

# In significant

magazine

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The Journal of the

WARRINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SINDUSTRY





# Sustainable nuclear decommissioning business scoops top industry award

A HIGHLY-respected Warringtonbased nuclear decommissioning and engineering business which delivers sustainable solutions for industry is celebrating winning a prestigious award.

React Engineering has developed a reputation across the UK and beyond for delivering pioneering, high quality, engineering and project management solutions in nuclear decommissioning and environmental clean-up, and achieving those outcomes in the most sustainable way possible.

At the Britain's Energy Coast Business Cluster (BECBC) Awards on Thursday night, surrounded by peers of engineering and manufacturing specialists, many in the nuclear supply chain, React took the honours with the top accolade on the night when crowned 'Business of The Year'.

Phil Redfern, React's Managing Director, said: "I am proud of every member of the team at React who have all contributed to this amazing success and this award is thanks to each and every one of them.

believe in empowering people, encouraging our team responsibility and opportunities to grow and develop their skills and capabilities to be the best they can be.

"We also believe if something is worth doing it's worth doing to the very best of all our abilities.

"That focus on innovative thinking and quality delivery has paid dividends over almost 30 years as it has enabled us to develop relationships built on trust. Our customers value our approach, ethos and our capability to deliver sustainable solutions to complex industry challenges.

"We have established a long-term valued relationship with our key-client Sellafield Ltd and it seemed fitting that they handed over the award after so many years of working with them.

"Winning an award like this and celebrating together, along with our peers made up of so many innovative, high quality, high-performing businesses and organisations across the region, is both humbling and inspiring.

"From our learning and experience over the last three decades, we are always happy to share best practice with others on how to make decommissioning happen through technical capability and how we maintain a pipeline of fresh thinking coming into the industry.

"Any organisation which wants to find out more, or is interested in collaborating with us, our door is always open.

React is also passionate about raising aspirations for young people by providing educational opportunities in science and engineering not usually accessible to school students, in addition to running a series of fun events and workshops promoting STEM subjects.

Last year, the company relaunched its React Futures scheme which provides financial and professional support for young people to kickstart their careers within the engineering sector.

Phil said: "We have always been passionate about giving back to our communities and making a positive difference to those who might not otherwise have access to further education or career opportunities, especially in science and engineering. It's part of our DNA at React and we will continue to try to inspire the next generation.

React enjoyed double success on the night as its team also took to the stage as part of a collaboration of Cumbrian SMEs who have established Resolve Engineered

Resolve, which brings together the expertise of four companies: React Engineering, Forth, PAR Systems and COMS, to deliver end-toend engineering services to mark a significant step forward in the nuclear industry's capabilities, scooped the Collaboration Award.

Earlier this year React, which is based at Cleator Moor, in Cumbria, opened a new office in Warrington to further embed its working relationships with the wider Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Group in Risley, and create new partnerships with the NDA supply chain whilst providing a platform for further growth throughout the UK.

To find out more about React contact mail@react-engineering. co.uk or visit https://www.reactengineering.co.uk/

# From the Chief Executive

As the Chamber prepares to depart the International Business Centre (IBC) at the end of the year, let's reflect on support previously available to local companies during this near 25 year period.

The IBC opened in 1999 with a handy grant from the European Union (remember those?) and was soon joined by the well-known Memphis Belle pub. The building was brimming with organisations whose sole objective was to help companies start up and grow – Business Link, UK Trade & Investment, Chamberlink and the economic development team for Warrington Borough Council. Over 50 SMEs would find a home at the IBC in the coming years, ably assisted by grants, loans, training and mentoring.

2000s The welcomed the establishment of the North West Development Agency (NWDA), headquartered in Warrington, because of course, why wouldn't it be? The former Burtonwood airbase was finally prepared for development and the UK enjoyed a 10 year period of economic growth, peaking at 5%. The global financial crisis brought this to an abrupt end, and business support started to be scaled back. NWDA was partly replaced with a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), although with a fraction of its predecessor's budget and remit.

Business Link was abolished and financial support diverted through national, not local competitions, such as the Regional Growth Fund. Austerity was introduced and Council's had to reduce their economic developments budgets.

Stephen Fitzsimons -

Add in a global pandemic, Brexit and a European war and you can see why there is far less money available today than in 1999.

However, 2024 will bring optimism for the business community in Warrington. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund may be less than those provided by the European Union, however there is more flexibility in how it can be invested. Look out for a Start & Scale Up Club to promote enterprise in Warrington – coming soon in the new year. The LEP will be absorbed into the three Cheshire Local Authorities, including the Business Growth Hub. This will preserve and continue their excellent work on initiatives such as the Cheshire Science Corridor (which includes Birchwood Park) and Marketing Cheshire - to attract more visitors into Warrington.



The Chamber will be moving to the Base on Dallam Lane, the nearly full business incubator for digital and engineering SMEs. The Business Exchange is already there, as is Warrington & Co, the modern iteration of the Council's economic development team. We just need Business Link to return and we'll be partying at the Base like it's 1999!

Have a great Christmas and New Year.

Take care, Stephen

# Works commence at The Landings in Burtonwood

INITIAL remediation has commenced at Bellway's latest development of 195 high quality new build homes in Burtonwood in Warrington.

Located on the site of the former RAF Burtonwood, the development is part of the wider mixed use Omega South scheme delivering around 1,400 residential homes, including homes for families, first time buyers and the elderly, shopping and leisure facilities and green spaces including a 35 acre park for the wider community to enjoy.

Providing a historical nod to the site's former use as an airfield, the Bellway development covers 5.45

hectares and will be known as The Landings.

It will comprise an attractive mix of three, four and five bedroom detached homes and three bedroom semi-detached homes all with private gardens and one or two allocated car parking spaces, plus one and two bedroom affordable homes.

Part of Bellway's Artisan Collection, properties at The Landings are individually designed with a superb internal and external specification including many luxurious features to ensure a flexible and modern living space for discerning purchasers.

Sales director at Bellway North West, Jenny Bell, comments: "We're delighted to be getting started on site at The Landings and look forward to releasing our first phase of new homes for sale.

"The overall plans for Omega are fantastic. When complete, it will result in a thriving new community within easy reach of both Liverpool and Warrington and close to a great selection of everyday amenities, open green spaces and parks. We expect strong interest from young and old as well as families looking to make the move to a vibrant new part of Warrington."

Within the planning conditions

for the development, a number of Section 106 contributions will be made towards healthcare, open space, primary and secondary education, public transport and community sports facilities.

Construction at The Landings is expected to take around four years. The first properties will be released for sale early next year, with showhomes to follow in the summer. For further information on the new development or to register your interest, please contact Bellway on 01925 358874 or visit www.bellway.co.uk/new-homes/north-west/the-landings





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Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive

# Flying start for new specialist division of PAM Group

A NEW specialist division of occupational health and corporate health services provider PAM Group is primed for rapid growth after a flying start.

Warrington-headquartered PAM has an ambitious expansion strategy for the new division, which is called Premier OH Solutions and is led by director Victoria Field.

PAM is aiming for the division to achieve turnover of £1m in 2024 and £2m by the end of 2025.

Premier OH Solutions is focusing on helping small and mediumsized employers to look after the health and wellbeing of their staff with a package of support.

This includes an employee assistance programme offering 24-hour access to trained specialists to support staff with mental health issues and concerns over financial, physical health and personal matters.

It also includes general occupational health services such as employee health screening, fitness for work medicals, health surveillance, vaccinations, ill-health retirement, absence management, physiotherapy, and neurodiversity advice, guidance, training and equipment. Premier OH Solutions also runs webinars and training courses, as well as inperson events.

It has signed up SMEs across a range of sectors, including retailing, education, financial and professional services, manufacturing, creative and arts, and education. Clients also include Premier League football clubs, marketing agencies, charities and dental practices.

Victoria joined this summer to spearhead the launch of Premier OH Solutions and leads a team of 10 staff, including clinicians, client services specialists and account managers, with further recruitment under way.

She moved from Health Management, part of Medigold Health, where she was a strategic relationship director. She previously ran her own mentoring, marketing and events companies.

Victoria said Premier OH Solutions' strategy is to help clients to reduce sickness absence and keep their staff healthy and productive.

She said: "There has never been a more urgent need for occupational health services in the workplace, with the NHS delays we are witnessing alongside skills shortages and the prevalence of 'presenteeism', whereby productivity is lost when employees are not fully functioning because of illness, injury or another condition.

"Our package of support is designed to help clients increase productivity and profitability. By creating a preventative healthcare programme, bringing positivity and engagement, they will also be able to attract more candidates and improve staff retention rates. The majority of employees say wellbeing support makes them less likely to leave their job.

"Our experienced, multidisciplinary team is working with a growing number of companies and organisations to deliver our suite of subscription products, while also enabling

them to access services from the wider PAM Group."

Victoria added: "The most important message to SMEs is that occupational health is preventative medicine, and it is an employee benefit that applies to businesses of all sizes. It's something I am intensely passionate about.

"We are building our team to take our subscription model to more and more companies to make a real difference."

James Murphy, chief executive of PAM Group, said: "Victoria is a highly-focused and driven professional with the right management and business skills to help lead the growth of Premier OH Solutions.

"The combination of running her own business and her experience in the occupational health field in a senior role make her the ideal person to implement our ambitious expansion plans."

PAM Group is a major provider of occupational health, health screening and wellbeing services

across the UK and Ireland. It offers a range of integrated services to public and private sector clients, supporting more than a million employees at over 1,000 businesses and organisations.

Its services include psychological support, corporate health assessments, ergonomic and assistive technology products, mobile health screening, drug and alcohol screening and a pathology laboratory. The group operates a network of 25 clinics. It also has a retail arm which supplies fitness, exercise and rehabilitation equipment to consumers, sports clubs and sports and physiotherapy professionals.

PAM, which employs more than 700 people, posted revenues of £45m for 2022 and is on track to reach £55m this year. PAM is looking to grow turnover to £80m over the next few years through continued organic expansion and further acquisitions.

The group is backed by private equity firm LDC to support its growth and the launch of new products and services.



# Local start-up to launch ground-breaking digital marketplace for 3D-printable car parts

AN Innovate UK-backed startup will launch a ground-breaking digital marketplace for 3D printable car parts.

Autentica Car Parts, based at Sci-Tech Daresbury, Cheshire, has developed a platform that allows OEMs, such as car designers and manufacturers, to sell spare parts designs to authorised dealers, distributors, and repair centres.

The first-of-its-kind solution enables Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT) backed blockchain-protected and certified design assets to be 3D printed ondemand locally.

The Autentica platform will help design owners and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) sell spare parts using NFTs to certify that a buyer is purchasing a genuine OEM replacement part, produced using 3D printing service locally on-demand.

NFTs further help prevent IP

infringement and sort out liability issues, enabling OEMs control over 3D printing service providers by streaming G-CODE tokens instead of 3D model files.

Using funding from Innovate UK, the UK's national innovation agency, the platform has been successfully tested with 500 customers, including OEMs and car dealers, and an international network of 600 3D-printing service providers.

The platform, which was developed in partnership with the University of Sheffield Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) and cloud technology company Oracle, enables instant access to spare car parts compared to the industry standard of 28 days, reduces non-production costs like storage by 70 per cent, and slashes the carbon footprint of transportation by 40 per cent.

Autentica's pioneering model extends to aerospace,

defence, and pharmaceutical manufacturing industries, granting them access to and licensing digital data rights. This approach empowers businesses to enhance cost-efficiency and streamline

maintenance through additive manufacturing.

For more information about the platform visit https://autentica-carparts.com





# B-Engineering Group powers up towards £10m turnover goal

WARRINGTON-based engineering group B-engineering is powering up to achieve record turnover of more than £10m this year as it looks to expand into new areas of

The building services group had revenues of £8.5m in the 12 months to September 30 following a remerger with sister company RD Mechanical & Electrical, which was initially spun out of the business in 2020.

The group designs, installs and maintains heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, electrical and renewable energy systems in commercial premises.

The family business was founded in 1990 by Bernard Ditchfield, who handed over the reins to son Rob in 2011, when the company was turning over £180,000 and had just six staff.

B-engineering Group's workforce has increased to 50 and is poised to grow over the next 12 months as the group looks to expand into Yorkshire, the North East and the

Rob said he expects the group to create around 10 new roles across its engineering, finance, administration and health and safety teams.

Last year, the group rebranded from Bmech Services to better reflect the breadth of services it offers and its adoption of new technologies.

The group has six divisions projects, service and maintenance, air-conditioning, renewables and technical services and employs engineers from Worcestershire, Lancashire to working across sectors ranging from education, healthcare, leisure and hospitality to manufacturing, retailing, construction and nuclear.

include management companies such as Mitie, Wates FM, Equans, EMCOR UK and Integral UK, as well as construction contractors such as Eric Wright Group, Amspec, Jennor UK and Contract Services.

The group's end-user client base includes corporate giants ITV, Bentley Motors, THG, Pilkington and Spire Healthcare.

Highlights of the group's most recent financial year included designing, installing and commissioning its largest-ever combined mechanical and electrical project – a £2.2m scheme at an electronics factory in Rochdale.

The group's burgeoning renewables division completed a 300KW solar PV panels project at a food manufacturing site in Hull, while new contracts were won for gas heating air-conditioning schemes in sectors including hear retailing and manufacturing. healthcare,

Rob, 42, joined the business straight from school in 1997 as an apprentice pipefitter welder and worked his way up to the MD's role.

He said: "We've come a long way in the past couple of years, rebranding from Bmech Services to B-engineering Group, setting up B-eco Renewables, starting our B Corp journey and restructuring our senior management and processes, with a new board which includes two non-executive directors and two employees.

"We have also successfully reintegrated RD Mechanical and Electrical into the group. When we split the businesses in 2020, one was focused on the FM market and end users, while RD M&E focused on installation work for large contractors in the new-build and office fit-out sectors. Both have continued to grow since then.

"The separation of the businesses enabled us to focus on how we met the different needs of clients across multiple sectors. This gave us the opportunity to develop the processes in both businesses and their services.

"Now that we have established a strong operating model in both companies and have identified the synergies between them, we have brought them back together to provide all of the services in-house.

pandemic, the wife Victoria joined the group as central services director, bringing extensive experience gained in senior roles in the nuclear industry to help B-engineering improve its

Rob said: "The improvements we have made to the business have created a platform for strong, strategic goals.

"We look forward with confidence to the year ahead and to creating a significant number of new roles as we expand our geographical reach for our maintenance offering."

Rob said the group has outgrown its current headquarters and will be relocating in the near future to larger premises.

sustainable growth in line with our



Join us at our highly anticipated **Nuclear Careers Evening!** 

seekers to meet with leading nuclear professionals under one roof. We welcome those from all backgrounds who are eager to redefine their careers in a thriving industry.

#### **EVENT HIGHLIGHTS**

- · Discover the imperative role of the nuclear sector in the global clean energy mix.
- · Explore a variety of roles from nuclear engineering, to finance to project management.
- Learn more about training programmes to enhance your qualifications
- · Get CV & interview advice from experienced

No physics degree? No problem! We're looking for enthusiasm and go-getters, not just scientific minds. We need project managers, engineers, commercial specialists, and more. The nuclear industry is growing, and we're confident that you have the skills that can play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our sector

#### REGISTER YOUR INTEREST:

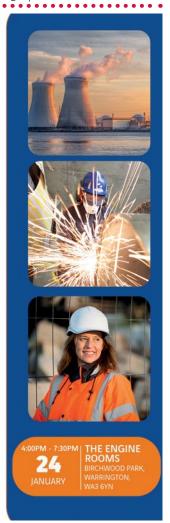












# Made Smarter to continue support for Cheshire SME manufacturers with national roll-out

MADE Smarter, a pioneering programme helping SME manufacturers in Cheshire access technology and digital skills, will continue as part of Government plans to roll out the initiative nationally.

Launched in 2019, Made Smarter has engaged with 2,500 manufacturers and funded 334 technology projects, which are forecast to create 1,550 jobs, upskill 2,772 existing roles, and increase North West GVA by f242m

This includes supporting 250 manufacturers in Cheshire and match funding 30 technology projects which are forecast to create 85 jobs, upskill more than 200 roles and boost the subregional economy by £15m.

This success has inspired the Government to expand the programme to cover all nine English regions in 2025-26 before working with Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland from 2026-27.

The announcement by HM Treasury, on November 17, means hundreds of thousands more SME manufacturers will get access to technology advice, leadership, and skills training, as well as grant funding for digital internships and technology projects.

The commitment, alongside

plans for £4.5 billion in funding for British manufacturing, will also boost productivity, growth, and decarbonisation for SME manufacturers across the country.

The announcement coincides with the publication of a new report by Made Smarter. 'Delivering Impact: How Made Smarter Inspires Digital Transformation' outlines the impact of the adoption model and proposes ways to make it even better.

Brian Holliday, Co-Chair of the Made Smarter Commission and MD of Siemens Digital Industries, said: "This announcement by the Treasury clearly demonstrates that UK manufacturing matters. It represents a tremendous investment boost for our makers that will enable the confidence to invest in innovation, productivity, and sustainability."

Donna Edwards, Director of Made Smarter's North West adoption programme, said: "I am delighted that the Government has recognised the extraordinary impact that Made Smarter's adoption programme is having on digitalisation of SME businesses.

"Over the last four years we have worked tirelessly to help North West makers to start their digital journey by providing them with specialist advice to help them select the right approach, level

of investment and tools for their business. The programme has proven the value technology and digital skills can bring to the manufacturing sector.

"While we await further details on the funding package, the commitment to a national roll-out is a huge vote of confidence in the contribution SMEs make to UK manufacturing. It will undoubtedly turbo charge the digital transformation of the sector."

Paul McLaren, Chair of Made Smarter North West's Steering Group and Production Director for BAE Systems, said: "Made Smarter has demonstrated that targeted support can be a catalyst for growth and a real enabler for change.

"UK manufacturing is moving into a phase where resilience is as important as it has ever been. Made Smarter is helping SMEs create robust plans to deliver impactful results."

Juergen Maier, Industrialist and author of the Made Smarter Review, added: "I am delighted that the Made Smarter programme, kicked off by the manufacturing review I had the privilege to lead in 2017, is now being expanded England-wide and with promised continuity to 2020.

"It is exactly this sort of policy continuity that our manufacturing sector is looking for and I know it will stimulate investment and productivity."

Among those businesses who have already benefited from the North West programme are Precision Card Services (PCS) based in Macclesfield and Qualkem in Crewe.

Adam Unsworth, Managing Director of PCS, said: "Quite simply, without funding through Made Smarter for the new equipment, PCS would not have been able to win a vital contract. The increase in turnover is huge for us. It's a game changer for our company."

Ivan Anketell-Clifford, Director of Qualkem, said: "Introducing the automatic tube labelling and filling machinery will see the start of our commitment to digitalisation.

"Not only will it allow us to offer another packaging regime to our existing customer base, but it will also allow us to actively market to new sectors, for example the cosmetics sector.

"Moreover, this digitalisation project will allow us, and our customers, to do our bit for society and the environment, and place more sustainably packaged products on the marketplace."



■ Donna Edwards, Director of Made Smarter North West and Paul McLaren, Production Director for BAE Systems and new Chair of Made Smarter North West's Steering Group

# BGEN launches industry-leading carbon and energy reduction offer

WARRINGTON headquarted BGEN, one of the UK's largest engineering companies driving the energy transition, has launched an industry-leading carbon and energy reduction offer to support its clients on their decarbonisation journeys.

The comprehensive offer will build on the company's digital, electrical and mechanical engineering expertise, and will add further value to customers through an alliance with the trusted sustainability consultancy, Tunley Environmental.

"Following the completion of several decarbonisation projects for our clients we've decided to formalise the offer," says Robin Whitehead, chief executive officer at BGEN. "Our carbon and energy reduction proposition will offer real value to organisations in sectors such as heavy-industry, pharma and utilities that are actively looking to decarbonise their operations."

The carbon reduction offer includes feasibility & planning, implementation & project management, and ongoing monitoring & improvement recommendations, and is targeted at medium to large organisations. Core mechanical and electrical services will be offered alongside innovative digital solutions such as resource (e.g., energy/water/material) monitoring and live carbon (CO2e) calculations – which will be key as the company looks to offer continuous improvement support to its clients.

BGEN's alliance with Tunley Environmental will enable the company to offer a step change in sustainability advice to its clients. The Tunley Environmental team includes dedicated environmental scientists that help organisations around the world to assess and reduce their operational and product life cycle carbon footprints.

"The alliance with Tunley Environmental will strengthen our consultancy offer and enable us to offer circular net zero solutions to our customers," said Oliver Groarke, head of future markets at BGEN. "Practically, we can now help companies to calculate their carbon footprint, assist them in developing roadmaps, and most importantly, turn these roadmaps

into reality."

BGEN recently completed the transformation of its headquarters into a net zero building. The project provided an opportunity to implement new technologies which will be on available to clients as part of this offer.



Oliver Groarke, head of future markets at BGEN and Robin Whitehead, chief executive officer at BGEN

## DV8 wins 'Best Commercial Scheme' at Sefton Design Awards

DV8 Designs was awarded 'Best Commercial Project' for the redesign of Southport Market, with recognition from the judging panel for the "effective integration with surrounding uses, adding to the vibrancy of the local economy".

DV8 were appointed to help transform and re-imagine Southport Market - a local historic building, as part of the town's huge regeneration plans. Formally a traditional indoor market, the brief was to take the classic market format and transform it into something big, bold and beautiful.

Now an exciting destination harnessing the fun, character and magic that Southport holds as a much-loved tourist destination and the team were honoured to be recognised for this prestigious award.

Congratulations went to lead designer Rebecca and the team for delivering an amazing project.



# Winter Wellbeing in the Workplace

DURING winter, the spread of a range of respiratory infections such as flu, pneumonia and COVID-19 are likely to increase - and with it, higher employee

To protect employee's health and wellbeing during these colder months, it's important to inform them of the precautions they can take to keep themselves and their colleagues healthy and well this winter.

#### Get vaccinated

Encourage employees to get their flu, COVID-19 and pneumococcal vaccinations if they are eligible, to protect themselves and others this winter. For further information and support (including eligibility), visit nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/

Employees can get the vaccination by booking an appointment online, at a walk-in site or through the NHS app. Employees can also access the flu vaccine at their GP surgery or a local pharmacy offering the service. It is important staff top up their protection, even if they have had vaccines or been ill with flu or COVID-19 before, as immunity fades over time and the viruses change.

Let fresh air into the workplace

Ventilation and fresh air are one the most effective means preventing transmission of respiratory infections, including COVID-19. Bring fresh air into a room by opening a door or a window. Clean air can have health benefits far beyond prevention of infection, such as long-term benefits for respiratory, cardiovascular and health.

Remember the basics of good

hygiene
Following these basic rules of good hygiene can help prevent the spread of illness during winter. It's the simple things such as:

- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze
- Wash your hands
- Sanitise surfaces
- Keep your distance if you feel unwell

Where possible, resources in the workplace that promote good hygien'e such as hand sanitisers, disinfectants and disposable paper towels. germdefence.org is a useful website, providing scientifically proven advice to help you identify ways to protect yourself and your staff from common infections.

#### Physical and mental health and wellbeing

The immune system is the body's way of protecting itself from infection and disease. Our immune systems are complex and influenced by many factors. Vaccines build immunity against specific diseases. However, specific diseases. However, there are additional ways we can strengthen our immune system this winter:

1. Get plenty of sleep

Studies have shown that people who don't get enough quality

sleep are more prone to becoming ill after exposure to infections. To ensure your staff get enough rest every night, it is important to promote a good sleep routine. Relaxing music, reading a book, yoga, having a nice long bath and avoiding your phone for at least 30 minutes before bed are good ways to prepare for sleep. For further advice and messages to promote across your workplace, visit nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/ mental-wellbeing-tips/

2. Look after your mental health Winter can be a particularly difficult time. People can feel isolated and lonely, particularly on colder, darker days, especially those who may work from home. Let your employees know about Warrington's mental health support directory - Happy? Ok? Sad? -warrington.gov.uk/happy-ok-sad which has information and advice on how to boost your mood, and where to get help if you're unable to cope. For electronic materials to promote the Happy?Ok?Sad? website to your employees, email publichealth@warrington.gov.uk.

Personal and work stress can suppress the immune system, increasing the chance of infection or illness. Managing stress and making time to unwind every day is beneficial for the immune system. For further advice and support, visit nhs.uk/every-mindmatters/mental-health-issues/

For information on how to take care of your staff's mental health, visit www.mind.org.uk/workplace/ mental-health-at-work/takingcare-of-your-staff

3. Stay hydrated

Water plays many important roles in the body, including supporting the immune system. Drinking enough water each day is crucial for many reasons, including to help prevent infection or to aid recovery. Being well-hydrated also improves sleep quality, cognition, and mood. The NHS Eat Well Guide recommends 6 to 8 glasses of fluid (not including alcohol) per day. Do you actively encourage employees to regularly access and drink fresh drinking water in your workplace?

4. Eat well and maintain a healthy weight

A healthy digestive system is essential to support normal immune system function. It is important to eat plenty of fruit and vegetables (aim for 5 a day) whole grains, lean protein and healthy fats. If you need extra support this winter, please visit Warrington Foodbank - Warrington Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis

further information guidance about eating a healthy, balanced diet visit, the NHS Eat Well Guide or download the free NHS weigh loss plan app to develop healthier eating habits and become more active nhs.uk/ better-health/lose-weight/

#### 5. Get active

Being active helps strengthen the immune system. It not only keeps people mentally and physically sharp, but it can really benefit the

immune system too. Make sure that you keep moving and spend less time sitting still for long periods to keep warm. Short and regular episodes of movement, physical activity, or chair-based exercises can keep your circulation flowing throughout the day. Visit the Better Health website for ways you can keep active - Better Health - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

A range of tips and tools to support employees with their health and wellbeing through physical activity can be found on the Sport England website, sportengland. org/funds-and-campaigns/activeemployee-toolkit

#### Further useful websites

You may find the below website useful to share with staff members as part of winter wellbeing advice:

- Livewire You can find local support with loosing weight, stopping smoking and getting into exercise visit, livewirewarrington.co.uk/ lifestyles/
- NHS's seasonal vaccinations and winter health page visit, Seasonal vaccinations and winter health NHS (www.nhs.

- Winter weather updates and local information from Warrington Borough Council. Visit warrington.gov.uk/winter
- There are grants, benefits and sources of advice available to help you make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help manage energy bills. Visit, Benefits and financial support if you're on a low income - GOV.UK (www. gov.uk) to check if you can get any heating and housing grants



■ David Herne, Director of Public Health North West

## Accident Credit Group take new office space at Birchwood Boulevard



BE Group has let an 8,725 sq ft office to insurance claim funder ACG, at 620 Birchwood Boulevard Business Park in Warrington.

Birchwood Boulevard Business Park is an established office park in Warrington and forms part of the Birchwood-Offices.co.uk portfolio, a property portfolio of Betfred's Fred Done. The park comprises 41 self-contained offices and has undergone a comprehensive refurbishment under Fred's ownership.

Joint Letting agent Simon Roddam of BE Group commented "The Warrington office market has not been immune to the changes of occupier demands since the pandemic and the implementation of hybrid working. From a positive viewpoint, we have seen an increase in demand for smaller office spaces, but in the case of ACG's relocation, they have expanded their business and, in turn, their office space. It was clear from the outset that this occupier values their office function, and they have created a fantastic working environment for their staff which is very close to public transport and amenities."

ACG provide stand-alone funding facilities for fault and non-fault repairs, hire and fleet funding. Debbie Nowell, Director at ACG commented "We are really pleased with our new office. We had a lot to consider when we set out on our property search, and the turnkey solution presented to us at Birchwood Boulevard Business Park has met all our aspirations as a thriving independent business.

ACG has committed to a 5-year lease. Joint agents at Birchwood Boulevard Business Park are BE Group and Knight Frank.



# Shaping skills for your existing & future workforce



The Cheshire & Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is one of 38 LSIPs that have been approved by the Department of Education Secretary of State. It has been developed to ensure that employers' most pressing skills needs are reflected within the local skills system.

The Cheshire & Warrington LSIP is led by South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Our LSIP aims to support employers in articulating their skills needs, whilst brokering links with Post-16 technical education to shape current and future provision; skills for your new and existing workforce.

In order to develop our LSIP, we have already engaged with many local employers and as a result been able to establish our Roadmap, focussing on key themes of Technical Skills (with priority areas of Manufacturing, Health & Social Care, Life Sciences, Digital and Low Carbon), Accessibility, Employability Competencies, Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance, and Educational Professionals.

Our aim is to ensure the current and future workforce have the necessary skills and access to local opportunities, as well being able to upskill or reskill to meet changes within industry. We also want to ensure that we can be responsive to the developing needs of employers.

If you would like to be part of making a difference to skills training within Cheshire & Warrington, or would just like to find out more, please get in touch – we're here to make things easier!

LSIP@sccci.co.uk or via our website: www.cheshireandwarringtonlsip.co.uk

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# **Expansion for Cube Homes with star** appointment

WITH project nearing completion at it's Lymm development, Cube Homes has added experienced Project Manager Andy Roberts to the team.

The award-winning developer is gearing up for a busy year ahead with the launch of four new developments and Andy will play a key role in growth of the business.

Andy, who has a quantity surveying degree from Salford University, has extensive experience in the property and construction industry having worked for construction management company Dick, quantity surveyor Baker Hollingworth and residential Hollingworth and residential property developer LPC Living.

He is currently overseeing the final stage of the build of homes at Hawthorn Grange in Star Lane

in Lymm in Cheshire, which means he has an enviable commute as he lives less than a quarter of a mile

He said: "I had seen work progressing on the site when I was out walking and I thought it looked incredible, so it felt like fate when I heard that they were looking for a new project manager.

"It's great to be joining Cube at such an important time in the company's evolution and the whole Cube ethos of returning profit to Great Places was very appealing as it's nice to be working with a company that is making a real difference to so many people's lives.

"I was also very impressed that some of the projects they are working on include the restoration and preservation of historic buildings - it is rare that you get a chance to work on projects which blend the old and new.

Along with Hawthorn Grange, Andy is responsible for Cube Homes' latest development Shire Hill on the site of the former Glossop Workhouse in the Peak District and its new canal-side homes in Lock Keeper's Court in Other Cube Home developments underway include sites at Weaver's Croft at Haven Lane in Oldham and Lime Grove in Woodley, Stockport with further developments planned for High ane in Chorlton-cum-Hardy and Mossley in Tameside.

Andy is the latest new recruit for the company which recently appointed Jamie Chitticks as Apprentice Development Project Manager with the developer.

Cube Managing Director Christopher Heath said: "Andy is an incredibly experienced Project Manager and has a fantastic reputation in the industry. Not only will our developments and buyers benefit greatly from the wealth of his knowledge I am sure the rest of the team will too."

Cube Homes builds bespoke new homes developments for sale and private rent across the North West of England. Established in 2007, it is the private sector arm of the Great Places Housing Group, which provides affordable social housing across the region. Profit from Cube Homes is returned to Great Places and used to support its core social ambitions of improving lives and addressing



THE Fursty Fox, an independent coffee retailer, has recently taken occupation at Birchwood Railway Station.

Having operated over the past 12 months from a converted horse trailer, the small business provides its community hot drinks and snacks at local festivals & agricultural events.

The letting represents the first retailer to take occupation at Birchwood Railway Station in over 6 years, facilitating growth of the station and that of the business, with space that provides commuters a higher selection of food and beverage options.

The station is situated in the south west of Birchwood, a town and civil parish located within the Borough of Warrington, an area of high economic prosperity with over 8,000 businesses employing approximately 115,000 people. Joe Simms, Graduate Surveyor at Lambert Smith Hampton, said: "We are glad to see an independent start-up like The Fursty Fox take occupation at a prime location in Birchwood.

Train stations are quintessential travel hubs throughout the UK, with occupiers now starting to realise the retail potential they offer, taking the opportunity to grow their businesses and breathe new life into these derelict stations."

Helen Rainford-Douglas, the owner of The Fursty Fox, said: "When the opportunity to acquire a second site near our closest train station, we could not wait for the opportunity to provide more of our products to the local community. Having been a regular commuter in the past, I am aware of how important it is for commuters to be able to access ethically sourced, on the go food & drink." drink.



# Eden Project partners with Warrington agency No Brainer for recent campaigns

DIGITAL PR and SEO specialist No Brainer has partnered with the Eden Project to enhance the social enterprise's summer campaigns.

The Eden Project and Warrington-based No Brainer have been working together on a creative Digital PR brief focused on amplifying the attraction's annual 'Summer of Play' programme, which offers a calendar of activities for families, and to promote its for families, and to promote its brand-new 'Nature's Playground'

The No Brainer team has created a series of rich brand stories with experts and influencers which resonate with the media and reinforce the Eden Project's key messaging of creating more opportunities for children to engage in nature. The work has already generated national coverage and built links from high quality media as well as smaller communities through targeted media outreach.

As part of the brief, No Brainer, a search-first content agency based in Stockton Heath, Warrington, focused heavily on promoting the Eden Project's new Nature's Playground in an authentic and relatable way to families through the use of influencers and Education Experts.

Nature's Playground is one of the largest outdoor play areas in the south-west, offering nearly 500m2 of immersive fun for children to enjoy and is brimming with imaginative and sensory play. A focal point of the play area is the huge nine -metre-tall Tree of Life tower, as well as lots of opportunities for water play.

The account was led by No Brainer's Digital PR Account Director, Tori Attwood.

Commenting on the project, Tori said: "We're really excited to work alongside a major eco attraction like the Eden Project, using our experience of working with attractions nationwide to help them amplify their mission of engaging more children in nature.

"Our goal was to put the Eden Project at the forefront of parent's minds over the summer months as a go-to destination to visit, as well as amplify the Eden Project's message of the benefits of playing in nature for children nationwide.

"We have been given lots of creative licence with our campaign ideas and it's been fantastic to work with the in-house team in a collaborative way to drive our goals forward.

"As a team, we're passionate about supporting attractions and are currently working towards B-Corp certified status, so it's been fantastic working with a brand that echoes our values and passions.

Becky Bennett, Media Relations Manager at the Eden Project, said: "It's been fantastic to have a digital PR agency on our side that really understands our mission and has been able to get up to speed quickly, giving a real boost to our internal team. No Brainer has brought a fresh approach to our earned media efforts over the challenging summer period and has landed fantastic feature pieces that showcase our Summer of Play activity in an authentic way.

No Brainer supports a range of companies across various sectors from attractions and e-commerce, to legal and charities, with brands including MBNA, Checkatrade and AO.com, Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

The agency was also named recently in the top 20 of the Prolific North's top 50 PR agencies list 2023 and is named in PR Week's top 150 agencies, as well as being The Drum recommended. Late last year, the agency also secured two wins at the UK Search Awards.



### Marketing Cheshire names its new managing director

MARKETING Cheshire – part of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP family – has named award-winning strategic communications specialist Cristian Marcucci as its new managing director.

Marcucci, currently assistant director for communications at Staffordshire County Council, will take up his role in January.

Marketing Cheshire promotes the sub-region to tourists, business, investors, and residents— using its tourism and place making expertise to promote a region that welcomes over 36.3 million visitors each year creating a visitor economy valued at over £3.7 billion.

Marcucci, 45, said he couldn't wait to promote "the world class attractions and pioneering businesses" in a region boasting a rich tapestry of must-visit places.

He said: "Cheshire is a special place, home to a world-class and diverse range of tourism attractions many with an educational aspect and as diverse as the Roman history and world's oldest racecourse in Chester, a theme park in Warrington (Gulliver's World), an UNESCO World Heritage site (Jodrell Bank's Discovery Centre), the beautiful Tatton Park, and muddled mazes of BeWILDerwood set in 70 acres of enchanted woodland next to the historic Cholmondeley Castle.

"I am passionate about place marketing and bringing leaders, influencers and people together to promote their areas and in this role I cannot wait to work with place leaders and the pioneering businesses that generate billions and attract millions of visitors each year to help the region continue to deliver a growing, sustainable, healthy and inclusive economy."

The ex-journalist has worked in local government communications for 17 years and also as a peer reviewer for the Local Government Association.

As well as offering tourism expertise Marketing Cheshire's work ranges from supporting the relaunch of Cheshire Science Corridor – home to over 7,000 businesses and world class assets – to promoting Cheshire Day and big events including the annual Marketing Cheshire Tourism Awards and recent Cheshire and Warrington LEP annual economic



## Warringtonfire TIC industry pioneer expands and empowers the community

WARRINGTONFIRE (part of Element Group), in Warrington, is due to expand its facilities with a new laboratory at Birchwood Park.

Warringtonfire dedicates itself to ensuring that products used within the Built Environment are within the Built Environment are fit for purpose. A true pioneer in the Testing, Inspection, and Certification (TIC) industry, Warringtonfire has been diligently working behind the scenes to help make tomorrow safer than

The changing landscape in the Built Environment means that demand for their expertise is growing. Increasing regulatory requirements, the introduction of additional standards, the rising importance of third-party certification and product assurance, as well as the need for shorter testing lead times, meant that it was time for Warringtonfire that it was time for Warringtonfire to grow in order to properly services its customers and the wider industry. This expansion allows them to continue their mission of making tomorrow safer than today and contribute even more to the safety of products used within the Built Environment.

But this expansion is not just about business growth and meeting the demands of the

## warringtonfire

industry. It is about investing in the local community, nurturing its potential, and creating opportunities for its residents. The company has plans to recruit a diverse range of talent, aiming to bring in around 80-100 individuals across various functions. From technical experts to operational and corporate functions, they aim to build a team that will not only enhance their current expertise but also become an integral part of the local community. Warringtonfire prides itself on offering a range of entry-level roles with comprehensive training and competency plans, which add to opportunities for growth and development.

Leigh Hill, Divisional Director, says: As the expansion plans continue to take shape, it is creating a real buzz and feeling of excitement for the team. The prospect of new jobs, increased capacity to serve more customers, and a more considerable contribution to the local economy is an incredible thing to be a part of. We look forward to opening in early 2025 and working closely with the local community in the meantime.



Malcolm Jack and Jayne Furnival from Langtree join Cheshire's Lord Lieutenant Alexis Redmond MBE and Major Cllr Steve Wright, Mayor of

## Regional critical incident training centre relocates to St James Business Centre

A REGIONAL critical incident training centre has relocated at St James Business Centre, managed by Langtree under its Wire Regeneration joint venture

Warrington Borough Council.

The move follows on the heels of a £2.9m Warrington Town Deal award for the establishment of a new Digital Enterprise Hub.

The establishment of a Digital Suite allows the University of Chester to operate state of the art technology from the renowned Hydra Foundation that trains up to 24 police officers at a time in how to manage critical incidents such as hostage situations, murder investigations and missing persons cases. Officers will be drawn from forces around the north west.

The University of Chester has entered into a five-year lease commitment on a 499 square foot office for the staff who manage the programme and an operating licence on the 2,500 square foot hi-tech suite. The team is relocating from the university's Padgate campus.

Geoff Elvey, Head of the Institute of Policing at the University, said: "The Hydra Simulation Suite is a fantastic critical incident management tool.

"Hydra immersive creates simulations that provide students with an opportunity to consolidate learning. The training invokes the tension and decision-making requirements of leading and managing serious incidents and allows delegates to put their skills and new approaches to critical situations to work. It's a highly effective methodology and similar suites are in use across the globe.

The Digital Suite will be the eighty-fifth in a worldwide network that utilises Hvdra's unique combination of hardware and software. To date, more and software. To date, more than 850,000 decisions relating to different emergency situations have been logged by delegates whilst under training in a Hydra Commenting on the letting, Jayne Furnival, group property director for Langtree, said: "We're immensely proud to be hosting something so important to our community. The brief was to find a property that combined ease of access, parking, flexible internal space, room to break-out and onsite catering and St James fitted the bill perfectly. Our on-site security and pass-access systems were also vital decision factors and we're now looking forward to welcoming delegates to the building.

Fit-out of the suites, which include training rooms, break-out space, plenary rooms and a hi-tech critical situation suite is complete and the centre is now open. Staff from other emergency services and the private sector will be able to utilise the service on request.

"These suites are unique to the region and will bring a whole new range of potential tenants to St James," said Jayne Furnival. "The deal, coming so soon after the Digital Enterprise Hub award, reinforces its place as one of the most important tech hubs in the

Commenting on the Town Deal-funded facility, Cllr Tom Jennings, Warrington Borough Council's cabinet member for economic development and innovation, said: "Warrington's Town Deal continues to make excellent progress. The Hydra Suite as part of the digital enterprise hub project will be an important facility for the region, and follows the successful completion of two other pioneering Town Deal projects in our Health and Social Care Academy and bus fleet depot."





prestigious awards and encourage you to consider applying in one or more of the categories.

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#### Entries close on December 11th 2023

For full terms and conditions to enter please visit: https://www1.chester.ac.uk/high-sheriff's-awards-enterprise Winners will be announced at the Awards Evening on April 4th 2024

www1.chester.ac.uk/high-sheriff's-awards-enterprise

# Birchwood Park launches free bus scheme for its occupiers

BIRCHWOOD Park has launched a free bus travel scheme for its occupiers, as part of its mission towards Net Zero.

Available as a free bus travel ticket via the Parklife app, the free bus scheme is a brand-new service, available exclusively to businesses and staff based on Birchwood Park

As part of the Park's commitment to becoming more sustainable, the scheme has been launched to reduce car usage, whilst helping occupants and employees reduce travel costs during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

Officially launched at the beginning of November, the Park's occupiers have been able to take advantage of free bus travel Monday to Friday from 7am – 8pm, using Warrington's Own Buses, to-and-from their homes in Warrington to Birchwood Park.

Birchwood Director, Martin O'Rourke, commented: "The free bus scheme is something we have had in the pipeline for a long time now."

"Not only will our occupiers and their employees be offered a greener way to travel to work each day, but the free bus scheme has also been created to support existing occupiers in their recruitment and retainment, making it easier for new and existing staff based locally to get to work without a vehicle.

Alongside the free bus scheme, the Warrington-based business Park also offers several other sustainable travel options, as part of its award-winning travel plan. This includes an online car share platform, EV travel stations and extensive facilities for cyclists in

the area.

Martin continued: "This is muchneeded step in the right direction for our Park, to ensure we are on track towards becoming Net Zero in all our managed areas and buildings by 2030 and aiming to be Net Zero in all our occupier managed buildings by 2040."

To find out more about what the Park is doing to become Net Zero, please head to www. birchwoodpark.co.uk/about-thepark/sustainability



## DBD Group sees US expansion following five years of successive growth

WARRINGTON based professional engineering and advisory firm, DBD Group, is now expanding into the US opening two new offices in South Carolina and Washington State after five years of consecutive growth since hiring a new CEO in 2017.

Standing for 'different by design', the firm provides engineering, project management and consultancy services to decommissioning and waste management projects in the nuclear energy sector.

In 2017, Thomas Keegan joined the business as CEO, following an international career in risk and advisory. Since his arrival, DBD has transformed its profits with five successive years of growth at a rate of 50 per cent year-on-year.

Operating across the globe, DBD Group has increased its headcount from 30 to 180 over the last five years, with plans to expand at pace into North America in the near future. This will help to bolster DBD Group's international offering to its growing client base.

DBD Group is also planning to launch new capabilities around project delivery, supported by expansions across the UK, with a new office in the South West of England. Throughout its growth, DBD has been supported by JS, a North West-based tax and accountancy firm, which has provided strategic advice and consultancy. This has facilitated the diversification of DBD's service offering within the nuclear sector, bolstering its position as a global leader in nuclear decommissioning.

Thomas Keegan, CEO at DBD Group, said: "Since joining DBD Group five years ago, I can't speak highly enough of the team throughout this period of exceptional growth. Working in the nuclear sector is an exciting and intense environment, and performing well requires resilience and creativity. That's when we decided to expand the service offering of the business to maintain our leading position in the industry.

Naturally with this came the need for a lot more support from a compliance and advisory perspective. This is where JS came in, they have provided strategic advice and guidance in providing financial support to facilitate our growth journey and turn our US ambitions into a reality. We're now looking forward to continuing

our partnership as we expand further afield."

Steve Crompton, Partner and Head of Tax at JS, said: "Working with DBD has been extremely rewarding. The core ethos of DBD is to be different, and the relationship we have built has

allowed for an open and honest exploration of unique ways to support the growth of the firm, and we have seen it develop from strength to strength. This is a real testament to the work of Tom and the team, and we look forward to continuing the journey together."



# One of Birchwood Park's most soughtafter buildings now fully let









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BIRCHWOOD Park has announced that 401 Faraday St is now fully let following the arrival of Quintessa.

Founded in 1999, the employee-Quintessa leading-edge, scientific, mathematical and strategic consultancy with a vision to facilitate a low carbon energy future.

Working with household names such as BP and EDF Energy, Quintessa has provided consultancy to world-leading, science-based organisations spanning across six continents and in 25 countries.

Being a leading nuclear hub in the UK, Birchwood Park is also home to some of Quintessa's clients and business collaborators, including Rolls-Royce, Sellafield Limited and Nuclear Waste Services.

Commenting on the move, Richard Little, Managing Director of Quintessa, said: "We're thrilled to move into 401. We were formerly occupiers of Chadwick House many years ago and we are very happy to be returning to the park, this time occupying a larger office space.

"Being employee-owned, we care deeply about the workplace wellbeing of our staff and it's great to know the Park are aligned with our aim to encourage and facilitate work life balance in all aspects of employee's lives."

Martin O'Rourke, Commercial Director at Birchwood Park, added: "We're delighted to welcome yet another business back to Birchwood Park.

"Birchwood Park provides a wellserviced business environment with a range of facilities perfect for employers looking to expand their wellbeing offer when recruiting staff, such as flexible meeting rooms hire and strong transport connections across the north west. We're confident Quintessa's team will enjoy their time at the Park"

Alongside Quintessa, Birchwood recently welcomed environmental consultants TEP to 401 Faraday St too.

# We are moving!



After nearly 25 years at the International Business Centre, the Chamber will be moving to The Base on Dallam Lane on the 1st January.

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# Miller Homes' Peaky Blinders Ball raises over £18,000 for Dementia UK

MILLER Homes, one of the UK's leading homebuilders with offices in Warrington, has raised an impressive sum of nearly £30,000 during 2023 for its nominated charity, Dementia

The company's commitment to supporting this vital cause has been unwavering, and the funds were raised through a variety of creative and inspiring initiatives throughout the year.

Most recently, Miller Homes hosted a 'Peaky Blinders Charity Ball' to raise further funds for Dementia UK. Held at the prestigious Titanic Hotel in Liverpool, event was a grand affair that saw attendees immerse themselves

in the glamour of the 1920s. The ball raised over £18,000, with contributions derived from ticket sales, games, auctions, and raffles, all in the name of a great cause.

Another the efforts was the achievement which fundraising remarkable consisted of a team of 18 people across all departments of Miller Homes North West, who took on the formidable 'Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge', embarking on a demanding 24-mile loop with a total ascent of 5200ft.

s' commitment UK extended Homes' Miller Dementia beyond fundraising events. The homebuilder was privileged to welcome an Admiral Nurse into their offices to shed light on the vital work carried out by the charity. This informative session not only raised awareness about Dementia UK but also offered valuable advice on recognising the early stages of dementia in family members and how to cope with the challenges it presents.

In total, Miller Homes' combined fundraising efforts resulted in a generous donation of almost £30,000 to Dementia UK. This contribution will go a long way in supporting the organisation's commendable work, including aiding Admiral nurses and various other functions vital to the charity's mission.

David Brackley, Regional

Operations Director Homes, expressed expressed his the company's charitable achievements, saying: "We are delighted to have raised such a significant amount for Dementia UK this year. It reflects the dedication and generosity of our team and the partners we work with. Dementia is an issue that affects so many lives, and we are committed to supporting the invaluable work of Dementia UK."

Dementia UK provides specialist dementia support for families through Admiral Nurses. These highly trained professionals offer practical and emotional support to individuals living with dementia and their families, ensuring that no one faces dementia alone.



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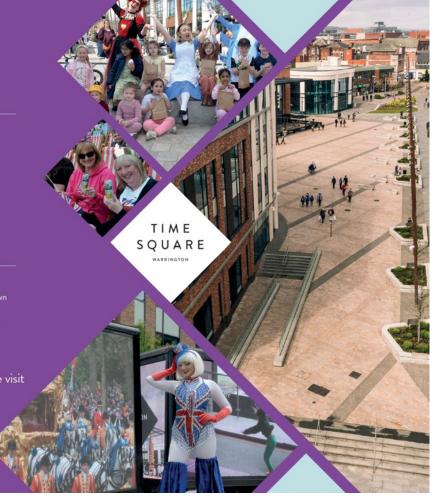
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