

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR



Insight

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Warrington home care company celebrates 250th milestone

CARE company, Home Instead UK, based in Lower Stretton, recently celebrated a key milestone in its history – the opening of its 250th franchise office.

The team applauds its dedicated care professionals who over the past 18 years have made it possible for older people to stay living at home and receive the care crucial to their health and wellbeing.

The national office team and various Home Instead franchise owners from around the country gathered at the beautiful Delamere Manor in Cuddington. Everyone raised a glass to the business' successful growth and toasted to a future of strengthening the care sector.

Owners of the 250th franchise office, Suzie and Rob Stanton from Home Instead Mansfield attended along with one of their care professionals, Alessia Hunt. They were surrounded by successful franchise owners who introduced Home Instead's care to communities across the UK, giving families the reassurance that their loved ones are safe, well and comfortable at home.

The owners of the very first franchise, Rob and Bryn Evans from Home Instead Sheffield and Barnsley were amongst the attendees. Still employing their very first care professional that they recruited when they launched

the business in 2006, they are a true success story.

Speaking at the event, CEO UK & International, Martin Jones MBE recalled celebrating the brand's 200th office opening which took place at Chester Cathedral in 2019 and the 100th office celebration in 2012 at the world famous Jodrell Bank Centre in Cheshire.

Reflecting on how far the business has come, he said, "We have grown significantly as a business but our reason for being hasn't changed.

"Our mission to increase the world's capacity to care is what unites us and what drives us to deliver quality care which keeps people in their own homes and supports their families.

"As society grapples with our ageing population, home care becomes even more relevant.

"We will continue to work to better understand the needs of our clients and their families, to adapt our model and grow our service offering to ensure that we continue to lead from the front."

Home Instead was launched in the UK in 2005 with its first office in Chester. The company's first franchised office opened a year later. They relocated to the Walnut Tree Business Centre in Lower Stretton in 2009.

Spike in demand for services

The company has seen a sharp rise in demand for its services as families look to address health and wellbeing issues they may have seen in loved ones over the festive period. This has led to new employment opportunities on offer for people keen to begin or further a career in care.

Home Instead Warrington and Lymm has seen a 25% seasonal uplift in client enquiries. When families get together for festive gatherings, they often see a change in a loved one's health, cognitive ability or general disposition, particularly if they haven't seen each other for a long time. That leads to families having to consider care options.

Melissa Critchley, owner at Home Instead Warrington and Lymm, says: "For many of us, Christmas is when we spend more time with family members than usual. We might notice Mum is more forgetful than last time she visited and is repeating stories. Or perhaps Dad has lost weight and is off his food? It might be that an older loved one is talking about how little they see friends these days and is struggling with loneliness.

"For many families, job number one for the new year is to get professional care."

Home Instead is looking for 4 care professionals to meet this rise in

demand.

Melissa Critchley says: "Those coming onboard and joining as care professionals aren't just starting a new job, they're acting as a lifeline for families. There are few roles more rewarding than a job in care and it won't be long before you realise how much of a difference you're making. We match care professionals to clients based on similar interests and personality traits; it's no surprise that so many of them become genuine companions.

"Our new recruits needn't worry if they don't have previous experience in care. We provide full training and ongoing support that will stand you in excellent stead to make it possible for an older adult in the local area to live well at home."

Home Instead Warrington and Lymm has been open for 17 years and employs 45 Care Professionals who help older adults in the community live well at home. The company provides tailored support, typically comprising of help with daily living tasks such as meal preparation, light housekeeping, personal care, medication support, companionship and shopping for older people.

For more information on the services provided or to find out about joining their team, please call Helen Wilcock or visit www.homeinstead.co.uk/warrington

From the Chief Executive

Stephen Fitzsimons



The UK economy continues to frustrate as the much-anticipated recovery fails to maintain momentum. Inflation has fallen to 4%, although it is still above the long-term target.

Borrowing saw a welcome reduction to £7.8bn in December, however the economy was shrinking by 0.2% before Christmas. This helps to explain the equally erratic surveys on business confidence. Federation of Small Business members were very upbeat last month, whilst the Business Barometer from Lloyds fell by a massive 22 points. We do, however, speak with plenty of businesses in Warrington who are doing well and looking to expand. The UK's nuclear sector is clustered at Birchwood Park

and I was really impressed by the number of candidates attending the recent recruitment fair, organised by Nuvia. The sector provides an excellent career path, not just for engineers, and is a significant contributor to the value of Warrington's economy.

We finally have some modest funding to help local companies become the next Martin Dawes, Halliwell Jones or Total Steel. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund has given us some money to provide small grants to new or growing businesses. It is dependent on new jobs, so if you are looking to recruit and want to take your enterprise forward, do get in touch with the Chamber. The budget will soon be spent so make it sooner rather than later! If you watched

Dragon's Den recently, Stand Out Socks demonstrated how a little bit of support can go a long way.

It's judging time for me, with entries submitted for the High Sheriff's Awards (Healthy Business, sponsored by Warrington Borough Council. I've been involved with many award ceremonies over the years and I struggle to understand why more companies don't participate. The application forms are usually easy to complete and some categories are less popular than others so improves the chances of winning! There are plenty to choose from in the north west, including Make UK for manufacturing and Business Insider (Property and "Made In"). At the very least, they can be a great night out for the team,

however winning opens up lots of exciting marketing opportunities. Look out for the Warrington Business Awards this autumn and have your pens ready to apply (pens – what year do I think it is?).

Dry January is done, February will fly by, even with an extra day, and we'll soon be enjoying the Warrington hospitality during a tropical Spring...

Take care, Stephen

Brothers snare a pair of Dragons with their Stand Out Socks

BROTHERS Christian and Ross Laing have successfully snared a pair of dragons to invest in their Warrington-based Stand Out Socks business after appearing on the BBC's Dragons' Den.

Appearing on the show with Christian's long time fiancée Natalie Dixon, the team attracted four potential investors, deciding two heads were better than one. They accepted an offer from sock fan Peter Jones, CBE, one of Britain's leading and best-known entrepreneurs along with Steven Bartlett, who joined the Den in Series 19 and became the youngest ever Dragon at just 28 years old.

With Christian, Ross and Natalie seeking £30k for a 25 per cent stake in their Stockton Heath-based business, the two entrepreneurs agreed to invest £15k apiece in return for a 12.5 per cent stake each. Touker Suleyman with 50 years' retail and manufacturing experience and Sara Davies who founded Crafter's Companion, a retail business specialising in crafting, also both made offers of £30k for a 25 per cent stake. The only dragon to withdraw was

Deborah Meaden.

Peter owns a portfolio of businesses ranging from technology and fashion to food and publishing. He is also the longest-serving Dragon in the world having been in the Den since the very first UK series in 2005. Steven is a British Entrepreneur, speaker, investor, author and the host of the UK's No.1 podcast The Diary of a CEO – an unfiltered journey into the remarkable stories and untold dimensions of the world's most influential people, experts and thinkers.

After a confident pitch, stating they aim to become a leading employer for people with learning difficulties, it didn't take the enthusiastic trio long to convince the normally hard-hearted dragons they were worth investing in, highlighting their achievements, including selling their Stand Out Socks at Manchester United's Mega Store.

Christian launched the Stand Out Socks business with his brother Ross in 2021 on National Down Syndrome Day. The business expanded last October when they

welcomed two new colleagues with Down Syndrome to the business.

Their business was founded on the principles of quality and inclusivity. Stand Out Socks understands that socks are more than just fashion accessories – they serve as catalysts to open discussions on disability inclusion and raise Down Syndrome awareness.

Beyond offering stylish and comfortable socks, each purchase contributes directly to creating meaningful job opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities.

After agreeing to invest, Peter, well-known for his love of socks said: "They are not quite there yet, but we will make the story happen!"



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Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive

Warrington IT company wins major financial services contract

WARRINGTON-based Sentis Managed Solutions and Leeds company virtualDCS have triumphed in a joint tender, which has seen the two companies win a major contract to provide a full range of IT services to a leading UK based mortgage lender.

This latest contract win comes on the back of Sentis recently expanding into new premises on Museum Street in Warrington town centre, in a former school building that was also previously a technical college. The contract also coincides with virtualDCS marking its fifteenth year in business and the two companies have a long-standing relationship spanning almost 10 years, which started when Sentis was first established in 2014.

As part of the contract, channel-first cloud and disaster recovery specialist, virtualDCS is providing backup services for Microsoft 365 via its CloudCover 365 product which is powered by the world's leading data protection software, Veeam. This will run alongside the fully managed Microsoft 365 ecosystem that Sentis is offering.

Other services from Sentis include a full 24/7 helpdesk and a managed Security Operations Centre (SOC), complete with security information event management (SIEM), coupled with proactive advice and guidance, as well as ongoing management of the client's Cyber Essentials Plus certification.

In addition, Sentis is supplying a complex interface solution for integrating data and systems, alongside a data loss prevention service, which will be supported by virtualDCS hosting its cloud-

based Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) solutions.

An advanced cybersecurity toolset has also been incorporated, complete with an AI-based XDR, with automated response that is pervasive across local and wide area networks and cloud services. This is supported by multifactor authentication gateways throughout the environment and DNS filtering at the endpoint level and PDNS filtering on a network level.

The company is also providing a full range of network and communications services including SDWAN as a service, a managed print solution and Vodafone mobile contract provision across 95 devices.

Neil Homer, Sales and Operations Director at Sentis, said: "When we launched Sentis, we took the decision on day one to join forces with a channel partner specialising in backup and disaster recovery services, which would free us up to effectively service our clients, as well as providing a high-quality end user experience.

"virtualDCS supported us with our very first customer and we've worked with them ever since, as the products and services they offer are second to none and they always deliver.

"When they approached us with this opportunity, we knew it would be a good fit for both businesses, working with a client where data and information security is the utmost priority. We have now designed and implemented a solution that offers a combination of services and management processes, alongside highly secure back-end services from virtualDCS,

which protects their data to an FCA regulated standard.

"Crucially it's also the client's only IT project that has been completed on time and on budget, which is largely down to the agile and responsive ethos that spans both Sentis and virtualDCS."

Richard May, CEO of virtualDCS, said: "As soon as we saw this tender, we knew it was an interesting opportunity where we could add significant value. However, as a channel-first cloud and disaster recovery specialist, we tend to work behind the scenes in terms of delivering the overall solution. We knew that Sentis would be the ideal partner to be the client's main point of contact, with their expertise and front of house services.

"The client immediately saw the benefit of the partnership, as it

gives them access to the services and experience of two best in class companies offering everything they needed, so it ticked every box.

"Together, we produced an innovative, new and bespoke solution that did everything the client required and more, complete with cutting-edge security incorporating the likes of Darktrace and Duo, which was a key reason we were awarded this contract."

Since adopting a channel-first model last year, virtualDCS has experienced exponential growth, establishing itself as an industry leader in backup and disaster recovery. Most recently, virtualDCS was presented with a prestigious Veeam Innovation Award, underscoring its commitment to pioneering technology and delivering top-tier solutions.



■ Richard May and Neil Homer.

Firethorn Trust expands presence with prime 21.5-acre Morrisons logistics acquisition

REAL estate investor and developer, Firethorn Trust, has acquired a 21.5-acre logistics asset in Warrington for an undisclosed sum.

Located on Hardwick Grange, Woolston, the property comprises three units totalling 432,166 sq ft, of an ambient storage facility, a cold store and ancillary office space.

The property is fully let under a long-term lease to the UK supermarket chain, Morrisons, and Firethorn will manage the asset as owner and landlord.

Chris Beer, Senior Associate at Firethorn Trust, said: "Having recently reached practical completion at Link Logistics Park, Ellesmere Port, we are pleased to be expanding our portfolio in the North West, which continues to be a leading industrial hub.

"The acquisition of Hardwick Grange reflects our ongoing

commitment to the logistics market, as we look to allocate capital in prime locations across the UK this year. Being ambitious and agile, we are well equipped to seek out income and long-term investment potential, as well as strategic land opportunities, amid the evolving market conditions. We are actively pursuing opportunities to deploy significant balance sheet capital into further acquisition and development across the sector."

Situated in a prime distribution location, the property is within one mile of M6 J21, providing fast access to the M56, M62 and major UK cities including Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds.

Firethorn Trust was advised by Colliers and Klipa on agency and Maples Teesdale on the legal.

For more information, visit www.firethorntrust.com



Specialist business bank aiming for six in a row

A WARRINGTON specialist business bank is aiming to pick up an industry award for an incredible sixth successive year, after being named as a finalist once again.

Redwood Bank has won the prize for Best Business Variable Rate Deposit Account Provider at the annual Business Moneyfacts Awards for five years.

Gary Wilkinson, CEO and Co-Founder of Redwood Bank, said: "Winning this award for five straight years was a phenomenal achievement for the bank. We are proud to have been included on the shortlist once again and hope we can claim another win."

This year, Redwood has also been shortlisted for two other awards, the Best Business Fixed Account Provider, a trophy it won in 2020, and Best Service from a Commercial Mortgage Provider.

"Our teams work hard to deliver the best possible outcomes for our customers and receiving recognition like this demonstrates that their efforts do not go unnoticed in the industry. Over the past six years, we have earned a reputation for backing British businesses, and remain committed

to providing the best products to support them."

Towards the end of 2023, it was announced that Redwood Bank's parent company, Redwood Financial Partners Ltd (RFPL) has signed Heads of Terms for the reverse takeover of R8 Capital Investments plc (R8), a company listed on the London Stock Exchange, in 2024.

The Bank will be facing big banking names in its shortlisted categories. The awards are decided using a combination of methods. Judges look at the providers who offer competitive products to new savers, but also those providers that are supporting their existing customers as well. In addition, they take into account feedback provided from customers and brokers.

The winners will be announced at the awards night on Thursday, April 18 at Evolution in London.

Founded in 2017, Redwood Bank was launched to offer secured SME lending products to owner-occupied businesses, as well as to experienced commercial and residential property investors.

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



BiSN opens new manufacturing facility in Perth to expand global operations

WARRINGTON headquartered BiSN, a leading provider of permanent downhole sealing solutions, has opened a new manufacturing facility in Perth, Western Australia to better serve operators in the region.

The facility will radically increase the operational capacity for BiSN in the Asia-Pacific region, creating several local jobs.

Located in Perth, the new facility represents a substantial investment in infrastructure and talent. BiSN's expansion into Australia is driven by the growing demand for Wel-lok™ technology in the region, which provides cost-effective, reliable, and environmentally friendly sealing solutions for the oil and gas industry.

"The opening of this facility is another step in BiSN's global expansion and builds upon successful campaigns with operators in both Australia and the wider region," said Paul Carragher, Founder and CEO of BiSN. "The Perth facility is one part of our commitment to rapidly support operators, allowing them to deploy Wel-lok technology for all intervention and P&A sealing applications."

The Perth facility features full heater and bismuth-based alloy production, two major components of Wel-lok technology, as well as final assembly. It also provides a focus for regional business development and a field operations base.

The state-of-the-art demonstration room allows operators to get hands-on with Wel-lok and other innovative BiSN technologies, facilitating a collaborative environment for planning plug and abandonment, intervention, and completion solutions.

In early 2023, BiSN appointed Andy Vigor as Regional Business Development Advisor in Perth. Previously, Vigor worked for many years in Operations, Sales and Marketing roles in the Middle East and Asia Pacific Region. During this period, he was based in Jakarta, Australia, Singapore, and Dubai. He then returned to Perth for 20 years. With more than 28 years of experience, Andy has a very broad understanding of the market, customer challenges and requirements, which places him in an ideal position to support BiSN customers both in Australasia and throughout the region.

"With the geographical size of the Australasia and the Asia Pacific region, response time and the ever-increasing cost of logistics is critical to our customers," said Vigor. "We can now provide customized, engineered products and solutions locally, which will assist BiSN in its efforts to achieve service excellence for all of our regional customers."

Before the facility opened in Australia, lead times due to shipping from the US or UK could be prohibitive for operators and their fast-moving intervention needs. The opening of this facility

removes that barrier, simplifying the deployment plans in this region.

"By opening a facility in Perth, it allows us to be more responsive to the needs of operators in Australia," said Adrian Weiss,

BiSN Senior Vice President of Operations. "The new facility is a continuation of BiSN's commitment to increasing our global capability. We have listened to our clients in this region, and we are responding to help them seal safer and protect forever."



Langtree reports "a very positive year" despite political and economic turbulence

WARRINGTON-based commercial property company Langtree has reported 'a very positive year' despite political and economic turbulence, although it is not expecting stability to return to the markets before the general election.

In its annual report for the year 2022/23, Langtree Chairman Tim Johnston points to an increase in profit pre-valuation movements of 73 per cent, to £1.3m (£750k, 21/22) and an increase in estimated rental value of £2m, to £30m for assets owned or under management.

Other key metrics for the company, which specialises in joint ventures and partnerships with local authorities as well as providing asset management services to institutional landlords, include:

- Almost 3m square feet of property under ownership or management
- 89 per cent average occupancy (92 per cent)
- A modest increase in net asset value to £16.8m (£16.4m)
- Development activity commencing or continuing on sites across the north west and midlands, with sites under ownership and management in Yorkshire and the south west.

"Given the headwinds out there, this is a very strong set of results," said Mr Johnston.

"If you take valuations, for example, the industry has seen a general reported downturn of 15 per cent, but Langtree has experienced only a modest 3 per cent decrease in values overall. That's testament to the quality of our portfolio and partnerships, as well as past sound judgement."

Mr Johnston also reported that the company continues to bring forward developments across its joint ventures and asset base, despite current market conditions. Projects coming forward include:

- A planning application for a 1.6m square foot second phase of the giant Parkside logistics and advanced manufacturing development in St Helens – a key component of the new Liverpool Freepoint.
- A further phase of the campus at Sci-Tech Daresbury in Halton, with tenders out to build a speculative 40,000 square foot laboratory and 20,000 square foot office building.
- Development of 190,000 square feet of industrial units at Hollinwood Junction in Oldham.
- Refurbishment and redevelopment of the 80,000 square foot St James Business Centre in Warrington into the new Warrington Digital Hub.

"It's been a busy and challenging year, but one we anticipated," said group chief executive John Downes.

"There are many things that contribute to allowing a business like ours to continue forward, chief among them being the quality of our team, and the commitment of our partners and clients. My thanks go to all for their dedication and support."

Mr Downes points to the confirmation that Sci-Tech Daresbury was announced as one of the government's new Investment Zones as helping aid its continued development.

"Part of our goal is regeneration and job creation, and Sci-Tech Daresbury continues to deliver on both fronts. It is an excellent partnership between Langtree, UKRI and Halton Council which has so far created more than 1,000 new jobs. The campus continues to go from strength to strength, giving us every encouragement to start the next phase of development in the spring which, when

completed, will mean that almost 200,000 square feet of new space will have been delivered. Design development for the next phase thereafter is already underway."

The company announced that it was also continuing to progress its charitable support as part of its wider ESG programme, with Wire Regeneration appointing Warrington Youth Zone as its chosen charity for the next three years and Sci-Tech Daresbury appointing the Children's Adventure Farm Trust as its new charity partner following the success of its 4-year partnership with Stick 'n' Step which comes to a close this year.

Concluding his chairman's statement, Mr Johnston noted: "I feel that we are well placed to have another positive year with a sound business plan and solid finances."



■ John & Tim and Project Violet at Daresbury

It's a full house for X-Press Legal in England & Wales

WARRINGTON headquartered X-Press Legal Services is now officially the largest independent company providing property searches and services across the whole of England & Wales – which is great news for conveyancers.

It's also great news for X-Press, who now have complete local coverage of all areas, with the recent opening of their final available territories. Dorset has been acquired by Linda Mannion, already a successful owner of adjoining territory, X-Press Wiltshire, South Gloucestershire and Swindon, with the Northumberland region now in the expert hands of new owner Sean Collier.

This widespread coverage underpins the commitment of X-Press Legal Services to providing the very best of personal service and local support for their clients in every corner of England & Wales.

Lynne Lister, Managing Director of X-Press Legal Services commented: "We are thrilled to say that we have a full list of local offices to offer our services. At X-Press we have invested in our exceptional technology and digital support, but we are more than that, we are real people who are there to guide and support conveyancers, essentially helping to make their working lives

easier."

"At X-Press, we understand how solicitors would ideally prefer to have someone they can speak to and who they can rely on to produce their property searches and reports. We have local people who know their area well and have in-depth local knowledge and expertise with particular attention to providing clients with a first-class service."

X-Press Legal Services continues to set the benchmark for quality, reliability, and expertise in the property search and conveyancing industry. With a widespread network and a comprehensive suite of services, the company remains at the forefront, catering to the diverse needs of its conveyancing clients nationwide.

It provides a wraparound service including residential & commercial searches, pre & post completion services, cyber security, and compliance products. The company delivers thousands of searches and reports to the conveyancing sector annually and works with over 500 legal practices.

For more information about X-Press Legal Services in your area, please visit <https://xpresslegal.co.uk> or call 01925 393333



Specialist Microsoft Cloud & Cyber Security provider 'labdesk' arrives in Warrington

WARRINGTON-based labdesk have launched a cloud + cyber security platform & services dedicated to enabling innovative teams working within regulated sectors.

Offering a suite of managed services across Cloud, IT and Cyber Security to enable teams within science, aerospace, engineering and clean energy sectors (and associated supply chains) to grow and stay safe by leveraging cloud technology.

labdesk was founded by Mike Douglass & James Rooney, IT professionals based at Birchwood Park. Both co-founders have many years experience providing managed IT & technology services within the clean energy and engineering sectors.

The team at labdesk believe that leveraging secure cloud technology is the key to growth. They have developed the concept 'technology value drivers' – taking their partners on a journey from technology pain, viewing IT as a cost to changing their partners perception of technology to be an investment. Adding value to a business – supporting growth, boosting productivity, enhancing innovation and protecting assets.

Mike Douglass, labdesk Co-Founder comments, "Innovative teams and sectors are the driving force making the world a better place, from advancing science, to improving how we live. With the fast-paced world of innovation and business, its important teams within these sectors have access to world class technology.

labdesk is cloud + cyber security first, meaning all of our services, team & support are built to enable

a modern-day business to grow, increase efficiencies and ensure security is optimised at every level."

labdesk have curated a suite of cloud offerings built in partnership with the Microsoft Azure & 365 technology stacks. Teaming up with leading technology vendors to optimise the partners experience – Allowing rapid deployment, scalable services, improved reliability, and world-class support.

James Rooney added: "We are building a brand with a purpose, to make a positive impact to the businesses and teams we work with. We are obsessed with partner experience and will be focused on delivering both XLA's (experience

level agreements) & SLA's (service level agreements). Whilst we recognise it's important to offer solid SLA's, we strongly believe a focus on partner experience can elevate the businesses we work with, providing relevant tools and technology to enable them to do what they do best. A positive team is a happy team, which in turn is a productive team!"

Martin O'Rourke, Commercial Director at Birchwood Park, added: "We are delighted to welcome labdesk to Birchwood Park. This is a testament to the Park's appeal, following Scientific Consultancy, Quintessa's recent relocation to 401 last December, as well as Galliford Try earlier in Q4.

Underlining Birchwood Park's commitment to sustainability and workplace wellbeing, Martin emphasised the alignment of labdesk's values with the Park's own: "labdesk's new office has been created with flexible working in mind, providing both current and future staff the opportunity to benefit from adaptable working hours.

"Additionally, labdesk staff can take full advantage of versatile meeting and co-working spaces in the EngineRooms, ensuring the evolving needs of staff can be consistently met."

For more information about the labdesk mission and impact they are making with their partners you can visit: www.labdesk.co.uk



Trinity Office Park welcomes Skillray Transport Services

TRINITY Office Park in Warrington has welcomed its first new occupier following a rebrand through Tandem Investments earlier this year.

The scheme comprises three office buildings which previously housed construction group Galliford Try and EOS Solutions. Following occupier departures at the start of 2023 however, Tandem Investments, alongside its property marketing team, set out to reposition the scheme within the local office market in order to attract new occupiers.

Richard Rees, director, and asset manager at Tandem Investments commented, "Trinity is delighted to attract its first occupier since the scheme rebrand. Skillray has purchased our 9,844 sq ft building, plus a small storage building, for their own occupation

which is something we were always prepared to entertain.

"Looking forward, we have almost completed a comprehensive refurbishment of Building Two, which is a 10,162 sq ft self-contained building, that has been specified to a high standard. We are working towards an A Rating Energy Performance Certification and anticipate the leasehold demand in Warrington turning its head to this property. We can accommodate occupier requirements from 2,000 sq ft upwards".

Simon Roddam, head of agency at BE Group and joint agent on Trinity commented, "On average 65 percent of office transactions in the Birchwood area come from local occupiers relocating within this micro-location. With the current flight-to-quality market

trend, and a need for flexibility, we feel Trinity ticks a lot of boxes and will provide some very good quality office supply to a buoyant part of the Warrington office market".

Trinity Office Park in Warrington now has Building Two (10,162 sq ft) and Building Three (4,459

sq ft) on the open market To Let, although the current owners are prepared to consider interest from occupiers looking to buy their own office building.

BE Group and Cushman & Wakefield acted as joint agents on behalf of Tandem Investments.



Get travel planning help for your organisation

TOWNS and cities are changing, and the way people work in them. How people get to work is changing too. Warrington Borough Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) identifies the aspiration for Warrington to be a thriving, attractive and well-connected place.

The way we travel around Warrington has a huge impact on the character of our town and the way we feel about the place that we live. Providing a place where more people choose to walk, cycle and use public transport will help Warrington to significantly increase the figure of 10.5% commuters that currently use active travel modes to commute.

Promoting smarter travel choices forms a vital element of this, reducing congestion and harmful vehicle emissions whilst improving health. Smarter Travel is about finding efficient and effective ways to support people and provide travel choices.

The Travel Choices Team is working with employers and businesses across Warrington to deliver a travel plan service and provide practical support to help encourage their employees to travel more sustainably. Travel plans identify transport impacts to identify targets and create measures to encourage sustainable and active travel.

Encouraging people who travel to their place of work to use greener and active travel choices can have huge benefits to an organisation, as

well as their employees. Whether you are a small business or a large multi-site company it's a good idea to create and implement a travel plan.

A well created and thoughtful travel plan can potentially reduce the number of staff driving to work by 10%, which may not sound much, but for a firm with 1000 staff significantly reduces the number of car miles commuted each year, providing less congestion, carbon emissions, pollution and noise making local roads safer.

Create transport choice

By creating easy alternatives to driving, businesses can automatically encourage some car users to switch their method of transport. From well-lit walkways, installing secure bike shelters and offering discounted public transport tickets makes a tangible alternative to four wheels possible and encourages drivers to make the leap to a more sustainable form of transport, improving a business's carbon footprint.

Get the workforce on board

In order, to ensure that your travel plan reaches its potential, it is important to get wider support from your workforce. The best ways to do this are to provide them with evidence that the business takes the travel plan seriously and that it isn't just a flash in the pan and that you explain to them exactly how they will benefit from it. The benefits can range from improved health and wellbeing to more money in

their pockets. Additionally, the plan needs to be fair. Some people won't be able to change their mode of travel because of their circumstances.

Travel Planning Policy

The need to manage transport in new developments is included within national, regional and local policy. The need to reduce car dependency, increase travel choices and encourage sustainable and active travel is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework which states that all developments which generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan.

Resources and support for business

The Travel Choices team help

businesses make the most of Transport for Warrington by:

- Providing information about different travel options available
- Delivering travel choice initiatives
- Providing options that reduce the need to travel
- Promoting sustainable transport travel options
- Managing public transport to meet your business requirements

They can also support you if you are moving your business, contact the team for help: activetravel@warrington.gov.uk



New returners programme in Warrington to drive gender equality in construction

A NEW returners programme is being launched in Warrington to help improve gender imbalances across the construction industry.

The programme is a partnership between Wates and STEM Returners and will support people who have had a career break back to employment.

The programme at the Wates' Warrington site will include opportunities across Wates' construction business, including in site manager, project manager and project engineer roles.

Return-to-work specialists STEM Returners will source the candidates and provide career coaching and mentoring.

The new programme follows the success of the first partnership between Wates and STEM Returners last year which helped six returners back to industry.

One of those people was Anwesha Gupta, who was able to secure a role as a Bid Manager after a two-year career break to look after her young daughter after moving to the UK. Prior to finding the opportunity at Wates, Anwesha, found it difficult to reach recruiters and secure an interview through standard recruitment channels, despite her 11 years' experience

in the civil and structural industry.

"Most of the time I was told that they saved my resume for future reference. It was tricky to secure a further interview as I didn't have prior UK experience," she said.

"There was a point when I started to feel that it was tough to get a suitable role after a career break. But with the help and connection of STEM Returners I am now able to move forward with my career.

"There are certain circumstances in people's lives where they need to interrupt their professional journey in order to take care of other things such as family life and health. But that doesn't mean the end of their career."

Annual research from STEM Returners (The STEM Returners Index) highlights the challenges people face when trying to return to work following a career break, with recruitment bias shown to be the main barrier to entry.

STEM Returners' programmes aim to eliminate these barriers by giving candidates real work experience and mentoring during their placement, as well as supporting them to seamlessly adjust to life back in work.

Natalie Desty, Director of STEM

Returners said: "Stories like Anwesha's are very common. Despite excellent skills, knowledge and experience, a gap on a CV puts you at a disadvantage, which shouldn't be the case.

"We are delighted to be continuing our partnership with Wates, who share in our commitment to improving the way the engineering and construction industries view people who take a career break and increase equity in STEM. Only by working together, will we make vital changes in recruitment practices, to help those who are finding it challenging to return to the sector and bridge the well-known skills gap while improving diversity and inclusion."

Nikunj Upadhyay, Inclusion and Diversity Director at Wates Group, said: "We are delighted to continue our partnership with STEM Returners to ensure talented individuals are not held back from pursuing a meaningful career of choice. We look forward to welcoming them into our business. For us, this programme is a bridge where experience meets opportunity, paving the way for a brighter, more inclusive, and diverse tomorrow."

Since STEM Returners first launched in 2017, more than 450 STEM Returners candidates have joined programmes across the UK. To view STEM Returners' opportunities, visit www.stemreturners.com/placements/



Redrow launches search for longest ever resident ahead of 50th anniversary

HOME BUILDER Redrow has launched a quest to find the longest standing owner of a Redrow home to help mark a monumental business milestone.

As it celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, the premium housebuilder, who built its first homes in the early 1980s in North Wales and its North West heartland, is on the hunt for original and long-term residents to share their experiences and unique stories. For those who enter, the longest standing Redrow customer(s) will win a prize of £500 as a thank you for telling their story.

Founded in 1974, Redrow was created by Liverpool born Steve Morgan CBE with just £5,000, loaned to him by his father. With hard work and dedication, five years later the company expanded from civil engineering into main contract building, seeing Redrow embark on its first housing development in Denbigh, North Wales.

After that, the company quickly expanded into the homes sector, with early developments across North West England including in Chester, Backford, Warrington and Northwich in Cheshire; Greasby, Heswall, Moreton and Bromborough on the Wirral; and Belle Vue, Bredbury, Romiley, Cheadle and Sale in Greater Manchester, cementing its reputation as a high-quality homebuilder.

Steve's entrepreneurial spirit runs

through the company to this day, making Redrow one of the most successful and forward-looking housebuilders in the country.

Most recently, Redrow became the first large housebuilder to introduce air source heat pumps into all of its new developments with underfloor heating as standard, reaffirming its commitment to creating future-fit homes, with greener, more efficient features, a top priority for homebuyers according to recent research.

Over the years, Redrow has built more than 120,000 homes, housing the equivalent population of a major city like Nottingham, and now has twelve regional divisions across England and Wales including the NW division, which operates in the North West of England and North Wales.

Although Redrow's first scheme in Denbigh may have consisted of just 36 bungalows, it has evolved its home designs over the years and continuously innovated building everything from apartments to penthouses, family houses and first buyer homes.

Today, it has developments located across Cheshire, including garden villages in Woodford, Ledsham, Chester and Daresbury, as well as ventures in Hartford, Nantwich, Knutsford and Congleton.

For Redrow, it is the people and communities that are at the heart of their business. In fact, the NW division has voluntarily

gifted more than £165,000 to the neighbourhoods in which it builds in the last 11 years through its community funds. This is over and above the statutory investment from us, linked to planning consents, such as contributions to education, healthcare, public transport and affordable housing.

With over 2,000 colleagues with a combined service of over 11,000 years supporting customers up and down the country, the housebuilder will be visiting developments across the country to connect and celebrate its 50th anniversary with the people who have made its houses homes across the years.

Anna Evans-Kerr, sales director for Redrow NW, said: "As we enter this exciting year, commemorating our 50th anniversary, we can't wait to celebrate with all the people who make Redrow what it is. If you've been a Redrow homeowner since your very first home purchase or

recently upsized into a new energy efficient home with us, we hope you will join us in the celebrations.

"As part of our 50th anniversary, we want to hear from you, whether that's an interesting homebuying tale or a story of your life in one of our homes. And if you think you may be the Redrow homeowner who has lived with us the longest, we encourage you to get in touch!"

If you think you've lived in a Redrow home for the longest time, send your entry to communications@redrow.co.uk.

Please note, all successful participants must be willing to be photographed and have their story featured across Redrow channels alongside potential media placement. £500 will be awarded to one homeowner who has lived in Redrow properties the longest. For T&Cs please visit www.redrow.co.uk/competitions#Anniversary



United Utilities commits to largest ever support package for customers

UNITED Utilities has promised to bring forward its largest ever support package for customers facing difficulties paying their bills if its ambitious plans are approved by the regulator.

Speaking at the company's fifth Affordability Summit in Warrington, Michelle Atkinson, Revenue Director for United Utilities, outlined that its current support package would be more than doubled.

As part of its draft business plan for the period 2025 – 2030, when United Utilities is proposing to invest a record £13.7 billion, the company has promised to help one in six customers through a £525m package.

The North West's water company currently supports more than 200,000 customers a year through a variety of payment support schemes. The company saw an increase of 15% in people completing 'Struggling to pay forms' on their website in 2023.

Held in Warrington, the Affordability Summit gave attendees from councils, charities, energy companies, housing associations and others, the

chance to share experiences and discuss ways for their organisations to be more joined up when it comes to helping people across the region.

As well as promoting the forthcoming investment and support package as part of the new business plan, United Utilities also highlighted the comprehensive package of support it offers, the benefits of water meters and how using less water can also reduce energy bills. Guest speakers came from the credit reference agency Equifax and Money Wellness.

Michelle Atkinson, Revenue Director at United Utilities, said: "We know that many customers are finding it tough and we're continuing to see an increase in the number of people coming to us for support to pay their water bills.

"That's why we're proposing our biggest ever support package that will allow us to help even more customers from next year. It was great to be able to share our plans at the latest Affordability Summit, whilst reiterating what we can already offer customers.

"These cross-sector events are

crucial for bringing partners together to ensure we can offer as much support as possible to those who need it."

Ofwat will review the proposals from United Utilities and give its draft response by June 2024. The final plans will be agreed by December 2024.



Young Professionals now an 'Award Winning Digital Marketing Agency'

PARTNERS Kieran Wallworth & Danielle Littler started their graduate careers in Warrington after university, but soon realised this didn't allow for the flexibility and freedom they desired to travel.

In October 2018, whilst sitting around Kieran's parents dining room table, they incorporated Attention Digital Marketing Limited and decided to dive head first into the world of self-employment. Kieran had already left his graduate job and Danielle followed shortly, taking her previous employer on as their very first client, who they still work closely with now 4 years later.

In order to provide the best level of service and expertise, the couple invested in an online programme (Affluent Academy) to give them the tools needed to launch their agency and complement their university education.

Then after the first lockdown in May 2020, they invested in a permanent office at Regus in Birchwood to give them a consistent space to work from and the ability to socialise with other local business owners.

Attention Digital recently

became an award-winning marketing agency, recognised by the Affluent Academy as an agency consistently generating exceptional client results.

When founding Attention Digital, the goal was clear – to create a marketing agency that businesses wanted to work with, with a clear focus on exceptional client results and relationships.

You see, marketing has a bad reputation. Frequently, the couple hear horror stories from clients' past experiences with marketing agencies who overpromise and underdeliver, make clients feel uneasy with lack of communication and who inflate metrics to create false successes.

Over the years, the couple have worked with a number of local businesses in and around Warrington, as well as companies from across the world, helping them to grow their businesses by leveraging digital marketing.

This award, their results and ultimately their client retention is a sign that they are doing something right and they're not planning on stopping here.

Kieran & Danielle said: "We are on

a mission to change the agency space through trust, transparency and hard work. Business owners deserve the opportunity to work

with marketing agencies who are invested in their growth, as opposed to charging for services that only line their own pockets."



BT Group to recruit 70 apprentices and graduates

BT Group has announced plans to recruit 70 apprentices and graduates across the North West for its September intake, with roles available in Warrington, Manchester and Accrington.

The company will recruit talent across areas as diverse as software engineering, customer service, applied research, data analytics and cyber-security to support the UK's fast-growing digital sectors.

Of the roles announced, 26 will be in Warrington, 31 in Manchester and 13 will be based in Accrington.

The new Manchester roles will be based BT Group's state-of-the-art new office currently under development at Four New Bailey close to the city's Spinningfields business district.

Hannah Rashidi undertook a Chartered Management Degree Apprenticeship with BT Group before securing a role in Learning and Development. She said: "The main benefits of an apprenticeship to me are that if you learn best by understanding a concept and seeing it play out in front of you, that's how an apprenticeship works so an apprenticeship is probably the best learning style for you.

"BT is a particularly good place to do an apprenticeship with because we have a strong early careers community and competitive opportunities to learn and upskill. Even better, the nature of our work touches on aspects of everyone's lives.

"This means that your work always

has an impact on somebody, and that feeling fires me up. Best of all, you're treated like an asset from day one."

BT Group is one of the UK's largest private sector apprenticeship employers and has recruited more than 3,000 apprentices and graduates over the past five years. The company offers apprenticeships ranging from level two, the equivalent to GCSE standard through to level seven, a master's degree.

In 2023, BT Group was ranked second in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the UK and as part of its Manifesto for responsible, inclusive, and sustainable growth the company has pledged to build a more diverse talent pool.

Elaine Bergin, Director of Colleague Experience, BT Group said: "As one of the largest private sector employers of apprentices and graduates in the UK, we continue to recruit and attract brilliant people into our business and we offer unparalleled opportunities to those who join us.

"As we build a better BT Group, we're developing a pipeline of future talent to help grow our business, deliver great outcomes for our customers and to help underpin economic growth in the UK."

For more information on how to apply for an apprenticeship or graduate job at BT Group, visit: <https://www.bt.com/earlycareers>



Support the local climate emergency response

Climate change is a global challenge that requires action from people everywhere.

The role of Warrington's Climate Emergency Commission is to lead the conversation on climate change at the local level and encourage action in response.

To stay up to date with news, events, and actions you can take in support of the local climate emergency response, sign up to their newsletter.

You can sign up using the link: <http://eepurl.com/iILknk>





No Brainer lands global B Corp certification

WARRINGTON-based search-driven content agency No Brainer has been awarded B Corp Certification status, becoming one of the first agencies of its type to secure the global accreditation.

B Corp recognises companies with a shared mission to use 'business for good' and the Cheshire-based digital marketing agency received the certificate after months of assessment.

Across the UK there are more than 1,600 companies with B Corp status. The certification requires businesses to pass a series of rigorous tests, measuring a company's entire social and

environmental impact.

Aspects such as operations, ownership, staff pay and community engagement are all factored into the assessment, with companies continually measured to ensure they drive continuous improvements in order to retain the coveted accreditation.

Lee Cullen, Director and co-founder at No Brainer, said: "B Corp is built on the mission of using business for good and when we first came across it a couple of years ago, we felt like it reflected exactly the type of business we are.

"There's been a huge shift in

businesses focusing on their purpose and looking to embrace better Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices. The beauty of B Corp for me is that it brings all of those things together, creating a growing community of like-minded businesses sharing the same values.

"The assessment phase is very comprehensive, with a high threshold required before you can obtain the certification. We scored well in lots of key areas, so are all very proud to have landed B Corp status.

"The other important factor in this assessment is there is always more you can do. We've identified a

few things we can be even better at, so the focus now is on making sure we continue to improve as a business for our people, our partners and our planet."

No Brainer achieved a score of 87.4 in the assessment phase, coming well above the required threshold of 80.

The securing of B Corp Status comes shortly after No Brainer received national recognition at the end of 2023 from Great Places to Work – a global authority on workplace culture. No Brainer achieved an average score of 96% in the assessment, which measures employee satisfaction and happiness.

Miller Homes appoints new North West Marketing Manager

MILLER Homes, a leading homebuilder based in Warrington, has appointed Helen Peacock as new Marketing Manager for the North West region of the business.

Helen brings a wealth of experience to her new role, having previously served as the Digital Marketing Manager for Pareto and as a Senior Digital Marketing & Creative Officer at Transport for the North for over six years. Helen holds a bachelor's degree from UCLAN, showcasing her strong foundation and depth of experience in the field.

With a remarkable track record in driving successful digital strategies and engaging audiences effectively, Helen's passion for creating exceptional online experiences aligns seamlessly with Miller Homes' commitment to building better places for communities. Her leadership, marked by organisational prowess and problem-solving skills, promises to bring growth in audience engagement and brand

transformation.

The appointment comes as Miller Homes is set to complete on a number of land purchases across the North West over the next few months, marking an innovative and progressive start to the year. The homebuilder has recently announced the purchase of Lunts Heath Rise, a 328-scheme in Widnes.

Of her appointment, Helen Peacock said: "Together with Miller Homes, I'm looking forward to embarking on an exciting journey, creating better homes for customers and fostering thriving communities in line with the company's vision of building better places where people and the planet prosper."

Clare Noakes, North West Sales Director added "We are delighted to welcome Helen to the team as the new Marketing Manager. Helen's extensive experience in digital marketing and creative will help delivering exceptional

customer experiences, as well as reach all the right audiences for our new developments. The collaboration promises a dynamic fusion of innovation, growth, and positive brand identity under Helen's leadership, marking a significant milestone for Miller Homes in the evolving digital world."

In her role, Helen will oversee

new site set-ups, demonstrating a hands-on approach in crafting compelling copy, managing website content, and coordinating launch events. Managing all commercial marketing activities within the Region, Helen will lead development strategies, campaign management, and agency relationships, ensuring alignment with brand guidelines and budget expectations.



Tourism and council leaders says tax-free shopping for EU visitors would inject 'hundreds of millions of pounds' into region

TOURIST, business and council leaders in Cheshire and Warrington have penned an open letter to Chancellor Jeremy Hunt calling for the reintroduction of tax-free shopping for EU visitors – to create thousands of jobs and inject "hundreds of millions of pounds of income" into the region's economy.

The letter, produced by the region's official tourism body, Marketing Cheshire, with the support and signatures of sector and council partners, stresses the move would act as an "adrenaline-kick" to accelerate the upward post-pandemic growth in a visitor economy worth £3.41bn and attracting 50million visitors a year "at a time when operators are contending with cost pressures, staffing and skills shortages, and increasing global competition for tourism".

Making the case the letter, sent on Wednesday 24th January states that restoring tax-free shopping for EU visitors in the Spring Budget would "provide an enormous stimulus" to the visitor economy across a region not just blessed with world class attractions like Chester Zoo, Tatton Park and muddled mazes of BeWILDerwood but diverse shopping destinations ranging from designer outlet Cheshire Oaks in Ellesmere Port to the historic 13th Century Chester Rows – home of the Three Old Arches in Bridge Street which believed to be the oldest surviving shop face in Britain.

The letter points to evidence from Visit Britain that shows that EU visitors are more likely to make repeated visits to the UK and travel outside of London than long

haul visitors.

Urging the Chancellor to act, the Marketing Cheshire letter stresses that reintroducing VAT free shopping for EU visitors "would bring hundreds of millions of pounds of income into the North West, into Cheshire and Warrington, invigorating our economy, safeguarding employment and creating thousands of new jobs".

The letter signed by Louise Gittins, Leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council; Cllr Hans Mundry, Leader of Warrington Borough Council; Trevor Brocklebank, Deputy Chair of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership and Chair of Marketing Cheshire; Eleanor Underhill, Chair of Destination Cheshire; Colin Potts, Chair of Destination Chester; Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive, Warrington & Vale Royal Chamber of Commerce; Carl Critchlow, Chief Executive Officer, Chester BID; Ellis Wardle, Chair, Northwich Business Improvement District; Terry Hayward, Chief Executive, North Cheshire Chamber; Paul Colman, Chief Executive, South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Debbie Bryce, Chief Executive Officer, West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce; Joanna Davies, Chair, Wilmslow Business Improvement District and Dave McNicholl, Chair, Warrington Business Improvement District adds: "As we are no longer part of the EU, we could become the only European country where 447million EU residents can shop tax-free, massively increasing our appeal to overseas visitors."

The open letter (attached) comes amid a national lobbying effort.

The Association of International Retail believe abolishing VAT on shopping for EU visitors would be worth "an additional £10 billion pounds in spending by EU visitors annually" and generating £1bn additional VAT for the Treasury.

Carl Critchlow, Chief Executive of Chester BID said: "Chester BID proudly represents 500 diverse and wonderful businesses in a city that welcomes 8million visitors a year – including many from across Europe, so we would fully back anything that would boost the economy, jobs and strengthen our

globally-renowned offering."

Trevor Brocklebank, Chair of Marketing Cheshire and Deputy Chair of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership said, "The Cheshire and Warrington visitor economy is continuing its upward growth and there is considerable work taking place in our region to improve our visitor offer, accessibility and promotion but it is clear that the Chancellor can accelerate that growth by restoring tax-free shopping for our EU visitors."



■ Trevor Brocklebank.

UK Atomic Energy Authority awards Jacobs with funding boost

THE United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) has increased its funding for Birchwood-based Jacobs' research into lithium, a key ingredient for fusion power reactors.

Under its Fusion Industry Programme, UKAEA has awarded £1.46 million for Phase 2 of the project to extend the liquid lithium testing facility at Jacobs' Technology & Innovation Centre at Birchwood Park in Warrington.

It was one of 18 projects which received initial Phase 1 funding at the end of last year and has now been selected among a handful of these to progress to Phase 2.

Jacobs Managing Consultant Ryan Morris said: "Based on the work we did under Phase 1, UKAEA

has recognized why a facility like this is needed. "Our research aims to fill many knowledge gaps surrounding the properties of lithium, an alkali metal critical for breeding the hydrogen isotope tritium, an essential fuel for fusion reactors. Its use presents several challenges though, including material compatibility and interactions of lithium with tritium.

"We will continue to develop our ability to handle lithium safely and we will also be able to test materials for fusion reactors at high temperatures and with known impurities. The facility and associated know-how will provide important groundwork for future projects, including fusion reactor design and will be a new and exciting capability for us at

Birchwood Park, complementing existing fusion capabilities."

Phase 2 will involve the acquisition of a new glovebox, a lithium purification system and a series of new test vessels and includes testing of materials under fusion relevant conditions.

The UKAEA funding program is designed to tackle specific challenges linked to the commercialization of fusion energy, from novel materials and manufacturing techniques through to innovative heating and cooling systems.





■ Erin Duffy (centre), with (L-R) Liz Jones, National Care Forum; Martin Rix, Belong Chief Executive; Rebecca Woodcock, Belong Head of Operations; Sue Goldsmith, Belong Chief Operating Officer.

Dementia specialist celebrates best of the best in social care

THE spirit of compassion and devotion is well and truly thriving in Warrington as carers at dementia specialist, Belong, scooped accolades at its annual Champion Awards.

Colleagues Erin Duffy, Samantha Smith, Caroline Clifton and Lisa Armstrong were all recognised for their exceptional performance supporting older people to live an active and fulfilling later life.

Winners from the Latchford village and its corresponding home care service, Belong at Home, collected their trophies to rousing applause from colleagues from across the region at the iconic Hallé St Peter's venue in Manchester. Later, they relished the chance to let their hair down and celebrate success with their peers.

Support worker, Erin Duffy, was named Newcomer of the Year, having been nominated after only two months at the organisation since joining as part of its ongoing

recruitment drive. In addition to her employment, the student donates her time outside of classes to the village's customers, catching up with them and even taking them out for lunch – a feat leading judges to describe her as a 'truly inspiring person'.

From the community team, Belong at Home support worker, Samantha Smith, impressed with her dedication to her clients living locally to earn her the Compassion Award. For a gentleman without any family, she put on a surprise 80th birthday party for him, inviting all the village customers and colleagues to share the milestone with him. Judges summarised her as 'a wonderfully caring and compassionate person.'

Meanwhile, recruitment manager, Lisa Armstrong won the Central Services Award for successfully implementing an enhanced recruitment platform, helping to engage the sector's very best

talent to the organisation. Judges described her communication skills as 'incredibly impressive', whilst her work coordinating T Level students sets the sector up for future prosperity whilst giving young people the opportunity to earn hands-on experience for their social care qualification.

Finally, admiral nurse, Caroline Clifton was named Mentor of the Year for her role in developing the skills and confidence of colleagues when supporting people with dementia. She also co-leads the village's monthly dementia cafe, B's Cafe, a complimentary service offering non-residents and their carers guidance and advice.

Winners were determined by a panel of independent judges who interviewed finalists chosen from nominations from customers, relatives and colleagues. All were presented with a handmade trophy, designed by Belong customer, Beryl Cadman, as part

of a creative competition for the special occasion.

Summarising the event, Belong's chief executive, Martin Rix, said: "It's been another year of hard work and dedication from our teams and so we're pleased to give them the recognition they deserve. To all our finalists and winners: thank you and congratulations for making Belong the best place for our customers to live and for our colleagues to work."

The news follows a year of successes in 2023, with Belong picking up national accolades at the Great British Care Awards, LaingBuisson Awards, and The Dementia Care Awards, amongst others. Meanwhile, its community home care service, Belong at Home, was crowned first place for Homecare.co.uk's Top 20 Large and Mid-size Home Care Groups and is the only not-for-profit operator to have placed every year since 2018.

Law firm Gordons advises on Iceland's new Warrington distribution facility

LAW firm Gordons has advised Iceland Foods on its new 505,000 sq ft distribution facility in Warrington.

Iceland has recently completed a 20-year lease on the facility at Omega West logistics park and intends to use the space as a regional distribution centre.

Omega West is the 184-acre extension of Omega Business Park, currently the largest mixed-use development site in the North West covering around 2.5m sq ft of logistics space. Current occupiers at the scheme includes Asda, Royal Mail and Amazon.

Founded in 1970 and with its head

office in Deeside, Flintshire, Iceland has been a Gordons client since 2015. The British food retailer has nearly 1,000 stores throughout the UK.

Commercial property partner Sarah Ratcliffe advised Iceland on securing the lease for its new distribution centre and worked closely on the deal with Iceland's property and acquisitions director, Simon Anderson.

Sarah said: "Iceland is a long-standing client and it's great to support its continued growth by advising on this new regional distribution centre in Warrington.

"The company is one of the UK's largest privately owned businesses. Its new facility will only strengthen

this position and gives Iceland a distribution centre which will enable further growth and successes."



Kickstart your health in 2024

A new year can bring a fresh start - and it's a great time to incorporate some healthy changes into your lifestyle. Setting little steps to achieve throughout the year can be an effective and sustainable way to achieve a healthier lifestyle. There are lots of ways to become healthier this year:

Get an NHS Health Check

The NHS Health Check is a free check-up of your overall health. It can tell whether you're at higher risk of getting certain health problems, such as:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Stroke

During the check-up, you'll discuss how to reduce your risk of these conditions, including where to get support. People aged over 65, will

also be told how to reduce their risk of developing dementia.

If your employees are aged 40-74, and do not have a pre-existing health condition they should be eligible for an NHS Health Check. In Warrington, these are offered every 5 years by local GPs.

What is involved in an NHS Health Check?

The NHS Health Check will be carried by a healthcare professional and normally takes 20 to 30 minutes. It includes blood pressure, weight and height measurements, a cholesterol test and possibly a blood sugar test. This will be followed by some questions about your health and lifestyle.

The NHS Health Check results are usually given during the appointment, which involves a discussion of the results and the provision of advice and support. More information about the NHS

Health Checks can found at www.healthcheck.nhs.uk

What are the benefits for employers?

NHS Health Checks help support employees to stay healthy and can help to reduce days lost to sickness through early identification of possible health risks and better management of conditions which are identified.

Get Active

Physical activity is not only good for your body but it's also great for your mind. A range of tips and tools employers can use to support the health and wellbeing of their employees through physical activity can be found on the Sports England website. Visit www.sportengland.org/funds-and-campaigns/active-employee-toolkit

Livewire's Lifestyles services provide local support and help with losing weight and getting back into exercise. Visit www.livewirewarrington.co.uk/lifestyles/ for more information.

Eat Well

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health and can help you feel your best. Information and guidance around eating a healthy, balanced diet can be found on the NHS website, visit www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well

If you need help with food, there are a number of foodbanks across Warrington, which you can view on Warrington Borough Council's cost of living support page - www.warrington.gov.uk/cost-living-support

Drink Less alcohol

Cutting back on drinking will help you have better sleep, save money, and improve your mental health. Visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/ for support and information.

If you think you have a problem with alcohol, Warrington's local drug and alcohol treatment service, Change Grow Live ('CGL') works with anyone looking to make positive changes relating to their alcohol use. CGL works with individuals to assess their requirements, plan their treatment and support them to address their problems and achieve their personal goals. Visit: www.changegrowlive.org/pathways-to-recovery-warrington/info

Stop Smoking

Stopping smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. You'll have more energy, feel healthier and also save money. Make 2024 the year you quit. Help and support with quitting smoking can be found at www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/. Local help and support for quitting smoking can be found on LiveWire's website - www.livewirewarrington.co.uk/lifestyles/stop-smoking/

Take care of your mind and look after your mental health

There are things you can do to reduce the risk of developing dementia. These include keeping active, eating healthily and exercising your mind. Find out more about dementia and managing your risk - www.alzheimers.org.uk/

It's important to look after your mental health. We all deserve to enjoy life and feel good about ourselves but sometimes life can be tough. If you think you need help with your mental health, visit 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

You can also visit www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/ for advice and practical tips to help you and your employees stay on top of your mental wellbeing.

Sexual Health

If you need advice around sexual health, Axess is the free NHS contraception and sexual health service for Liverpool, Knowsley, Cheshire East, Warrington and Halton. Warrington's main clinic is in the Bath Street Health & Wellbeing Centre. This clinic provides support to people with sexual health concerns. Visit www.axess.clinic/find-service/axess-sexual-health-warrington/

For more information about making healthier lifestyle choices, visit Warrington Borough Council's healthier lifestyles page www.warrington.gov.uk/healthier-lifestyles



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As you develop your international trade activity the Warrington Chamber of Commerce can assist you with all the documentation you need to export your goods and services easily. All our staff have passed the required training to become British Chambers approved documentation officers and are able to provide the following services:

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March 20th 2024

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info@warrington-chamber.co.uk

Premium performance meal delivery service renews partnership with Warrington Wolves

FOR the second year in a row, Warrington headquartered premium meal delivery service, Fuel Hub, has announced its latest partnership as the official food nutrition partners for Warrington Wolves for the 2024 Betfred Super League Season.

Fuel Hub will be providing meals for all Warrington Wolves' training sessions, as well as pre- and post-match nutrition across the entirety of the 2024 season.

Establishing itself as Warrington Wolves' food nutrition partner in 2023, Fuel Hub has also been named as the team's official training kit sponsor for the 2024 season. The partnership also marks the beginning of Fuel Hub's sponsorship of the team's social media content for a second year running. Its 'Performance of the Match' posts are set to be sponsored by the meal prep company for the entirety of the season on Instagram and X (formerly known as Twitter).

Founded in 2019 by former professional rugby league player James Laithwaite, COO, and Michelle Laithwaite, CEO, Fuel Hub provides high-quality, macro-balanced meals for elite athletes and sports teams including Team GB, Chelsea FC, Manchester United Women's FC, amongst

many others.

James Laithwaite, COO and co-founder at Fuel Hub, said: "Partnering with Warrington Wolves for a second season running is really exciting for both Michelle and I. As a former Warrington player, the team has long been a big part of our lives, so it's great to be able to continue playing an active role in supporting them to perform to the best of their ability."

"We understand how important

it is to have a high quality, macro-controlled meal throughout training and around matches, and our partnership will ensure each player receives this to support them in their optimum performance."

Ade Gardner, head of performance at Warrington Wolves, said: "Choosing to work with Fuel Hub again was an opportunity we could not pass, and we're really excited to build on this relationship as we continue to fuel our players throughout the season."

"Nutrition is an essential part of the modern game, and Fuel Hub is the perfect partner to ensure the team gets the right foods to maximise their performance."

"The partnership has worked effectively so far and I'm glad we're able to extend it ahead of the 2024 campaign. I'd like to thank James and Michelle for their continued support and I'm looking forward to seeing how the partnership grows over the year ahead."



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