



Insight

magazine

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The Journal of the
WARRINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
in association with
VR VALE ROYAL
The heart of Cheshire



United Utilities widen range of roles for graduates and apprentices

WARRINGTON-based water company, United Utilities has widened the range of roles it's offering graduates and apprentices as it welcomes its latest cohort.

125 new starters have joined the company to take up roles ranging from scientist, project controller and data analyst to mechanical and electrical engineer, customer service advisor and apprentice assistant town planner – a new role introduced this year. More new graduate roles are planned for the 2025 intake.

This year's group – made up of 48 graduates and 77 apprentices – are guaranteed permanent employment at the company when they finish their schemes.

Apprentices at United Utilities earn while they learn, studying

Apprenticeship Standards which are endorsed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and the Department for Education, while also gaining hands-on experience. Apprenticeship schemes vary from 18 months to six years for degree apprenticeships in subjects such as engineering, quantity surveying, town planning, science and labs and run in conjunction with universities including MMU, Liverpool John Moore's, Sheffield Hallam, Salford and Harper Adams.

Apprentice precision maintenance engineer, 29-year-old Jack Cleworth said: "I'm excited to get hands-on experience and get to know the people I'll be working with in my new role."

The graduate scheme lasts for three years and graduates take

part in a tailored programme to provide them with the business and technical knowledge required to become future leaders. This includes first-class training and support alongside an in-depth understanding of their chosen area and the chance to make a tangible contribution to live projects that are benefiting the entire region.

Graduate project manager, Oluwaseun Ayegbusi, 23, added: "I'm looking forward to learning new things and moving forward in my career at United Utilities!"

United Utilities' senior education lead, Jacqueline Kawczak said: "It's vital for our business that we have a pipeline of talent supporting the skills growth required to deliver our five-year business plan.

"This year, we've introduced a new level 7 master's degree in

Town Planning and increased our intake of graduates on our engineering schemes in each of our key business areas bio, waste and water.

"We're broadening the range of graduate and apprenticeship schemes we now offer and will continue to do so for next years' intake."

United Utilities currently has around 300 apprentices and graduates training with the company. Applications for next year's graduate positions will open later this month and apprenticeship positions will open in January. Details on all the roles, as well as other career opportunities at United Utilities, will be available at: www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/careers/

Pure Insight – leading the way in supporting young care leavers

Can you help a North West charity which supports young people leaving children's homes and foster care? (care leavers, aged 16-28)

- Can you offer work placements or employment to young care leavers who are trying to gain experience and find employment?
- Do you have unused laptops in good working condition you can donate, so young people can search for jobs and submit applications?
- Can you make a financial donation (of any amount)?
- Are you interested in becoming a volunteer mentor and working one-on-one with a young care leaver? This is an exceptionally rewarding role and enables mentors to have a huge positive impact on a young person's life. We ask for a commitment of approximately two to three hours a week, for two years. Excellent training and support are provided, and you will join a network of likeminded local

people.

- Mentoring training starts early September in Warrington, Congleton, Halton, Stockport and Salford

Many care experienced individuals receive little support when they reach adulthood.

As children, they were removed into local authority care, most commonly due to abuse or neglect. Many exit the care system with poor educational attainment, low employment or academic prospects and lacking the basic skills for living alone. They face challenges including isolation and loneliness, poor mental health, risk of exploitation, and some are trapped in detrimental cycles of behaviour such as addiction, offending and harmful relationships. Care experienced young people undeniably face significant challenges as shown by the statistics below:

- 25% of homeless people are care experienced
- 82% of care leavers struggle to

afford food all or some of the time

- Care leavers are almost three times as likely to be Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)
- 40% of the under 21 prison population are care experienced

Care leavers are four times more likely to take their own lives than the wider population

Care leavers can, and do, lead successful lives. However, like all young people, most can connect their success to someone championing them and lending a hand to navigate life's challenges

Pure Insight was established in January 2013 as a response to the unmet needs of care leavers. They provide psychological wellbeing services, one-to-one mentoring and a range of specialist support services. They currently work

with approximately 500 care experienced young people a year (aged 16-25) to help them make a successful transition to adulthood: gaining the skills and resilience to live independently, to form healthy relationships, to achieve employment, and (for some) to become the caring, supportive parents they aspire to be. Annually, Pure Insight support around 140 children aged 0-5 through whole family support alongside their care experienced young parents.

If you would like to discuss potential support that you might be able to provide, contact info@pure-insight.org.uk and title the email with the nature of your enquiry so they can direct to the correct person.

PURE INSIGHT
connecting care leavers



From the Chief Executive

Stephen Fitzsimons

The UK has a new government, however there are many similarities to when the Coalition came to power in 2010. Both incoming administrations took control, having served for over a decade in opposition.

They also inherited the fiscal consequences of two of the largest economic shocks of modern times - the financial crisis of 2007 and the global pandemic in 2020. Gordon Brown's government was forced to take over four high street banks at a total cost of £137 billion. Boris Johnson's business support and public health measures are estimated to have cost between £310 and £410 billion. David Cameron in 2010 and Keir Starmer in 2024 were/are tasked with the unenviable task of balancing the books, a necessary prerequisite for market and consumer confidence.

The Labour government has put growth at the top of its agenda, encouraging for (boring) economists like me because we've only experienced average annual GDP increases of 1.2% since 2008. Industrialised nations should expect to see 2-3% growth during any "normal" year so the performance over the decade before the pandemic was underwhelming at best. The new administration has placed housebuilding at the top

of its growth plan, with a more progressive planning process to make this happen. This will be most welcome for Chamber members, with one shoe manufacturer unable to install a wind turbine at its Cumbrian factory and another experiencing a project-threatening delay with the Environment Agency. We would never want to see a "Wild West" planning regime, however we do want to see a system that supports, not impedes investment.

Chamber members will be able to challenge members of the government at the Warrington Business Conference on the 11th October. Charlotte Nichols and Sarah Hall will be participating in panel discussions that will explore the well known brands that have a presence in the town. We'll also welcome former Cabinet Minister Esther McVey who now covers Lymm as part of her Tatton constituency. It was the Conservative's turn in 2023 to provide a serving Minister so we look forward to hearing from Labour's Business Minister for this year.

Finally, a big thank you to outgoing Chamber President, Nigel Schofield. Nigel ran the very successful Cresta World Travel from St James Business Centre and many of us were

successfully transported around the world thanks to his highly experienced team. Nigel has also been involved in many important county bodies, including Cheshire Business Leaders and the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership. He has been an invaluable friend for me personally over the last four years and we all wish him well with his well earned retirement. Thankfully, we have a more than capable successor, with local businessman Paul Taylor taking the reigns. Paul is well known as the former owner of Taylor Business Park in Croft,



however he continues to operate a property investment and telecoms business from Warrington. All the very best to Paul too!

Take care,
Stephen



Home appliances group signs five year lease for Birchwood site

AN international home appliances group has signed a lease for office space at Element in Birchwood.

Glen Dimplex Home Appliances has taken part of the first floor of the building, which spans 6,806 sq ft, for a five year term.

Savills agreed the lease on behalf of Bridge Properties.

Element provides 39,707 sq ft of office space and benefits from a luxury business lounge and licensed cafe with outdoor terrace as well as an on-site gym.

Externally, there is cycle storage, parking spaces, EV charging points and landscaped outdoor space.

This latest deal follows the recent letting to RPS earlier this year and, as a result, there is 22,956 sq ft available to let.

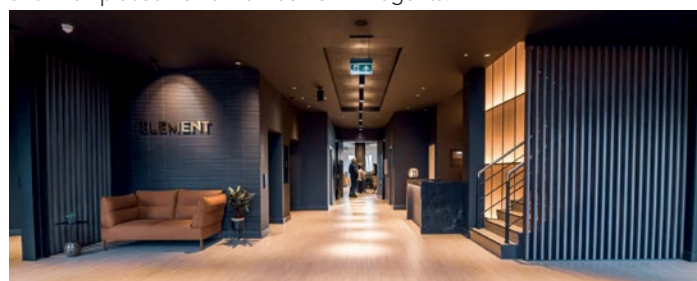
Daniel Barnes, director of office agency at Savills Manchester, said: "Element has been completely remodelled, raising the bar for office accommodation not only in Birchwood, but the whole of the out of town office market.

"The on-site amenity is excellent

which has resulted in us securing substantial occupiers such as Glen Dimplex Home Appliances. The scheme is well-connected and well-placed for a number of

businesses being minutes away from the wider road network."

Canning O'Neill are joint leasing agents.



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Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive

American Golf announces store expansion with new GO Outdoors partnership

WARRINGTON based American Golf, the UK's leading golf retailer, have announced their first partnership with the UK's largest outdoor retailer, GO Outdoors.

The partnership is the latest move in American Golf's strategy to offer the ultimate one stop destination for everything a golfer requires.

The first in a series of expansion plans, American Golf will unveil a 3,000 square foot concession in GO Outdoors Gloucester on 22nd August 2024, with another concession due to open in a GO Outdoors store by the end of the year.

Along with an extended range of American Golf's top brands, including TaylorMade, Callaway, PING, Cobra, Benross, Garmin, Adidas, Stromberg and Under Armour, the concession will have a dedicated American Golf team on hand.

Employees from American Golf's recently closed Cheltenham store have been re-deployed for their expertise, to provide a range of services including free custom fitting, which includes the latest Foresight FSX Pro shot-tracing technology.

Customers will be able to trade in their old clubs for instant credit against any purchase (T&C's apply), have their clubs regripped, access to its Golf insurance policies, and customers can also continue to enjoy their AG Club Card loyalty benefits.

Elaine Wrigley, Retail, Operations and People Director at American Golf, announced: "It is with much excitement to bring American Golf's extensive product offering and expertise to the city of Gloucester through our new partnership with GO Outdoors.

"The store represents a significant step in our broader strategy to enhance our presence and accessibility across the UK. The sheer popularity of the GO Outdoors brand and their footprint across the country, offers an amazing opportunity to

introduce the game of golf to a wider audience.

"We are committed to providing exceptional service and products to our customers, and this partnership is testament to that commitment, as well as a fantastic chance to meet the growing demand from the Hereford and Gloucester areas. I'm also thrilled that we can continue the loyal relationship we had with our Cheltenham customers."

Lee Bagnall, CEO at GO Outdoors said: "We're thrilled to expand

our offering to customers to now include high quality golf clubs, clothing, footwear and equipment. American Golf is the go-to brand for golfers of all abilities across the nation, and to have them onboard and continue to grow across more of our stores is a partnership we're really excited about.

"Customers at GO Outdoors Gloucester will benefit from a wide variety of golf brands as well as a wide choice of the biggest brands for outdoor activities including camping & Caravanning, hiking, cycling, climbing and fishing."



Birchwood Park celebrates continued success in first half of 2024

Birchwood Park is celebrating continued success of its small suites and a significant milestone with the completion of Chadwick House's multi-million-pound refurbishment.

The north west's leading out-of-town business destination has experienced continuous growth over the past 6 months,

leasing over 25,000 sq. ft. of space, including 42 renewals and welcoming 13 new companies in its small suites alone. This success has led to a remarkable 98% occupancy rate and Birchwood Park enjoyed an impressive renewal rate exceeding 95%.

Recognised as one of the UK's most successful nuclear hubs,

Birchwood Park continues to attract and retain leading businesses in this sector.

The small suites' flexible lease terms have proven to be invaluable for businesses such as, technical solutions provider Cerberus Nuclear and architectural and interior design practice, DV8 Designs. Accommodating to their dynamic teams and project demands, the Park's small suites enable occupiers to leverage flexibility to scale their operations seamlessly, providing the perfect scalable solution.

Alongside small suites success, the Park is excited to announce the completion of the next phase of its multi-million-pound refurbishment of Chadwick House, a landmark project for its flagship building, undertaken in partnership with OBI Property and main contractor Fado.

Linda Welsby, Leasing Manager for Birchwood Park, commented: "We're thrilled with the continued popularity of our small suites for business looking for flexible office spaces for growing teams. The high occupancy and renewal rates reflect the quality of our spaces and our dedication to creating

a vibrant community for our occupiers on the Park.

"Alongside news of new occupancy, we're incredibly proud to see the next phase of the Chadwick House refurb come to fruition too. This project reinforces our commitment to providing diverse and flexible workspace options for all our occupiers."

Birchwood Park's continued success extends beyond its commercial accomplishments, with the Park raising over £4,500 following its annual Duckfest event, with money raised donated to non-profit organisation, Peace and Mind UK.

With a wide range of warehouse and office spaces available, including flexible small suites designed for growing businesses, the Park is hoping to continue to welcome new occupiers throughout the rest of the year, while maintaining its strong retention rate for 2024.

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



LDC-backed Talos360 grows technology revenues by over 50% in strong year

TALOS360, an award-winning provider of human capital management (HCM) solutions, is celebrating a strong financial year on the back of significant client growth and investment in its market-leading software services.

The Warrington-based business increased technology sales by 55% to £5.1m in the year ending 31 December 2023, up from £3.3m (FYE: December 2022). Technology sales now represent a record 44% of Talos360's total revenue, up from 19% in 2021, with further growth forecast.

Rising technology sales helped Talos360 to grow its overall revenue by 10% to £11.6m over the same period, up from £10.5m (FYE: December 2022), against a challenging backdrop for providers of HCM solutions.

Talos360 is one of the UK's fastest growing providers of software-as-a-service talent solutions. Its proprietary technology helps businesses to better attract, recruit and retain talent, and it is a trusted partner to more than 800 businesses.

The management team, led by CEO Janette Martin, was backed by private equity investor LDC in October 2022 to help accelerate its ambitious growth strategy.

Since then, Talos360 has driven technology sales by continually developing its Talos ATS and Talos Engage products, securing

new customers in sectors including retail and hospitality, care, education, manufacturing and professional services, and successfully cross-selling its software-as-a-service offering to clients that previously only used its advertising and vacancy filling services.

It has also invested significantly in its commercial and product partnerships to further support customers. This includes new partnerships with the likes of Certn Credence, a leading provider of candidate background screening, and Talent Strengths, industry leaders in employee psychometric tests.

With LDC's support, Talos360 also continues to invest in its award-winning workplace culture. The business, which is proud to have a 50/50 male and female balance, is committed to giving all employees the opportunity to develop exciting careers in tech. It uses its own Talos Engage EVP software to gather feedback on everything from employee wellbeing and work-life balance to career opportunities and the benefits it offers.

As a result of its people-first approach, Talos360 provided 20 opportunities for promotion or internal moves for its employees, and won first place in three Great Places to Work awards in 2023. Janette Martin was also named TIARA Talent Tech Leader of The Year for the third year in a row.

On the back of its strong financial year, Talos360 is now focused on further investment in its people and product development, and complementary acquisitions to accelerate its growth.

Janette Martin, CEO of Talos360, said: "2023 was a landmark year for us. We continue to invest in our market leading talent solutions to solve all our customers' hiring challenges, helping them to attract, recruit and retain their top talent. Technology is firmly at the forefront of our brand, and we're excited to continue investing in our offering and build momentum by actively pursuing complementary acquisitions with LDC's support.

"It's also my passion to achieve growth whilst providing a

supportive and inclusive workplace culture. We're proud to offer exciting careers in tech to people across the North of England and will continue to help our people progress in their careers."

John Clarke, Partner at LDC, added: "When we started working with Janette and the team it was clear that there was no limit to their ambition. The human capital management solutions space is increasingly technology-driven and Talos360 has positioned itself as a market leader in software through a commitment to innovation and a recognition that investing in employee wellbeing and development is a critical component of any successful growth strategy. I'm confident 2024 will be another stellar year for the business."



Ansell Lighting supports electricians of the future

Warrington-based lighting designer and manufacturer Ansell Lighting has joined forces with Warrington & Vale Royal College to provide support and resources for electrical apprentices and full time students.

Ansell has built a strong relationship with the college, with team members undertaking regular talks and presentations to the students on the latest lighting technology and products.

The college is also keen to build relationships with industry partners in order to help students and apprentices to learn more about lighting and electrical products and help them build their knowledge.

Now Ansell has supplied a series of product boards including downlights, retail and commercial fittings, emergency lighting packs and its own smart OCTO lighting technology, to be displayed within the College and for the students can interact with.

Each board has information about the luminaires and their benefits, as well as a working product

attached to it.

Mike Talbot, Sales Director at Ansell, said: "As a manufacturer we recognise the importance of investing in and supporting the next generation of electricians and installers, at a time when there has been talk of skills shortages within the industry.

"We have worked on a number of

projects with colleges across the country but in this instance it has been especially great to support students and apprentices local to our Warrington headquarters."

Karl Hill, Subject Leader for Electrical Installation at Warrington & Vale Royal College, said: "It was an absolute pleasure to welcome Ansell Lighting to our Warrington campus last week. We

are very grateful for the donation of various product boards, which will be displayed in our brand-new electrical workshops, as they will help our students gain a better understanding of how these fittings work, setting them up perfectly for their careers after college. We look forward to collaborating more with Ansell Lighting in the future!"



■ Nick Anderson – Curriculum Manager at Warrington & Vale Royal College, Rebecca Anderson-Moss Assistant Principal at Warrington & Vale Royal College, Mike Talbot - Sales Director at Ansell, Karl Hill – Subject Leader for Electrical Installation at Warrington & Vale Royal College, Ryan Jervis-Garner - Regional Sales Manager for Ansell North West, Frances Ffitch – Channel Marketing Manager at Ansell.

Solar Together scheme returns following success in Warrington

THE Solar Together scheme, powered by iChoors and facilitated by Warrington Borough Council alongside Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Councils, brought together residents who were interested in installing solar panels, battery storage, and electric vehicle charging in the sub-region.

Group-buying aims to make purchasing solar panels and batteries much more accessible and affordable than if residents were to individually buy solar panels on their own.

This initiative provides residents and businesses with an opportunity to combat rising energy prices by generating their own clean energy.

Residents can register their details on the Solar Together website solartogether.co.uk/warrington to get involved.

Solar Together will hold a reverse auction with pre-vetted installers, who compete to offer registrants the most competitive price.

Registrants receive a personal recommendation for their home based on the information provided during registration. You can then decide if you want to accept the quote, which will include information about the winning installer, the proposed installation, costs and savings. There is no obligation to go forward with the install.

When the job is accepted, the winning installer will arrange a roof survey and set an installation date. All installations aim to be complete within six months of acceptance. Registration will close on Friday 18 October.

In 2023, over 6,550 residents across Cheshire and Warrington registered their interest, with:

- A total of 584 installations completed, 95 of which were located in Warrington
- 89% of participants chose to add a battery to their solar panel installation
- The scheme facilitated a total private resident investment in renewables of £5,619,920.00

- The scheme helped homeowners save a combined total of £1,880,975.00

- The estimated carbon emissions reduction over 25 years from the installations is more than 12,315 tonnes

Warrington Borough Council's cabinet member for climate change, sustainability and the environment, Cllr Hitesh Patel, said: "I'm pleased that following the success of the Solar Together Cheshire and Warrington 2023

scheme, we're able to once again support people to access greener energy solutions."

"The scheme's achievements underscore the community's commitment to sustainability and energy independence, and we look forward to building on this success with the latest scheme this year."

For more information about the Solar Together scheme, visit: solartogether.co.uk/warrington



Need a hand to
install **solar panels?**

Join Warrington's biggest
solar panel scheme

solartogether.co.uk/warrington



Record-breaking iconsys opens new Daresbury office

Iconsys, a power, control and automation solutions provider and system integrator, has capped a record year by launching a new facility at Sci-Tech Daresbury to help it increase its market share in the region and to attract new engineering talent.

The company has seen sales soar by £5m over the last twelve months after securing a string of new contract wins across a multitude of industries, including maritime, construction materials, metals, energy, transportation and consumer goods.

It reached a turnover of £14.5m by the end of its 2024 financial year and this has seen it increase

its workforce to 81 people, with a recruitment drive for 15 more engineers and support staff currently underway.

Nick Darrall, Managing Director of iconsys, explained: "Companies across all markets are switching on to the many benefits our control and automated solutions can provide, in terms of improved safety, reliability, efficiency, reducing obsolescence risk and transitioning to net zero. This is translating into a massive growth opportunity for our business."

"Daresbury offers greater flexibility and allows for a more engaging experience for our existing staff living in and around

the North West and opens up the talent pool to boost our growing team of 'best in class' engineers. Our customers will also benefit from having 'boots on the ground' in this region."

"Sales have rocketed towards £15m and our pipeline is looking very healthy for the next twelve months. The way we deliver value at all stages of the process, from consulting, design and build to manufacture, installation and service support sets us apart from our competitors. We are also 'technology platform-independent' which is another unique differentiator, ensuring our customers always get the optimal

solution."

He continued: "Some of the decisions we have taken over the last two years have been pivotal to our expansion and have laid the foundations for the next phase."

"This includes the development of £3m smart factory in Telford, which we're already looking to substantially extend, the creation of our internal training academy to support staff development and the opening of Daresbury and our third office in Scotland."

"We've also strengthened our senior management team with a host of key Director-level hires in Finance, Sales and HR."



Metal surface specialist and nanodiamond manufacturer to develop 'world's first' composite copper coating

ELECTROPLATING specialist BEP Surface Technologies and nanodiamond manufacturer Carbodeon have announced a strategic relationship to develop a 'world first' copper-nanodiamond composite coating.

Nanodiamonds are particles of diamond so small that you could fit a million on a pinhead. Their unique structures and properties radically enhance thermal conductivity and improve wear resistance.

Blending nanodiamonds with metal coatings can offer game-changing improvements in components used in many existing industries and emerging industries.

The companies have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU), which combines Greater Manchester-based BEP's metal coatings expertise with Helsinki-based Carbodeon's world-leading position in the manufacture of nanodiamond additives.

The agreement gives BEP the rights to develop and produce nanodiamond-infused copper, an innovative composite coating with the potential to radically enhance thermal conductivity and wear resistance. This will enhance BEP's production of copper chill rolls used by the world's leading paper and packaging manufacturers.

The MOU also gives BEP exclusive UK rights to process nanodiamond-infused electroless nickel, increasing wear and corrosion resistance. Carbodeon's uDiamond® electroless nickel composite coating improves the service life of components used in on-shore oil and gas production, polymer processing, board cutting, agriculture and textile manufacturing.

Both activities will be pursued with a view to supplying several of Carbodeon's well-established development programmes worldwide and enhancing BEP's offer to customers.

BEP's innovation arm, BEP Solutions, will carry out research and development activities. Established this year, BEP Solutions aims to forge new strategic partnerships across government, industry, and academia to develop solutions for long-standing barriers in manufacturing and engineering.

Andrew McClusky, Managing Director of BEP Surface Technologies, said: "I am delighted that Carbodeon has agreed to work with us to develop methods to create a novel composite surface material which we believe is a world first and has

the potential to revolutionise a multitude of applications across multiple industries.

"This new relationship is further evidence of BEP's commitment to leveraging half a century of engineering know-how, leading-edge digital techniques, and a research and development mindset to find innovative solutions to metal surface engineering challenges.

Established in 2006, Carbodeon produces chemically-modified nanodiamonds for applications where the service life of the end product is of particular importance.

They also enhance a material's ability to dissipate heat, improving the efficiency of electronics manufacture.

Current industrial uses include metal plating, thermoset and thermoplastic-based polymer thermal compounds, chemical vapour deposition (CVD) seeding, chemical mechanical polishing (CMP), sealings and other rubber products, and 3D printing filaments.

Carbodeon has patented all its products and key applications it supplies.

Dr Vesa Myllymäki, CEO of Carbodeon, said: "Diamonds dramatically enhance durability and tribology in a range of metal-plated finishes.

"I am delighted to find a partner with such a global reputation for expertise in metal plating who is willing to drive innovation in using nanodiamonds to enhance copper and electroless nickel. We are confident we are on the cusp of creating something unique with transformative capabilities."

To learn more visit: <https://bep-st.com>



■ Andrew McClusky, MD of BEP Surface Technologies.



Logistics firm powers up in milestone year with move to carbon neutral HQ

A sustainability-focused logistics company is primed for growth after completing a move to carbon neutral headquarters as it celebrates 50 years in business.

John K Philips Group has relocated from St Helens to a 135,000sq ft warehouse and office building in Warrington.

The award-winning new HQ at Europa Boulevard is called Solar 120 and has an 'excellent' BREEAM rating for its environmentally-friendly features.

Fully covered by solar panels, and with LED lighting, heat pumps and new electric forklift trucks, the site enables John K Philips to provide carbon neutral warehousing to its customers as they increasingly strive to decarbonise the distribution of their goods.

Previously a BT call centre, the building was acquired in 2022 by CBRE Investment Management and transformed into a modern warehouse which was named building of the year at the National Sustainability Awards in 2023.

John Philips founded his business in 1974 after buying a truck to deliver paint. Today the group employs 80 staff and has a fleet of 35 trucks and 32 trailers.

It remains family-owned, although

the day-to-day running of the business is led by managing director Alan Simpson, who joined in 2019. John's daughter Karrie Hughes is the commercial director.

The business specialises in the storage and UK distribution of goods such as paint and specialist liquids for sectors including pharmaceuticals and healthcare. All of its drivers have ADR training to transport specialist freight.

John Philips said: "We have made a significant investment in our new headquarters and warehouse to give us additional storage capacity in line with our plans for future

growth. We've been growing steadily year-on-year by 15 per cent, and our aim is to continue to expand at this rate.

"Our new location is close to the motorway network and is an ideal location from which to grow our customer base.

"Solar 120 is carbon neutral, with the electricity generated from solar panels powering our warehouse, offices and new forklift trucks.

"Sustainability is a priority for our business and our relocation to Solar 120 enables us to deliver significant further progress in this area, with more investment in electric vehicles

planned, providing us with the capability to decarbonise our customer supply chains.

"Alongside this, we continue to invest in our people and in technology to drive efficiency and productivity.

"It's an exciting time for the business as we celebrate our 50th anniversary."

John K Philips is a member of the Palletforce express distribution network, which enables it to provide local customers of any size with cost-effective and sustainable overnight delivery of freight across the UK and into Europe.



■ L-R finance director Maggie McMellon, chief executive John Philips, managing director Alan Simpson and commercial director Karrie Hughes.

Digital transformation confusion risks paralysing SME manufacturers

Confusion around digital transformation is risking paralysis among SME manufacturers in Cheshire says Made Smarter.

Donna Edwards, director of the North West adoption programme, says businesses are hesitant to commit to change because they lack the confidence with technology and digital skills among leaders and employees.

But, delaying digital transformation risks being left further behind, or wasting time, effort and money, Edwards cautioned.

The stark warning features in the foreword of Made Smarter's new white paper - Digital Transformation: A Made Smarter Roadmap for SME Manufacturers.

The free-to-download guide aims to help makers looking for a place to start, explaining the concepts and steps to a successful digital transformation.

Crucially, it explains the Made Smarter process, the services available, and showcases some of the hundreds of businesses who have benefited in the North West.

Donna Edwards said: "Ask a hundred SME manufacturing leaders what digital transformation means to them, and you'll likely get a hundred different answers. But the common view is that it is daunting and confusing. SMEs, while aware of the benefits technology brings, lack the

resources and skills to approach digital transformation in the right way. Many hesitate or become paralysed, risking being left behind, or wasting time, effort and money.

"The Made Smarter Adoption Programme is a tried and tested approach that offers businesses access to fully funded support so they can improve their understanding of what steps they need to take, to arm them with the tools and strategy to take those steps, and accelerate them towards the multitude of benefits and growth opportunities."

Since launching in the North West five years ago, thousands of manufacturers have engaged with Made Smarter's specialised support, from expert, impartial technology advice and digital transformation workshops, to digital leadership programmes, internships and other training opportunities, and match funded technology projects.

The impacts of the programme are starting to emerge. North West GVA is forecast to grow £242M in the coming years and 1,300 new jobs have been created, while 2,500 existing roles have been upskilled.

The white paper also spotlights some of the partner organisations who are also working with Made Smarter to help manufacturers digitalise and decarbonise

including the Smart Manufacturing Data Hub (SMDH), based at the Hartree Centre at Sci-Tech Daresbury.

SMDH, part of Made Smarter Innovation, is an initiative helping SMEs to boost their productivity and competitiveness through the adoption of digital technologies which can improve productivity and is managed through a consortium led by Ulster University and backed by £50m of government funds and business co-investment.

Francis Lee, Business Development Manager, STFC Hartree Centre, said: "The Smart Manufacturing Data Hub is

one of the Hartree Centre's key initiatives for working with SMEs in the manufacturing sector who are seeking a free or low-cost approach to adopting digital technologies and access to sensor and data solutions. By gaining real-time visibility into energy usage patterns, companies can identify inefficiencies, maintenance requirements and implement targeted improvements, achieving energy savings, reducing carbon emissions, and helping them to make informed business decisions."

To download the white paper visit: madesmarter.uk/resources/digital-transformation-a-made-smarter-roadmap-for-sme-manufacturers/



■ Donna Edwards.

Banking specialist relocates from Australia to join business bank

THE green and community credentials of a Warrington specialist business bank have been boosted by the appointment of a specialist from Sydney.

Redwood Bank has demonstrated its commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG) objectives in recent years through a series of initiatives, including the launch of a special Green Reward for landlords who achieve the highest energy standards.

Alex John, who has had an impressive banking career in Australia, working in business development, product development, risk, strategy and ESG roles, has joined Redwood as its new ESG manager.

Alex, who relocated to London for his new role, said: "Having grown up in regional Australia, nature, the environment and sustainability have always been important to me. I was fascinated by how influential the finance sector could be in financing the transition to net zero, supporting the economy and helping the world change positively.

"In order to learn as much about ESG as I could, I spent time at a specialist climate risk and energy management consulting firm.

While I learned a lot in my time there, it made me realise I missed the mechanics of banking and the finance sector more broadly. That, and the rapidly evolving regulatory landscape around ESG, green and sustainable finance, drew me back to banking.

"I couldn't resist the chance to move to Redwood when the opportunity arose to join its team.

"It really appealed to me because Redwood is lean and nimble enough to be dynamic and yet at the same time it is big enough to have an impact on ESG.

"The bank recognises that climate change is one of the most significant challenges facing society and takes a proactive approach to its environmental responsibilities. It is also committed to being a responsible and responsive employer and to applying responsible banking in all that it does.

"I'm excited to use my experience and knowledge to help Redwood to support society in a meaningful way."

Last year, Redwood successfully launched its Green Reward proposition, supporting landlords who have attained the highest energy standards by offering them

cashback of up to 0.50 per cent of their loan value.

Redwood has achieved Investors in the Environment (iE) national bronze and silver accreditations and its recent charitable efforts have included supporting creative mental health charity PoetsIN and the National Literacy Trust colleagues volunteering at a dogs'

home in Warrington and working alongside a grass roots football club to redevelop its changing rooms.

The team also regularly supports and runs events internally to raise awareness of charities and good causes.

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



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Celebrating Six Years: Worksmart's 6th Anniversary

WORKSMART is set to celebrate its 6th anniversary! For the past six years, they've been redefining work-life balance for local professionals with their high-end, serviced offices in the heart of Cheshire.

Since Worksmart started the journey in 2018, its mission has been simple: to offer a workspace that you want to work in.

"Our journey has been nothing short of amazing," said Carla, Founder at Worksmart. "We set out to build a community where work feels less like work, and we've seen that happen over the last six years. Worksmart firmly believes that a great work-life balance leads to happier, more productive people."

The team is all about creating workspaces that are charming, stylish, and inviting to enhance productivity and well-being.

Worksmart have recently welcomed Geraldine Claire Therapy as a new tenant. Geraldine is an accredited

Psychotherapist now based at the Hale office! Geraldine offers the following therapies: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT); Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) Skills Training; Schema Therapy, Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR), and Trauma-Focused Therapy.

With 20 years of experience in the NHS and private sector across Greater Manchester and Cheshire, Geraldine is dedicated to supporting adults, adolescents, and children in overcoming various mental health challenges. We're thrilled to have her with us and wholeheartedly support her efforts as she helps many individuals make positive life changes.

Worksmart has four high-end serviced offices in prime locations across Cheshire, including Warrington, Hale, and Altrincham. The offices are convenient for local professionals and offer a community feel and the chance to work with like-minded people.

www.worksmarthub.co.uk



■ Founder, Carla Wells.



■ Geraldine Claire.



Is your business Gen Z ready?

Our second Cheshire & Warrington Business & Skills Conference, helping you better prepare for your next generation workforce.

The Cheshire & Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is delighted to host its 2nd Business & Skills Conference.

This time, we're asking you if you're ready for your Generation Z workforce. We'll be:

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in
LSIP@sccci.co.uk
www.cheshireandwarringtonlsip.co.uk

Raiys expands with acquisition of wellbeing content streaming service

WELLBEING company Raiys has taken another leap forward for its growth strategy with the acquisition of content streaming service Ashia.

The deal enables Cheshire-based Raiys, which currently provides online and in-person support to over 750,000 employees in companies and organisations across the UK, to further enhance its wellbeing content, technology platform and management intelligence capabilities.

Raiys supports clients with health and wellbeing services such as a dedicated app, wellbeing audits, behavioural change programmes, health screening, workshops, neurodiversity assessments, mental health training, one-to-one coaching and 24/7 access to specialist counselling.

Onsite support is provided by specialist clinicians including doctors, nurses, health and fitness experts, counsellors and nutritionists.

The company's digital and face-to-face services are designed to deliver improved health and performance and increase employee engagement, and to build resilience and emotional strength to help people face stress and life challenges.

The Ashia service is Raiys' second acquisition following its swoop in early 2023 for The Healthy Employee, which works with employers to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of their people through targeted programmes, including workshops, webinars and roadshows.

Clients using Ashia – the name means life and hope in Arabic – include Sussex Cricket, The Lowry theatre and arts venue in Salford Quays, Greater Manchester, Scotland-based hire firm GAP Group and construction and development company GRAHAM.

James Murphy, founder and chief executive of Warrington-based Raiys, said: "Organisations are increasingly starting to understand their role and responsibilities in supporting employee wellbeing in the workplace. Our mission is to help employers and businesses of any size to create healthy, purposeful workplace cultures across all sectors and job roles.

"The addition of Ashia gives us an even more powerful offering and enables us to grow the digital side of our proactive wellbeing services as we focus on our goal to provide employers and organisations with all the tools they need to improve the health and wellbeing of their people.

"The combined data capabilities of the Ashia and Raiys services will also give existing and new clients access to formidable real-time management data to assist their managers and HR teams with informed wellbeing decision-

making. I'm delighted to be able to bring Ashia into our business."

Ashia was developed by Glasgow-based Frog Systems and provides individuals and businesses with user-friendly, on-demand access to 16 channels of expert and lived experience content comprising 8,000 videos and podcasts, alongside a UK-wide support directory and thousands of curated digital resources.

Uncertainty about ongoing research and development tax credit reviews had frustrated Frog Systems' attempts at attracting new funding streams to provide working capital and accelerate its growth, despite interest from potential investors.

As a result, Craig Morrison and Brian Milne, managing directors of business advisory firm Quantuma, were appointed joint

administrators of Frog Systems at the end of July and completed the sale of the Ashia business and assets to Raiys.

The deal ensures the future of the Ashia business and safeguards the jobs of all nine employees, who have transferred to Raiys. It takes the number of Raiys employees to 75.

Frog Systems' former chief executive Phil Worms said: "Like Raiys, we are passionate about the value of proactive and preventative wellbeing services and the role that digital technology plays in helping employers to create healthy workplaces.

"It has been a challenging time for the company, but I believe that bringing Raiys and Ashia together is a fantastic outcome and we are excited for what we can achieve together as a genuine one-stop

shop for wellbeing solutions."

Quantuma's Craig Morrison said: "The sale is a great outcome for the business. I'm delighted that the jobs of all employees have been saved and the business has been protected by being sold to a third-party buyer with the ability to take it forward."

James Murphy added: "This deal is another exciting move forward for Raiys. With the acquisition of Ashia, and the technical expertise gained, we now have the capability to offer a wider range of digital and personal wellbeing solutions that will support and help organisations to meet the challenges they face."

Ian Gillis and James Redshaw of law firm Hill Dickinson advised Raiys on the acquisition.



■ James Murphy.



■ Phil Worms.

Inco's Warrington office flying high after Manchester Airport instruction



■ Brandon Casey, Darrell Norris, Nav Heer, Mike Puttick, Matthew Penswick, Carly Webb, Josh Sullivan and Nathan Foy.

A MAJOR boom in commercial work and its first instruction at Manchester Airport has capped a record-breaking first half of the year for Inco Contracts' office in Warrington.

The principal contractors, which specialise in turnkey commercial and industrial refurbishments, has been appointed by Quartz Project Services to complete the external decoration of the World Freight Terminal.

Valued at £1m, the project will involve replacing skylights, lining gutters, coating roofs and full renovation of external elevations on six units that will be operational throughout.

Up to 20 professionals will be involved on the contract at any one time as Inco Contracts looks to complete it in just 24-weeks.

This high-profile order comes on the back of some major commercial office refurbishments and takes instruction values past last year's total of £8.5m. The focus now is on securing between

£13m and £14m in revenue by the end of 2024.

"I don't think any of us could predict the scale of growth we've enjoyed when we first decided to set-up a presence in the North West," commented Matthew Penswick, who helped launch the Warrington office in December 2020 alongside Operations Director Sam Norton.

"We've gone from a standing start to one of the most respected contractors in the region, building strategic partnerships with property and management consultants keen to appoint a company that will deliver on-time, on-budget and to exacting standards."

He continued: "The team are also growing to meet demand, with a new Associate Director, Contracts Manager, Assistant Contracts Manager, Senior Estimator and Team Administrator all now working out of our Hatton Lane office. Another two senior hires have also just been made from

our competitors within the last month."

The Manchester Airport job tops an 'instruction heavy' few months for Inco Contracts, including (three) industrial refurbishment projects at McBride's Eurolinks facility in St Helens, (£2.65m), Europa Way (£1.5m) in Sheffield and Follingsby (£1.5m) in Gateshead.

Success in the commercial market has been a strong feature, with several projects awarded to fit-out Category A and Category B office space at Anchorage in Salford and WellbarCentral/Time Central - just a few minutes from Newcastle United's iconic St James Park football ground.

The latter will involve complete refurbishment of offices for rental, breakout spaces for tenants and a new state-of-the-art business lounge.

Sam Norton went on to add: "Industrial projects were originally our main source of growth, yet this is quickly being caught up by commercial work, which is now

being headed up by our new Associate Director Mike Puttick, a real specialist in this field.

"There is still a vast amount of these projects coming online in Manchester, Leeds and the North East, and we want to break into this space, believing the Warrington office gives us the perfect base to do just that.

"Education schemes, led by expert Billy Sneddon, offer another area of expansion, with specialist school refurbishment projects underway in Warrington."

He concluded: "The market is highly competitive, but with the strength of our growing relationships and our new approach to client management, we are sure that we will command more market share over the next twelve to eighteen months. There is even talk of a potential Scottish presence to meet demand there."

For further information, please visit www.incocontracts.co.uk or follow the company on its social media channels.

Redwood Bank's flexibility means age doesn't limit landlord's plans

An experienced landlord's business plans – under threat because of his age – were saved when a specialist business bank offered a flexible solution.

Chris Thomas of FC Funding approached Redwood Bank, knowing that it is always keen to find solutions after looking at each case independently.

The landlord was looking to remortgage a £1.2m semi-commercial property near Kentish Town tube and overground station in London after a refurbishment and his existing lender had turned him down as he would be 97 at the end of the 25-year term.

BDM Ian Tudor said: "The introduction came from a broker who I have known for many years.

"This was the first deal we were able to complete with them. They approached me as they were aware the landlord was in his seventies and didn't know if we would be

able to assist, although they had said his son was more involved in the business and for succession planning would becoming a director and shareholder of the limited company."

Redwood's usual maximum borrowing age at end of term is 75, but that can be extended if circumstances merit. In this case, it was straightforward with the son becoming a shareholder and director. With manual underwriting, Ian was able to understand the situation and make an informed decision, based on common sense.

A loan of £561,000 (LTV 43 per cent) on a five-year fixed deal over 25 years on capital and interest repayment terms was made available, allowing the development finance to be repaid, while also letting the landlord progress with his plan of making his son a director.

"We were delighted we were able

to support this request, providing a longer-term finance option which has saved the family money as we were able to provide a better rate than the existing lender."

Chris Thomas said: "Working with

Ian to get the deal approved was a truly positive experience. We look forward to future collaborations with Redwood Bank."

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



Warrington design studio delivers full brand strategy and new website for RBC

WARRINGTON-BASED design studio, The Modern World, has delivered a full brand strategy and design alongside a new website for leading business growth consultancy, RBC.

Formerly The Ruth Badger Consultancy, the new brand represents RBC's evolution as it celebrates its 18th year in operation. Following a major strategic review, The Modern World created a brand hierarchy to introduce a set of sub-brands, as well as the new RBC positioning, purpose statement, value proposition, brand story, values and behaviours, brand personality, tone of voice and a complete overhaul of the visual identity.

The original brand colour – red – had great equity so that was retained, although made brighter and more vibrant. The tonal values of the supporting colour palette were then built around that to complement it, while also working independently when needed. Typography plays a big part in the identity, with big, bold messaging at the heart of the RBC personality, as such, a headline font that would do that job well was selected.

Ruth Badger, founder and director at RBC, commented: "When we decided to rebrand The Ruth Badger Consultancy, we knew we wanted more than just a logo – we wanted a family of interconnected brands that would best showcase the honest, intelligent growth consultancy we've become renowned for.

"The Modern World's approach was different to anything we'd experienced before – they were like a breath of fresh air. Working with them became more than just a rebrand – the stages they took us through seemed to empower us more and more. The clarity they gave us in how we describe who we are and what we do was incredible. Matt, Jen and the team were very patient with us, which is key when you have four, strong-minded women making decisions! We have had a great experience working with them, and are left with a brand, story and vision we all absolutely love!"

As well as delivering a full suite of brand assets, including a range of digital and print marketing materials, and a framework for rollout, The Modern World redesigned and built a new website, which features subtle animation, transitions and interesting interactions.

Matt Lewis, creative director at The Modern World, said: "It's been the definition of a journey, going from a conversation over a year ago to now seeing the brand fully realised and rolling out. The process we go through means we get to really understand what makes the clients we work with

tick. We quickly get past all the surface-level stuff to where all the interesting things happen.

"The conversations get deeper and the resulting work is so much more authentic because of it. Ruth and the team were really open and receptive to ideas and different ways of thinking about their business, they're a dream to work with. B2B 'brochure' sites can often be quite dry, but the new personality of RBC needed a different approach that would reflect them properly and be authentic to their new way of communicating. SEO was also a big consideration from the start, so a lot of work went into developing the right kind of content. It's been super-collaborative and we're really proud of the work that's been delivered."

RBC focuses on growing owner led SMEs through honest, intelligent, relevant consultancy. Its approach is shaped around knowledge transfer, focus and empowerment. Issues and barriers to growth are identified, teams are upskilled through training, strategies are set and implemented, leaders are mentored and then empowered. As a result, growth continues long after the RBC consultants have left.

The new RBC offers six core service areas of expertise which provide business owners and SMEs with everything they need to improve and grow; Growth, People, Leadership, Wellbeing, Small Business Mentoring and Holiday Park Consultancy.

To coincide with the new brand launch, RBC has strengthened its leadership team, appointing Julie Hughes and Fiona Kelly as directors. Both have worked with the Consultancy for several years and in their new roles, Julie and Fiona will join existing directors,

Ruth Badger and Jackie Hall, with the four all now equity partners.

Ruth Badger concluded: "After 18 years supporting businesses to grow, it was time to invest in our own. RBC represents an exciting new chapter for us as we embark on our mission to challenge the status quo when it comes to business growth consultancy. We've started, built, grown and sold businesses personally, and for countless customers, earning us the right to talk the talk, and walk the walk.

"We don't believe in average; what works for one business doesn't work for all, and that's where our refreshed offering is different. RBC is about delivering straightforward consultancy that cuts through the waffle, leaving businesses and their teams equipped, trained and empowered to continue the growth. Quite simply, we are transforming business as usual into business extraordinary!"

A renowned sales icon, Ruth's true passion is working with owners to grow and sell their business using proven and effective strategies. Heading up the Growth division at RBC, Ruth focuses on growing businesses by removing issues, driving sales, building teams and implementing strategies, as well as mentoring and transferring her knowledge for long-term success.

With decades of experience, the newly formed, four-strong leadership team are proven specialists in growing owner-led businesses by transforming the commercials, strategy and people.

As a highly experienced and successful HR, people developer and wellbeing consultant, Julie has worked with a wide range of businesses and sectors, developing their staff and HR strategies to ensure they have the

right team in place to achieve their full potential. In her role at RBC, Julie heads up the People and Wellbeing service offerings.

With over three decades of experience in holiday parks and holiday home sales, Fiona Kelly is a proven operator who achieves tangible results for customers. In her role at RBC, Fiona will lead the Holiday Park service offering, with responsibility for enhancing strategic and efficient operations, implementing holiday home sales processes, owner engagement and training.

Bringing over 15 years' experience in customer service and holiday park management, Jackie Hall specialises in delivering staff training to ensure customer experience is a priority for everyone. In her role at RBC, Jackie is responsible for designing and implementing training programmes, ensuring the highest levels of standards across businesses by creating and conducting customer satisfaction audits, ensuring adherence to process and policy.

The relaunched RBC offers a range of consultancy services to SMEs all designed to empower growth. From people to culture, sales to profit, customer engagement to journey, every challenge and tough decision is tackled head on. The team works across a multitude of organisations and sectors, giving them a unique perspective on business, and the ability to share proven strategies and practices.

RBC, formerly The Ruth Badger Consultancy, was founded in 2006 by prominent businesswoman, and former BBC One The Apprentice finalist, Ruth Badger. Since then, it has helped hundreds build, improve and grow their businesses with huge success.



■ Julie Hughes, Ruth Badger, Fiona Kelly and Jackie Hall.

Dementia – reduce your risk

IT'S estimated that there are 2,557 people aged 65 and over living with dementia in Warrington.

Dementia is a disease of the brain, and it's a condition that can get worse over time. Whilst there is currently no cure for dementia, and no guaranteed way to prevent dementia, there is evidence that certain steps can be taken to help reduce your risk of developing dementia when you're older.

Research suggests that up to one in three cases of dementia could be prevented through lifestyle choices. There are steps you can take to decrease the risk.

Some of the risk factors for dementia are:

- Social isolation

- Obesity
- Hearing Loss
- Smoking
- Physical Inactivity
- Alcohol
- Diabetes
- Poor Vision
- High Cholesterol

Steps you can take to reduce your risk:

- Keep socially active
- Drink less alcohol
- Stop smoking
- Be more active
- Have regular hearing checks
- Eat well and maintain a healthy weight
- Know your blood pressure – High

blood pressure puts you at risk.

- Educate yourself on dementia and the risk factors

To find out more about dementia, the symptoms, and prevention and risk factors associated with dementia visit, nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/

If you would like advice and support to make healthier lifestyle changes, please visit liveriewarrington.co.uk/lifestyles/

I would also recommend, that people who are aged 40 to 74 take use of a free NHS health check.

The free check-up of your overall health is offered to people who are 40 to 74 years old, who do not have heart disease, diabetes or kidney disease and have not had a stroke. It's offered every 5 years.

The NHS Health Check can help find early signs and tell you if you're at higher risk of certain health problems that can also increase your risk of dementia. These include:

- Coronary heart disease

- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Stroke

If you're over age 65, you'll be told the signs and symptoms of dementia to look out for. You'll also be given advice on how to lower your risk of dementia.

If you have not been invited for an NHS Health Check, ask your GP surgery.

Debbie Watson, Director of Public Health, Warrington Borough Council



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AlphaBiolabs appointed as sole provider testing services

AlphaBiolabs has been appointed the sole provider of forensic testing services for Bedford Borough County Council, following a competitive tender process.

Under the 12-month contract, AlphaBiolabs – one of the UK's leading, UKAS-accredited testing laboratories – will provide DNA, drug, and alcohol testing services for the Council, including sample collection and back-to-lab analysis in support of family cases.

The company owns and operates purpose-built genetics and toxicology laboratories from its headquarters in Warrington, Cheshire, and has extensive experience working with Family Courts and local authorities across the UK.

Rachel Davenport, Director at AlphaBiolabs, said: "Our in-depth knowledge of the challenges facing local Councils – particularly when it comes to making time-critical safeguarding decisions – stems from over 20 years' experience working with family law professionals, social workers, and local authorities across

the country.

"We know all too well the sensitivities involved, especially when working with vulnerable children and adults, and will work hard to ensure we deliver the highest possible standard of service for the people of Bedford over the next 12 months."

The appointment by Bedford Borough County Council is the latest in a slew of contract wins for AlphaBiolabs, having recently been re-appointed sole provider of drug, alcohol, and DNA testing services for Warrington Borough Council, and awarded the No.1 spot on the Forensic Testing Framework for Surrey County Council.

Established in 2004, the company is one of the UK's leading providers of drug, alcohol, and DNA testing services for members of the public, family law professionals, social workers, local authorities, and the workplace sector. It also operates 20 walk-in centres across the UK and Ireland, providing on-site sample collection appointments for drug, alcohol, and DNA testing.

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November 20th 2024

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

info@warrington-chamber.co.uk

J&K Ross Chairman Joins Blood Bikes as a volunteer

CHRIS Ross, Chairman of J&K Ross, long-standing chamber members, has joined Merseyside and Cheshire Blood Bikes as a volunteer rider. This volunteering role combines his passion for motorbikes with his incredible commitment to giving back to the community.

Merseyside and Cheshire Blood Bikes was formed in 2012 by a group of volunteers, many of whom, but not all, are keen motorcyclists. The organisation holds the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. They provide their time and service free to the NHS to help reduce transport expenses. In June 2024 alone, their volunteers did 370 bike runs including 251 blood runs and 53 baby milk runs.

This volunteer role with Blood Bikes reflects Chris' professional commitment to safety and community. In both Chris' business and volunteering roles, he is focused on safeguarding people, whether they're at work or relying on vital medical supplies. J&K Ross provides the protective equipment that enables workers to perform their jobs safely, and he is now personally ensuring that critical medical supplies such as blood, donor breast milk, medications, and human tissues are delivered quickly and securely

to hospitals and care facilities.

J&K Ross, Warrington's protective workwear specialists, who this year won a 5 year contract with Northern Powergrid, are dedicated to protecting workers across various industries by supplying a wide range of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). From protective footwear, high-visibility clothing, head and eye protection to safety gear for those working at heights, their mission is to ensure

everyone's well-being and safety at work.

Chris uses his own motorbike for the volunteer role and said "Joining Blood Bikes has been a wonderful and fulfilling experience. It's an incredible way to combine my love for motorbikes with the opportunity to support our NHS and make a real difference in people's lives. The Blood Bikes service helps the NHS to reduce transport expenses

by providing their services for free, allowing funds to be redirected towards improving patient care."

All funding for the Blood Bikes service comes from donations and regular fundraising events. Donations help to ensure this essential service continues to benefit both the NHS and the local community. Donations can be made here: www.justgiving.com/d89bfdec72



■ Chris Ross (centre) Chairman of J&K Ross is now volunteering at Merseyside and Cheshire Blood Bikes.

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