



# 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





## College rated 'Good' by Ofsted

**STUDENTS and staff at Warrington & Vale Royal College are celebrating after a recent Ofsted inspection officially commended the organisation as an overall 'Good' college.**

The inspection found the college, which merged with Mid Cheshire College in 2017 to be inclusive and rated good in various areas, including leadership and management, quality education, behaviour and attitudes and personal development.

Nichola Newton, Principal & Chief Executive of Warrington & Vale Royal College said: "I am very proud to be principal of this wonderful college and I am so pleased that Ofsted have recognised just how well we are serving the communities with whom we work.

"This is a huge achievement for our staff and students who have worked together at pace and with great focus and energy to succeed since the merger of Warrington Collegiate and Mid Cheshire College in Northwich and Winsford in 2017.

"To have achieved this excellent result and be described as 'highly inclusive' re-affirms my belief that we have become a college that the people of Warrington and Vale Royal can trust and justifiably be proud of. Quite simply, we believe in our students and we do the very best for them, inspiring them to achieve and this report is testimony to that."

The report observed that the college meets local and regional needs very well, providing a wide range of courses that ensures students and apprentices of all ages are

well prepared for further study, employment or promotion at work. Areas of the inspection rated 'Good', include leadership and management, quality of education, behaviour and attitudes and personal development.

The inspectors praised the college's "very caring and highly inclusive learning environment", applauding the "excellent" relationships between students and their tutors and assessors and highlighted how the college "develops" young people and adult students as individuals.

The college's industry-standard equipment was also identified in the report, enabling tutors to teach modern methods and techniques far beyond the requirements of the qualification.

This commitment to excellence

was also demonstrated through the college's personal development programme, with inspectors applauding the wide range of activities, work experience and internships which complements student programmes of study and develops students as individuals.

The report also commends the "excellent" conduct, respect and professional standards demonstrated by students and apprentices in classrooms and throughout the college.

These high standards are rooted within the college's "highly effective" senior leadership team and governing body who work tirelessly to ensure that students have access to an "ambitious curriculum" within a safe and nurturing environment.

## Warrington's Own Stephen is crowned top bus engineer

HEAD of Engineering for Warrington's Own Buses Stephen Stringer is celebrating having been crowned Engineer of the Year 2019 at the UK Bus Awards.

Stephen joined Warrington's Own Buses as an apprentice back in 1999 and has been at Warrington ever since. His department's performance is always excellent, and he is described as 'placing a great deal of importance on the development, mentoring and coaching of his fellow engineers.'

The award, sponsored by IRTE, recognises and rewards inspirational management talent in engineering disciplines from across the bus industry.

The judges were impressed with the way Stephen has worked his way up from starting as an apprentice, and felt he was a role model to others and has an excellent approach to mentoring and bringing on new talent through team engagement and delegation.

Mark Yexley, Chairman of the UK Bus Awards, said: "A big congratulations to Stephen from everyone at the UK Bus Awards. He really shone through as someone who went over and above to understand bus passenger's needs and where engineering fits into the bigger picture of providing quality bus services."

Jack Abbott from Stagecoach Manchester took the silver, and Paul Slaney from Translink was awarded the bronze.



# From the Chief Executive

Colin Daniels



## Building on Green Belt is not delivering affordable homes

Just one in 10 homes built on green belt land is deemed to be affordable, a report by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has found.

The study argues that far from providing much needed homes for first time buyers development

on the green belt is "squandering" the asset.

Countryside Campaigners say developments built on released land over the past decade have failed to deliver affordable homes.

CPRE has recommended that councils adopt a "brown-field first" policy when embarking new areas to build homes and their research shows there is enough brownfield land to make way for more than one million homes.

## Late SME payments costing the UK economy £51.5bn per year

Nearly a third (31 per cent) of British SME's have struggled because of late payments in the last year according to a report by Hitachi Capital UK – which are estimated to have cost the UK economy at least £51.5 billion.

More than a third of the country's 5.6 million small to medium enterprises reported losses of at least £10,000 over the last year the study said – resulting in poor cash flow that in turn affected productivity and growth. Even more worrying 12 per cent of respondents said late payments meant they were sometimes unable to pay staff salaries, leaving 1.95 million UK employees out of pocket on pay day.

Late payment rules as well as revisions to the Prompt Payment Code were introduced by the last government and put on hold, but have now come into force. These are intended to give the Small Business Commissioner greater powers to enforce best practice.

## Business rates

Business rates have come under fresh attack from MP's amid fears the tax is crippling Britain's high street – but they fell short of putting forward more concrete plans to tackle a "broken system".

An update consultation into rates is needed before next year's spring statement to propose alterations, members of the Treasury Select Committee have said.

Last year the Government's coffers were boosted by £31bn from business rates.

MP's identified potential solutions including a land value tax online sales levy, profits tax, single consolidated tax and hybrid tax. But said that further work was needed to come up with something more concrete.

## Hallmark Hotel welcomes new General Manager

Hallmark Hotel Warrington has appointed Joseph Henry as its new General Manager.

Joseph has worked in hospitality since graduating with a masters degree in Business.

Now, still only 30 years of age, he is at the helm of the 52-bedroom hotel, wedding and events venue on Knutsford Old Road, located close to the M6 and M56 motorways.

On his appointment, Joseph said: "I have a real passion for hospitality and this hotel offers one of the best opportunities in the area to put it to good use.

"At Hallmark Hotels we are encouraged to be independent and entrepreneurial, which allows us

far greater flexibility and the ability to react quickly to changes in the market. It also means that we can really tailor guest stays and special events in a way that some of the large chain hotels can't."

As part of his appointment, Joseph is currently redesigning the hotel's wedding packages and conference offering. He is also leading a recruitment drive, to build a team that offers "good honest Northern hospitality" throughout the hotel.

He continued: "I am looking for colleagues who will support me in offering the best possible hospitality, the best possible dining experience and deliver the best possible events.

"To really help us reconnect with our

local community and local guests, we're working hard to find the very best talent from within Warrington. Popular chef, Stuart McNaughton, has returned to our restaurant and both our new Operations Manager and Reception Manager live very close by."

For more information about the hotel, vacancies and Christmas party events, visit: [www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/warrington](http://www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/warrington)



**WARRINGTON**  
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Colin Daniels, Chief Executive



# Hat-trick of nominations propels University's Chemical Engineering Department to finals of prestigious international awards

**Innovative teaching methods and unique courses developed through close collaborations with industry partners have earned the University of Chester's Department of Chemical Engineering worldwide recognition.**

This year, the Department was involved in a trio of nominations in the prestigious 2019 IChemE (Institution of Chemical Engineers) Global Awards ceremony, hosted by actor Warwick Davis, in Hull on November 7.

The IChemE awards celebrate outstanding achievement in chemical, biochemical and process engineering and highlight how these disciplines are providing solutions to major issues facing societies internationally.

The University, in partnership with a group of companies including Unilever, Cavendish Nuclear and AECOM, is pioneering a new model for training engineering graduates. The Chemical Engineering Degree Apprenticeships are the first in the UK to offer flexi-learning degrees that have been created to train the next generation of professional chemical engineers. The programme was nominated for the IChemE Team Award 2019.

Professor Steve Wilkinson, Head of Chemical Engineering at the University of Chester, said: "This will create a new type of chemical engineering graduate, who will earn their degree without debt and with four- or-five years industrial experience, ready to move into roles of greater responsibility. The degree apprenticeships provide a fast-track to chartered status for the leaders of the future, providing a completely new way to train and recruit high calibre graduates."

Twenty-two-year-old Angus Strowbridge, a process engineering technician at AECOM in Leeds, is undertaking a degree apprenticeship in Chemical Engineering at the University. Angus, who started his apprenticeship degree course in September, was a finalist for the IChemE Young Industrialist 2019.

In a separate initiative, the University, in collaboration with the IChemE Nuclear Technology Special Interest Group, was also nominated for another IChemE award in the Training and Development category, for a new lecture series to teach nuclear technology.

Taught by chartered engineers from a range of companies including Sellafield Ltd., Rolls-Royce and EDF Energy, the lectures aim to bridge the gap between academia and the nuclear industry, showcasing the different engineering roles available and the critical work undertaken by chemical engineers in the sector.

Bill Harper, of Sellafield Ltd.,



explained: "We developed this lecture series for the final year MEng students who have done the theory and now want to apply it.

"We've been really impressed by the number of busy professionals who want to give up their time to inspire the next generation of chemical engineers. The bonus is that it has given students an insight into future job opportunities and some valuable case studies that they can use at interviews."

Lee Greenlees, from Rolls Royce in Derby, who helps deliver the sessions added: "We hope that other universities and industries will be interested in following this collaborative teaching model."

Steve commented: "It's an honour for the University of Chester to be recognised in this way – and to work alongside people throughout industry that are as passionate about learning as we are."

Angus, who attended the ceremony with his managers from AECOM, was disappointed not to win the award for which he was nominated, but added: "The awards' ceremony was a great night, but not a late one for me since I had an early start at work the next day!

"Life is pretty full on for me renovating my house at the weekends and studying at Chester alongside my job – but I'm absolutely loving the opportunity."

**AECOM Process Technician and IChemE Young Industrialist of the Year 2019 finalist, Angus Strowbridge, centre, with AECOM colleagues Marie Thomas, Senior Process Engineer, and Bryce McDonald, Principal Process Engineer.**



**IChemE Young Industrialist of the Year 2019 finalist, Angus Strowbridge, at the awards, with the host, Warwick Davies.**



# St Rocco's Hospice finds its first 'Face'!

**St Rocco's Hospice has launched its #100Faces campaign – and the local charity has already found their first and second and third faces!**

All next year, Gary Skentelbery will quite literally be the face of St Rocco's Hospice – on their Wall of Fame, across their advertising and online.

Each of the charity's 100 Faces will pledge to raise £1000 to help fund the vital work the hospice does for people with life-limiting illnesses in Warrington.

So do you think you have what it takes to be a Face?

How you raise the money is entirely up to you - but St Rocco's will be behind you every step of the way.

They'll be helping with fundraising tips, motivational moments, meet ups and all the information you need to kickstart your challenge.

But they won't stop there – they will keep in touch all year, finding out how you're getting on and shouting about your fundraising to all their

followers.

At the end of the year, they'll celebrate your achievements in style, with awards for the best (and most inventive) fundraisers.

So do YOU have what it takes to join our #100Faces?

Sign up now online at <https://www.stroccos.org.uk/100faces> or email [marketingteam@stroccos.org.uk](mailto:marketingteam@stroccos.org.uk)

Where will the money go?

Every single penny raised by the 100 Faces will go directly to helping those with life-limiting illnesses, their carers and their families.

It costs £4.2 million every year to provide all of the care. That's £80,000 a week, £11,000 a day or £8 a minute! Whichever way you cut it, it's a huge amount.

Your generous support will make sure that their care is available, free of charge, for anyone in Warrington who needs it.

With thanks to Warrington Worldwide, 100 Faces Media Partner.



## Apprentice joins team at Chamber

APPRENTICE Carlyne Kasangwa has joined the team at Warrington & Vale Royal Chamber of Commerce to assist with admin.

She has joined on an apprenticeship course with Warrington Vale Royal College.

Carlyne said: "I chose this course because business is something that has always been on my mind. I find it very intriguing dealing and sorting out clients enquiries and how a business is run."

"So far, I'm enjoying my role and learning new things in the office

and getting to know my colleagues who have been very helpful and welcoming."

"Previously, I've worked in warehouses but it wasn't challenging enough for me this is why I chose to do a business administration course to gain more skills and expand my knowledge for a better and brighter future."

"I've undertaken media production at Stoke on Trent College, but I'm

finding this course very exciting and utilising my previous skills for Microsoft, research and IT into it which has been very helpful to understanding what I'm expected to do."

"My hobbies include: Listening to music, travelling (exploring), reading, debates and socialising"

"I look forward to working with all of you in the near future."

## Chancellor visits Chamber to hear from business leaders

THE Chancellor of the Exchequer Sajid Javid visited Warrington Chamber of Commerce to hear directly from businesses leaders in the town ahead of the General Election on Thursday, December 12.

In a round table discussion hosted by Warrington South Parliamentary Candidate Andy Carter, Mr Javid answered questions on the changing face of the High Street, opportunities for businesses to invest in training and development, the success of Warrington businesses exporting to Commonwealth Countries and the impact of Brexit on business in Warrington.

Relating directly to his own experience of his parents' family business, Mr Javid said he recognised the challenges of running a business and the need for certainty when making business decisions.



Carlyne is pictured with Chief Executive Colin Daniels.



The University of Chester's Institute of Policing welcomes the first intake of Cheshire Constabulary's Police Constable Degree Apprenticeships.

# Institute of Policing welcomes the first intake of Apprenticeships

**In partnership with Cheshire Constabulary, the first cohort of Police Constable Degree Apprenticeships has started studies at the University of Chester's Institute of Policing.**

Twenty-nine Cheshire Constabulary Police Constable Degree Apprentices have started their degree programme, which will see them divide their time between University studies at the University of Chester's Warrington Campus, and policing with Cheshire Constabulary.

The University has worked in partnership with Cheshire Constabulary since 2008, at the time when all initial constables and trainee detectives attained a foundation degree, whilst undertaking their training. In January 2015, the University launched its Institute of Policing which was established in partnership with Cheshire Constabulary, to raise the profile of police education and to offer a number of courses for anyone contemplating a career in policing.

Since then, the Institute has been delivering both undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses, which prepare students for a career within law enforcement. Each course enables students to gain transferable skills that sees students graduate and obtain positions in many other occupations, as well as in policing.

Geoff Elvey, Head of the Institute of Policing, said: "This is a very exciting time for policing. It is with great pleasure that we welcome the Cheshire Constabulary Police Constable Degree Apprentices to the University of Chester, along

with Cheshire Constabulary Police Trainers, who will be working alongside the Institute of Policing teaching team in the delivery of the curriculum and assessment. The implementation of the College of Policing, Police Educational Qualifications Framework (PEQF) sees policing working with Higher Education Institutions to professionalise the standard of police education. However, more importantly, it recognises the valuable contribution made by police officers and staff, for the complex roles they deliver in keeping communities safe and supporting those most vulnerable within our society, by providing them, quite rightly, with higher academic professional qualifications.

"To have the Chief Constable of Cheshire Constabulary come and visit the new students at the University of Chester demonstrates the commitment of the force to the PEQF. Both the University and the Constabulary play a major role within the Cheshire community and I think it's fair to say that all the team are looking forward to developing this partnership as we move forward on this exciting journey."

Chief Constable of Cheshire Police, Darren Martland, said: "Policing is an extremely rewarding career. However, it can also be challenging and complex and it's essential that all officers have the skills and knowledge they require to do the job effectively.

"The Police Constable Degree Apprenticeships provides new recruits with the opportunity to learn on the job by dividing their time between front line policing and

studying. Ensuring that they develop the knowledge they require while also giving them the opportunity to learn first-hand out on the beat."

Those Police Constable Degree Apprentices who have already started their Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship have commented on the course below:

*"The best route into the police. Such a great way to prepare for today's world of policing."*

**Rebecca Jones.**

*"Revolutionary opportunity to join the most unique role, combining University and the police."*

**Lewis Williamson.**

*"A huge amount of support is offered throughout the course from Cheshire Constabulary and the University of Chester."*

**George Shepherd.**

*"A 21st-century, innovative course, equipping the police officers of today."*

**Josh Morris.**

*"So far this course has been diverse with true reflections on front*

*line policing, delivered by truly passionate tutors."*

**Lucinda Firman.**

*"Giving everyone the chance to complete a degree in policing; especially people who thought that chance had passed."*

**Dan Pheasey.**

*"This course has shown how important it is to have a well-rounded and professional attitude towards the role of a police officer."*

**Robyn Taylor.**

*"A great way of learning on the job, taught by the people who know best."*

**Lewis Hand.**

Mark Williams, Cheshire Constabulary Police Trainer for the Police Constable Degree Apprentice course, added: "The Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship is designed for the 21st-century police officer who needs to be critically astute, innovative, emotionally aware, reflective and caring. Combining academic thinking with practical policing skills will prepare the apprentice for the complex and fast moving world of professional policing."

## Chamber Luncheon

The next Chamber luncheon takes place at Priestley College on Thursday February 6th at 12 noon.

Guest speakers will include Gary Skentelbery from Orbit News, Catalyst Choices and Cheshire Fire & Rescue.

The cost of the event is £23 and includes a buffet lunch.

To make a booking please email [info@warrington-chamber.co.uk](mailto:info@warrington-chamber.co.uk)



# New manager aims to transform iconic hotel into market leader

**THE Park Royal Hotel at Stretton has a new General Manager, Mark Illingworth, who aims to use his experience to transform the iconic hotel into a market leader.**

Mark has 25 years' experience which has seen him go from being a Director for Thomson Select, leading, managing and developing their specialist hospitality recruitment and consultancy agency, to managing major hotels across the country, including the Samlesbury Hotel, AccorHotels and more recently the Mercure Haydock Hotel.

During this time he has successfully executed strategic business, marketing and revenue growth plans that have led to developed hotel operations and enhanced guest experiences.

Mark said: "I have also developed marketing strategies, which have also

achieved strategic and operational goals.

"I have now taken on a new challenging management position at The Park Royal Hotel, part of the Almarose hotels and resorts group. Bringing my wealth of experience in this role, I am excited to lead the iconic, well-respected hotel for a growing hospitality company. I look forward to taking this hotel to the next level and being part of the transformation project that will see a fresh rebrand and refurbish programme."

Almarose Hotels have an exciting portfolio of hotels throughout the country.

Mark added: "I am very keen on joining this developing company and utilising my wealth of experience to transform this iconic hotel into a market leader in 2020."



## Apprenticeship success for trainee electrical contractor

A Student at Warrington & Vale Royal College is celebrating an apprenticeship as an electrical contractor after gaining valuable work experience on the new Time Square development.

Paul Turner the site manager of Vinci allowed construction work placements since the project started in 2017. Student Ethan Woodier was on a L1 full time Electrical course at the college.

He attended work placement in March 2019 and worked alongside Bowker (electrical contractors) who are based in Morecambe but working on the Warrington site.

Whilst on site he made such a good impression, his supervisor Steve Elliott asked him to attend on his days off from college. He has now been taken on by Bowker as an apprentice.

A delighted Ethan said: "This was such a great opportunity to attend work placement whilst studying on my full time course. I gained experience on such a large site working alongside 300 construction workers."

Faye Hennessey Business Development Executive said: "This was an amazing opportunity to work closely with Paul Turner from Vinci.

"The site took on over 400 Warrington and Vale Royal construction learners to look over the new development. Ethan then had the opportunity to attend work placement with Bowker electrical on the Vinci site.

"With his determination and willing to learn he has now gained an apprenticeship with them. What a brilliant success story for one of our electrical learners."



# Biology brought to life at Priestley

**PRIESTLEY College has teamed up with a Warrington business to help bring aspects of Biology to life in the classroom.**

CreativeHUT has donated equipment including 3D pens to help sixth formers gain a new perspective on science including exploring DNA structures.

"It is more helpful than just using a textbook because you can see

for yourself how DNA adapts to its different functions," said Faine Spracklen, a former pupil at The Heath.

"It was really easy working with CreativeHUT because they gave us a demonstration and tips when we needed help."

3Doodler pens are the result of one of the most successful Kickstarter projects of all time and the best-

selling 3D printing product.

More than 2.5 million 3Doodlers have been sold making a difference in more than 8,000 classrooms across the world.

At Priestley College, young biologists have used them to create molecules thanks to the donation from CreativeHUT. Future projects are planned using the new kit worth more than £800.

Nicola Kleiser, of CreativeHUT which is based at the Pyramid Arts Centre, said: "We are a STEAM resource and training partner, working closely with educationalists to inspire the development of 21st century skills amongst their students.

"The 3Doodler seed project, which the DNA session was part of, is a way of encouraging students to learn more effectively through creative challenges."



Alex Adams making use of the 3D pens at Priestley College.

## Graduate hopes to inspire young people to aim high



A GRADUATE is hoping to raise the aspirations of young people in Warrington through his work at Priestley College.

Tom Ward, who went to Oxford University and secured a Masters at York, will be based at Priestley as part of Oxnet – an Oxford University access programme.

"My role will be about stretching and challenging the most able students so they reach their full potential," he said.

"One way of doing that will be to get them thinking beyond the curriculum and pushing them to consider universities they might not traditionally have thought were within their reach."

Tom's role goes beyond Priestley as he is Oxnet Coordinator for Languages in the North West.

Priestley College is an Oxford University regional hub and Tom will be organising Easter and Summer camps at the Loushers Lane campus for students aiming to excel in languages.

The 22-year-old, who grew up in

Northwich, secured a First in History and Politics at Oxford University before completing a Masters in History at York.

He now hopes to inspire others by sharing his experiences of securing a university place.

"Until I was 16 going to Oxford was not on my radar," he said.

"That will be the same for a lot of young people in Warrington, but it helps to break down barriers if you see it as an option from a younger age."

Priestley College runs a programme called 'The Graduate' to help those aiming to study at Russell Group universities.

This year a record number of early applications have been made to the UK's top universities by Priestley students – 16 of which are aiming for Oxford and Cambridge.

"Priestley has already made great strides in recent years in changing young people's perceptions of what is achievable and I am looking forward to continuing that work," said Tom.





## Disability charity opens new shop premises

**Warrington Wolves' legend Bennie Westwood was on hand to help Warrington Disability Partnership open their new shop premises at Golden Square.**

The charity founded by Chief Executive Dave Thompson, has moved from their original Warrington Disability Trading premises inside

the Golden Square shopping mall, to new larger premises facing out onto Sankey Street.

Deputy Mayor of Warrington Cllr Maureen Creaghan was on hand to perform the official opening, alongside Wolves' legend Westwood, who has been a great supporter of the charity over many years.

During the opening Dave Thompson, who founded the charity after breaking his neck playing American football, explained how the Disability Trading Company had grown over the past eight years, starting off as a £30,000 business and now well on the way to becoming a £1.1m business.

Further expansion plans are proposed with the charity now looking to open another branch at Birchwood, adding to their other premises at Beaufort Street and Liverpool.

The new premises provide extra space for displaying disability aids as well as test driving scooters in store.

## Christmas is the time to celebrate!

The festive season at Blue Whale Media Ltd means only one thing; celebration!

For the team, Christmas is a time to spend team building and reflecting on the year's achievements and enjoy a few themed competitions. The Blue Whale Media Ltd team have a jam-packed Christmas schedule to see them through to the new year in good spirits!

Christmas for the festive bunch at Blue Whale Media Ltd team began on 2nd of October. As soon as the clock struck midnight, the tinsel and baubles were dug out from the back of the cupboard and the decorating of the office began. Christmas songs were aplenty during the decorating. The team go all out every year, with wreaths, door bows and baubles hanging from the ceiling, the office feels like a Christmas grotto. And of course, every decoration is compliant with the Blue Whale Media Ltd colour scheme; navy blue and gold.

With the office looking and feeling festive, the team enjoy planning their upcoming Christmas competitions and parties. The annual gingerbread decorating contest is always a great afternoon in the office and lets the group showcase their creativity. This year, Operations Manager Stef will be the judge of each round. The overall winner will be decided by a poll on social media, so be sure to check out our Facebook page on 13th December and choose your favourite gingerbread man!

Towards the end of the year, the team take a staff outing to the Manchester Christmas Markets to sample the tastiest treats and enjoy a night walking through the quaint wooden stalls.

Just before the Christmas break is the Blue Whale Media Ltd Christmas party and Secret Santa. In an attempt to tackle the dreaded Secret Santa problem; what to buy? The team have developed a small questionnaire sheet that is filled with hints and tips to help each member buy the best Secret Santa gift they can. However, it is a particular skill trying to take a sneaky look at the folder without giving the game away!

The Christmas party is an excellent way for every business to wind down and celebrate the year's achievements. Every year the Blue Whale Media Ltd team enjoy a meal and a night on the town as a final farewell to the working year and the start of well-deserved rest. Over the years, the Christmas party has provided a few comedy moments, and the group have a feeling that 2019 will be no exception.

The whole team and office dogs at Blue Whale Media Ltd would like to extend holiday greetings and well wishes to all of their customers and clients. Everyone in the office hopes that you enjoy your Christmas break and want to take this time to wish you a happy and prosperous new year.



# Magnificent seven showcase their research

**SEVEN** postgraduate researchers from the University of Chester, who are based at Thornton Science Park, have showcased their research at an Eco Innovation conference.

All the students are studying at the University of Chester through the Eco-Innovation Cheshire and Warrington project, which is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. Each of them is working with an SME on collaborative research, aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop low carbon technologies.

They attended Eco-I 2019, which took place at Lancaster University, the University of Chester's project partner in Eco-Innovation. It brought together academia, industry and policy, to share how recent research advances are driving eco-innovation across six key global challenges: energy; waste; food; water; resource efficiency and natural capital. The conference highlighted and showcased innovation for clean and sustainable growth – and celebrated the importance of collaboration.

Keynote speakers included Mark Knowles, Head of Low Carbon at Liverpool City Region LEP; Dr Ruth Alcock, Clean and Sustainable Growth, Science Innovation Audit; and Sir Ed Davey, former Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. There was also a presentation by the CEO of the Eden Project International Ltd, David Harland.

University of Chester MRes students: Hannah Eccleston, Ahsen Senturk, and Georgios Balia; and PhD researchers Sheena Worthington, Mohammadali

Mozafarian (Sepehr), and Mubashra Latif had the opportunity to network and showcase their research work through poster presentation; while PhD student David Cann discussed his research work by lecture presentation under the category 'Resource efficiency'. Details of some of their individual projects can be found here: <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/eco-innovation-cheshire-and-warrington/research-and-innovation-projects/phd-projects>

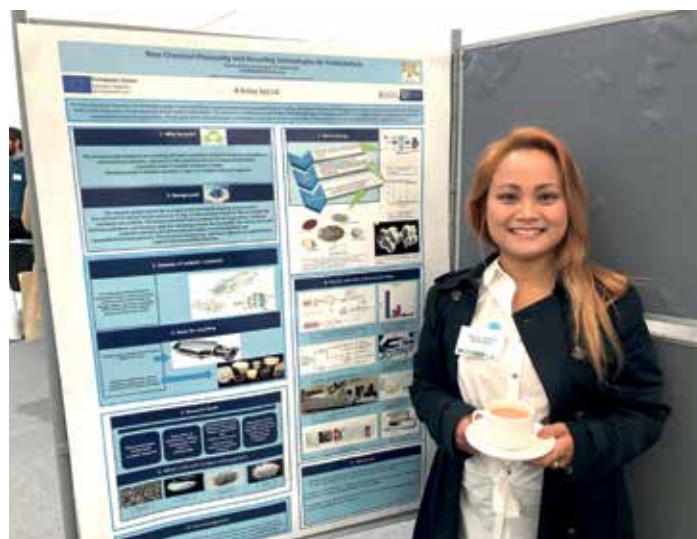
PhD student Sheena Worthington said: "The conference was about encouraging people, especially businesses, to safeguard the welfare of the environment and people's health. It was all about creating processes, services and new products that provide a positive impact to both the environment and to our very existence. It had a perfect mix of topics, such as energy, food, waste, water, resource efficiency and natural capital. Overall, the main aim was to take action in stabilising our climate. The conference was a wonderful event, well organised with good talks. It was very inspiring, very enjoyable and, academically, very profitable."

John Morris, Technical Officer, Eco-Innovation Cheshire and Warrington, said: "I was really impressed by the global attendance at the conference. I know we all advanced our knowledge from new ideas. Looking forward, with shared know-how and joint ventures, Eco-Innovation will benefit business and the environment."

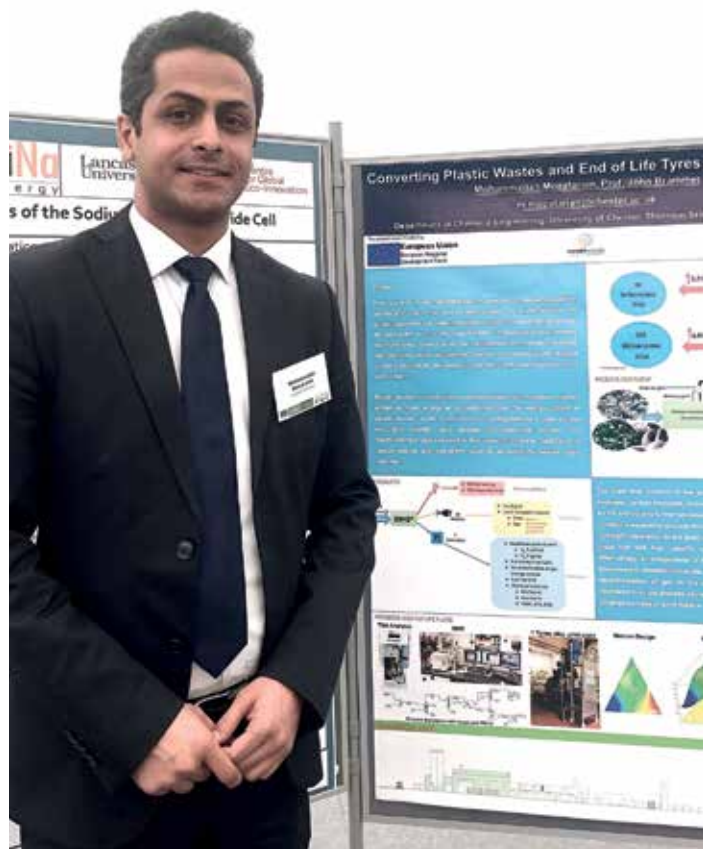
To find out more about Eco-Innovation Cheshire and Warrington, visit: [www.chester.ac.uk/eco-innovation](http://www.chester.ac.uk/eco-innovation)



The researchers from the University of Chester at the Eco-Innovation Conference: John Morris; Mubashra Latif; Sheena Worthington; Hannah Eccleston; Mohammadali Mozafarian (Sepehr); Georgios Balia and Ahsen Senturk.



Sheena Worthington with her research poster.



Mohammadali Mozafarian with his research poster.

## Awards abound for region's most innovative entrepreneurs

A number of the region's most innovative entrepreneurs have been celebrated at a prestigious awards ceremony in the heart of Chester.

Held at the city's Storyhouse Theatre and hosted by the University of Chester, the Innovation to Commercialisation (I2C) Awards 2019 recognised the extraordinary achievements made by eight of the 120 businesses from across Cheshire and Warrington which have benefited from the I2C project over the last two years.

Funded by the European Regional Development Fund, and delivered by the University of Chester, I2C has helped eligible SMEs to introduce innovation to their organisations and effectively bring new products, processes and services to market. Along with I2C's own team of engineers

and specialist equipment, I2C has also offered SMEs access to the University of Chester's state-of-the-art skills, equipment and resources, based at Thornton Science Park and NoWFOOD, which is based at the University's Parkgate Road Campus in Chester.

Beneficiaries of I2C have included a huge variety of SMEs, ranging from the smallest start-ups to more established companies, looking for support on a particular part of their business. The project has resulted in 28 new products being brought to market, 84 new processes being introduced to business and 10 new jobs being created. Innovations have included a new cooling therapy, numerous food and drink products, including pet food, luxury accessories, renewable technology, chemical processes and many more.



# Churchill's great-grandson opens University Business School building

**The great-grandson of one of Britain's most revered statesmen has officially opened a building at the University of Chester's Business School named after his inspirational relative.**

Jack Churchill, descendant of Sir Winston Churchill, unveiled a plaque at Churchill House at the University's Queen's Park Campus. The plaque included a quote attributed to Churchill himself, and suggested by his great-grandson, Jack: "We must strive to combine the virtues of wisdom and daring".

Sir Winston Churchill was the inspirational statesman, writer, orator and leader who led Britain to victory in the Second World War. He served as Conservative Prime Minister twice - from 1940 to 1945 and from 1951 to 1955.

The official opening is also one of a number of activities taking place this academic year as part of Chester Business School's 20th anniversary celebrations.

Part of the University's Business School, Churchill House was built in 1937 as the Western Command headquarters for the west of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and was much used during World War Two. Leaders such as Churchill, French General De Gaulle and US supreme commander Eisenhower reputedly met in this building for top secret meetings. There was also a secret network of underground rooms underneath Churchill House which were related to the war effort which are currently sealed off. Both Churchill House and the newer Bridge House building used to be the regional headquarters for Lloyds Bank until 2009.

Not only an academic site, the Queen's Park Campus also operates as a much sought after corporate hub for a wide range of partners from the public and private sector.

Jack Churchill is a board member of the International Churchill Society and of BATA (British Assistive Technology Association). He is the Co-founder and CEO of Scanning Pens, one of the world's leading suppliers of mobile scanners. These portable electronic devices are predominantly used to support people with dyslexia to read independently in class, exams and the workplace. Jack - also known as John Spencer Churchill - lives in Wiltshire with his wife Charlotte and three children.

As part of his speech to the Business School, he described one of the members of staff at his business, Scanning Pens, who coincidentally happened to be a Business School Graduate. He said: "Two and a half years ago we were beginning to build a team based out of an office in Telford, Shropshire. One of the first people we hired was a young chap called Jim. He struggled greatly at school. At the age of 16 he was finally diagnosed with dyslexia, got the support he needed for his studies, went to

college and then came on to do a business degree here at the University of Chester. Jim is a rising star at Scanning Pens and has been promoted to business development manager for Ireland. He's got tonnes of confidence and never turns down an opportunity to further himself. I rang him yesterday and said "You went to Uni in Chester- how was it?" He replied "Amazing!"

After unveiling the plaque, Jack Churchill was given a tour of the building by Vice-Chancellor Professor Tim Wheeler and member of staff, Chantal Bradburn, who

shows visitors around the site as part of the popular annual Heritage Open Days.

Jack Churchill said: "It has been a great pleasure to be here in Chester to open this great building and to celebrate 20 years of the Chester Business School. Sir Winston Churchill was a great proponent of higher education, wholeheartedly understanding the benefits a University can bring. My great-grandfather never attended University, but I feel absolutely sure he'd be very proud of the fact that his name has been added to

the front of this noble and historic building that served out its duties in World War Two."

Professor Tim Wheeler, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Chester, added: "We are delighted that Sir Winston Churchill's great-grandson has officially opened Churchill House - named in honour of his great-grandfather, and in celebration of the building's history. The University is very fortunate to have such a wonderful facility as this and I believe that Churchill House is the finest Business School building in the country."



Left to right: Canon Dr Jeff Turnbull; Professor Tim Wheeler; Jack Churchill; Associate Professor Meriel D'Artrey and Associate Professor Kirstie Simpson, both from the University of Chester Business School.

## Visiting Chinese students share good memories at farewell ceremony

Visiting students from Shaanxi University of Science and Technology (SUST), said a fond farewell to the University of Chester at a special celebration of their time studying in the UK.

The students were welcomed by Professor Phil Harris, Executive Director of Business Research Institute China Centre (BRICC) and their tutor representatives Dr Phil Smith and Emma Simpson, who gave welcome speeches, congratulating them on their achievements and giving them best wishes for their return to China. Two of BRICC Researchers Ying Zhao and Ann Qian also joined in the celebration and shared their thoughts on culture and education at the event held at Churchill House, Queen's Park Campus.

All students expressed their appreciation of the opportunity to study at the University of Chester, to come and visit the beautiful historical city of Chester and to stay with a local family. They were very happy to share their individual experience during the three-month programme, including: their home stay; British food; British culture; trips and activities they participated in, such as skydiving, visiting Bentley Motors during a field trip to Crewe

and sightseeing in London, along with other experiences that the students loved to share and would treasure as precious memories. Most students also expressed their wish to come back to the UK to pursue further academic achievements and study.

The students were awarded with their programme completion certificates and study reports which recognised their hard work.

At the end of the session, the students enjoyed chatting with their tutors and having photographs taken with Professor Phil Harris, Executive Director of the BRICC and their tutors. They were wished the very best for their future.

Professor Harris said: "This was a lovely celebration of all the hard work and achievements by the students from China. It was fantastic to hear their positive experiences of both the University and the city."



Chinese summer school.



# College celebrates a year of success

PRIESTLEY College has celebrated the record-breaking success of its Class of 2019 as well as 40 years of excellence in the town.

Students and their parents were joined by tutors, award sponsors and local dignitaries at St Elphin's Church for the college's annual awards.

Addressing the students, Principal Matthew Grant complimented them on achieving Priestley's best ever A-Level results and an excellent set of vocational marks.

"I thank you for being a wonderful group of young adults who make my job, and that of my colleagues, such a rewarding one," he said.

"I, and everyone here tonight, are proud of your achievements and I wish you every success as you continue your journey."

Those who received awards represented all Priestley students who; achieved in exams and coursework, competed on sports fields, shone in performances, overcame personal challenges, completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award and tackled science and Maths Olympiads.

Congratulations also went to the football team who won the Cheshire

Cup and got to the national final as well as artists who produced work that was displayed in the town's indoor market and at Alexandra Palace, London.

Others secured places at university, apprenticeships or employment, and there was recognition for those who won the Barclays Tech Challenge, took part in Mooting competitions and represented Priestley in Parliament and at the Ministry of Defence.

Guest speaker Mark Henderson, a former Priestley student and son of the college's second principal, acknowledged the institution's role over four decades.

"40 years of developing, nurturing and enabling tens of thousands of students to become well rounded successful people is a legacy every member of staff should be proud of," he said.

Warrington Wolves – who run a rugby academy at the college – brought the Challenge Cup to the event in recognition of the fact three former Priestley students played a part in their winning run.

Also in attendance was the Mayor of Warrington Wendy Johnson, former student Laura Harrison, Reverend

Stewart McTaggart as well as other distinguished guests and governors.

"The college was named after that famed trailblazing scientist and free thinking philosopher Joseph Priestley," said Matthew Grant.

"I'd like to think that the Priestley we know today is built on the solid foundations that were laid 40 years ago by David Henderson and his fellow trailblazers, work that continued under the stewardship of

my predecessor Mike Southworth.

"In many respects we remain trailblazers and we dare to be different and take risks. We continue to innovate and to look forward, we continue to be inclusive offering students a comprehensive range of courses and, if need be, a second chance whilst ensuring every student is supported, challenged and inspired to reach their full potential."



Warrington Wolves' Lee Mitchell with Principal Matthew Grant next to the Challenge Cup.

## Silver success for radio graduate

The University of Chester's student radio station has once again enjoyed national success.

The Cat Radio, which is based at the University's Warrington Campus, walked away with the Silver Award from this year's prestigious Student Radio Awards.

Contracting to Cheat, an hour long programme about Essay Mills produced by Radio Production and TV student Tom Marland as part of his final year radio project, received the Silver Award for the Best Journalistic Programming category supported by BBC Newsbeat. The 23-year-old, from Middlewich, went to the star-studded event in London, just two days after graduating at Chester Cathedral, to pick up the award.

Tom, 23, from Middlewich, said: "After such an amazing show put on by the SRA at Indigo at the O2, I was thrilled to have walked away with Silver in my category and have had some amazing and constructive feedback. I really wanted to tell the story and bring light on this ever growing issue, in a way that caught everyone's attention and kept them glued to the investigation!"

"I sincerely hope that for anyone who listens, it will make them realise the damage contract cheating does, not only to higher education, but also to the personal development of the students themselves."

The Cat Radio was also nominated for The Best Student Chart Show and Best Podcast.

Radio Production Programme Leader, Michelle Ponting, said: "To get three nominations was fantastic.

I continue to be proud of the work and effort the students put in. I am particularly happy for Tom. It's a well-deserved recognition for a really, really, good programme."

The Student Radio Awards

have over 500 entries across 16 categories. They are judged by over 100 industry professionals, to produce a shortlist of six nominees in each category. The nominees are then whittled down to Bronze, Silver and Gold Award winners by some of

the biggest names in radio.

The ceremony, which takes place each year at Indigo at the O2, is one of the key events in the radio calendar and a highlight in the world of student media.



Tom Marland.



# Out of this world tech business event success

**A former contestant of Dragons' Den, an investment expert who has helped raise £1.5bn for North West firms and an entrepreneur whose retirement lasted just four hours were among the speakers at a unique tech business event in Warrington.**

The event called 'On a Stick...' – took place in the town's Parr Hall under the stunning backdrop of artist Luke Jerram's 'Museum of the Moon' installation.

A 100 plus audience made up of high growth companies, entrepreneurs, marketing directors, investors and technologists were gripped by real-life stories from seven panellists who shared how and when they'd been promised the moon on a stick.

Organised by Carpe Diem the Opus Open House event was part of their Look Up Warrington campaign, the event made the most of the perfect scale model of the moon, part of Warrington's Contemporary Arts Festival, introducing AR/VR experiences of Life on Mars with demos from 4WardFutures.

But in its journeys from Beijing to Glastonbury Festival, the Museum of the Moon is unlikely to have witnessed anything quite like 'On a Stick...'

The speakers, ranging from start-ups to investment experts and experienced entrepreneurs, were split into three

panels and shared their tales of aiming for the stars and the mishaps they've encountered along the way.

Organiser Saul Peake, managing creative director at Carpe Diem, said 'On a Stick...' was one of the most ambitious business events they've ever put on.

"When we were told that Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon was coming to Warrington we wanted to organise something for the digital and tech sector that was different, insightful and fun. And 'On a Stick...' certainly delivered – and not just pizzas," he said.

"The speakers opened up about everything from how to raise investment to rocket fuelling their businesses and even what it was like to get offers from all five Dragons on Dragons' Den.

"At the end the audience took the opportunity to grab advice on surviving as a start-up, the right time to recruit and how to scale their business.

"The feedback we had was amazing and hopefully the businesses in the room will be inspired for their own journeys to the moon."

The speakers were (left to right in the photo above):

- John Kershaw, founder of M14 Industries, who pitched their dating site Bristlr into the Dragons' Den;

- Serial entrepreneur Lorna Davidson, who sold her first business for several million and is doing it all over again with the launch of The Mothership Group and RedWigWam;
- Atif Mahmood, founder and CEO of Teacherly, which has raised £1.5m and is breaking into the Middle East market;
- Former barrister Sue Wright, who is now the managing director of Signature Living overseeing 900 staff;
- Guy Weaver, director of Praetura Ventures, who has raised £1.5bn for North West companies during his career;
- James Bedford, former head of Investment Partnerships at Tech Nation, who has been involved in around 150 different investments

and fundraises; and

- Award-winning Anna Heyes, who was 21 when she launched her business Active Profile and now has a presence in Liverpool, Manchester and London and has grown her turnover to nearly £1m.

'On a Stick...' was sponsored by MAP and Yellowbus Solutions who both support Opus, the co-working collaboration space for digital creatives and technologists in Warrington's Pyramid run by Carpe Diem.

MC'ed by award-winning journalist Chris Maguire, he said it was one of the most memorable events he'd ever been involved in; "I've hosted between 400 and 500 events but having the seven-metre wide 'Museum of the Moon' as a backdrop was the most memorable setting I've ever seen."



## New training and consultancy company enjoying unprecedented success

S.L. Procurement Solutions Limited provides a unique approach to Supply Chain and Procurement solutions.

From 1 and 2-day introductory courses to supply chain and procurement, to tuition for CIPS Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Professional Diploma and also; revision and exam masterclasses, along with consultancy services too.

Director and Founder of S.L.

Procurement Solutions Limited Stephen Lovatt has been humbled by the number of companies and individuals in Warrington who are using the company's services in all aspects of procurement and supply chain solutions.

Stephen, who has extensive experience of working in Procurement roles, decided to step away from the office and share his experiences and knowledge in

tutoring and consultancy work, and has, over the last 15 years enjoyed an eclectic and successful career which gives a unique and highly regarded approach to CIPS studies and beyond.

The company have also enjoyed seeing junior buyers enrol for their Introduction to Purchasing courses to open up and pave the way up to the Diploma CIPs courses and beyond.

Stephen said 'many training providers concentrate solely on delivering just the CIPS content, which of course is essential. However, we have found that there are many talented and ambitious individuals who are keen to kickstart their career in Purchasing, Procurement and Supply in the Warrington area. Our introduction courses are an essential tool in setting the tone of the CIPS courses. We have thoroughly enjoyed steering the training cohorts through these courses and then on to their CIPS journeys as well.'

'We know that everyone's journey through their qualifications is different and we pride ourselves in enabling a tailored and personal pathway for each and every student, wherever they may be in their Procurement career'.

Along side classroom teaching of the CIPS programme, S.L. Procurement Solutions have also derived a very popular Distance Learning study approach to help those individuals who cannot get to the classroom

sessions. Whilst still providing 1-2-1 support the students have access to all study materials, with full tutor support without having to attend the classroom sessions.

Further more, any students who have ambitions to fast track their studies with multiple topics and exams can benefit from condensed and focussed 1-2-1 study sessions with Stephen to enable them to achieve their qualifications even more quickly.

The unprecedented early success of S.L. Procurement Solutions is, by Director Stephen's admission, attributed to the talent pool of ambitious, hungry-to-learn individuals in the local area who have helped place his company on the Procurement map. Stephen said 'we think the reason we have had so much success so quickly, although this can be due to our tailored study approach, moreover it's because we have been very lucky to be graced with amazing purchasing talent. Not only that but employers who are dedicated to their employee's engagement and in helping them in achieving their personal professional goals.'

Due to their early success, S.L. Procurement Solutions have enjoyed the opportunity to grow the business further with new roles in Business Development Management, Administrative assistants and Senior Tutors to join the company to sustain its growth.

## Basketball club seek business sponsors

Cheshire Wire Basketball Club is seeking sponsorship from Warrington business owners to ensure the future viability of the club.

Ten junior teams have been entered into the North West Division of the National Basketball League; however, the club says it requires 'significant funds' to cover the cost of training and match day venues in Birchwood, Culcheth and Warrington.

Paul Morrow, speaking on behalf of the Cheshire Wire Fundraising Committee, explained: "The club offers community coaching to more than 100 young players from Warrington – including under 12s – and we are proud to be one of the

most successful junior basketball clubs in Britain.

'Our young people are looking forward with excitement to competing in this year's league; however, our costs have grown considerably as a result of the ever-increasing rates to hire facilities for our teams to train and play in.

'We need to raise significant funds to ensure the future viability of the club and are, therefore, reaching out to the Warrington business community to help us achieve our goal through corporate sponsorship. Our young players require their support to continue to have fun, lead healthy lifestyles and learn about commitment, pride and passion in a safe environment."



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## Red carpet event launches Warrington Wolves new kit

**The Warrington Wolves fashion show to launch the new kit and sponsor is a roaring success.**

Warrington Wolves players ably assisted by the Wirettes strutted their stuff on the cat walk showing off the latest range of training kit as well as unveiling both the home and away kits for the coming season.

In what was described as a coup for the club and for rugby league itself was the announcement that the Wolves new shirt sponsors are globally recognised brand Hoover and their representatives attended the proceedings.

The Martin Dawes Legends suite had a large crowd of fans who were entertained not only by the fashion

show but also by stilt walkers and fire breathers.

Ben Currie and Luther Burrell had the honour of being the first players to wear the new home and away kit but the Man of Steel award on a very chilly evening went to Josh Charnley and Danny Walker who traversed the catwalk in body painted replicas of the new jerseys.

Ben Currie said it was great to be in a full pre season after two serious ACL injuries had cut short previous seasons preparations. He is looking forward to teaming up with the new signings and can't wait to play against the Toronto Wolfpack away from home as it presents a whole new challenge.

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# Wolves Hoover up new main sponsor

**WARRINGTON Wolves have announced leading domestic appliance manufacturer Hoover as the club's new principal sponsors.**

Hoover has agreed an initial two-year deal with the club to become the first-team's main shirt sponsor with branding rights throughout The Halliwell Jones Stadium and the club's digital platforms.

The deal is one of the most significant in the club's history and kicks off with the unveiling of the new 2020 home and away kits on Thursday 14 November.

Karl Fitzpatrick, chief executive officer at Warrington Wolves, said: "Warrington Wolves has a proud record of attracting a prestigious stable of official club partners and Hoover is no exception. We will work closely with Hoover to ensure both organisations get the absolute maximum from the partnership.

"On the field, we are one of the top-performing clubs in the Super League; having most recently lifted the Challenge Cup trophy in 2019 and reaching four of the last eight Grand Finals. Partnering with a brand that is as equally ambitious and known for its performance credentials paves the way for a very exciting 2020 season."

Antony Peart, director of brand and communications at Hoover Candy Group, added: "As a business that's recently opened offices and a showroom in Warrington we're

excited to become the principal club sponsor of the Wire. Hoover and Warrington Wolves share a passion for performance and being the very best at what we do, which is why we have invested considerably in this partnership and cannot wait

to see where the 2020 season will take the team.

"It's clear that the club has never forgotten its heritage in the 143 years since its inception, which is another reason why we wanted to

pursue this opportunity, as Hoover is a household brand that has over 110 years' experience of its own, manufacturing reliable products that deliver powerful, game-changing results."



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