

Insight magazine

April / May 2026



Family-run firm wins High Sheriff's Award

Bathgate Business Finance launches Wales base at M-SParc

New Business Awards event to celebrate 150 years of Warrington Chamber and the Wolves!
Plans underway to relaunch under new brand



Criminal Defence Solicitor wins Crime Leading Associate of the Year at Legal 500 Awards

Marcela Salter, Criminal Defence Solicitor at Bell Lamb & Joynson Solicitors has been named Crime Legal Associate of the Year at The Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards, recognising her outstanding contribution to criminal defence and her dedication to supporting clients through some of the most serious and complex cases.

Marcela brings more than three decades of experience in criminal law, having built a reputation for her resilience, compassion and depth of courtroom experience. Since joining Bell Lamb & Joynson in September 2021, she has become a highly respected member of the firm's Criminal Defence Team, known for her unwavering commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for her clients.

Her recognition follows another milestone for the firm, after Bell Lamb & Joynson's Crime Team was ranked in Tier 3 in the Legal 500 earlier this year, reflecting the strength and reputation of the firm's criminal defence work across the region.

Originally from Chile, Marcela came to the United Kingdom as a refugee in 1975. Fluent in both Spanish and English, she brings a

culturally aware and empathetic approach to her work, particularly when supporting vulnerable individuals and those facing language barriers.

Marcela began her career in criminal law in 1989, initially working as an office junior before progressing through roles including Magistrates' Court Clerk and caseworker across both the Magistrates' and Crown Courts. While working full time, she undertook her legal studies at Liverpool John Moores University, completing both her LLB (Hons) and Legal Practice Course, before qualifying as a solicitor in February 2016.

Throughout her career, Marcela has worked on a wide range of serious and complex criminal matters, including cases involving serious violence, homicide, sexual offences, complex conspiracies, organised crime and prison law. Her experience also includes involvement in several high-profile cases that have attracted national attention, including the nationally reported Brianna Ghey case.

She is widely recognised for her calm and determined advocacy and her ability to build trust with clients during periods of significant

stress and uncertainty.

Marcela holds Police Station Accreditation, is a Mental Health First Aider, and is currently awaiting the results of her Higher Rights of Audience examinations with the University of London, which will allow her to undertake advocacy in the higher courts.

Speaking about the recognition, Marcela said: "Criminal defence work can be incredibly challenging but also deeply rewarding.

Every client deserves to feel heard, supported and properly represented, regardless of their circumstances. I feel very fortunate to be able to do this work and to be part of such a dedicated team."

Outside of work, Marcela has been married for over 27 years and has two adult sons. She often credits the support of her family as the foundation that has enabled her to build such a long and demanding career in criminal defence.



From the Chief Executive

Stephen Fitzsimons



Spring is normally a time for growth and renewal, however this year brings another wave of chaos, unleashed by the US President on the global economy.

The UK was witnessing some green shoots itself - inflation had steadied at 3% and growth was forecast at 1.2% for 2026. Fiscal headroom from healthier tax returns had also increased slightly to £23.6 billion. And then the President decided to launch airstrikes against Iran.

Now of course, we all recognise that the Iranian regime is abhorrent, however the Chamber should only discuss the economics of the situation. About 20 million barrels of oil normally pass through the Strait of Hormuz every day, plus 20% of the world's liquefied natural gas (LNG). Attacking international shipping in this 24 mile wide waterway has led to oil prices jumping above \$110 a barrel. This has repercussions not just at

the petrol pump, but for all the processes that rely on energy to operate. This means just about everything, so increased input costs from holidays to the humble loaf of bread. These will be passed on where possible to consumers, so our current 3% inflation rate will soon be wishful thinking.

The UK is especially exposed to energy fluctuations, with an over reliance on gas which ultimately sets electricity prices. Renewables are not yet at scale to meet demand and the country no longer enjoys the buying power of the European Union. We always knew that when the US sneezed, the world caught a cold, however we've never experienced a President so erratic during all the years of the "special relationship".

We need to cheer ourselves up then, so what better way to do so than get excited about the Warrington Business Awards Plus on the 15th October. A group of

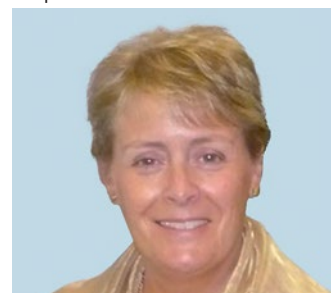
local businesses did a great job in hosting the awards in the past - Watsons, Morgan Digital, Voisey, Lloyds and others. It's a massive undertaking so the Chamber will run with them this year, coinciding with our 150th year(!) of operation. We are joined at this great milestone by Warrington Wolves, which is why the celebration will be held at the Halliwell Jones. Get ready to submit your entries!

Finally, a massive thank you and emotional farewell to Gail McGough who is retiring from the Chamber after 32 years loyal service - that's over 20% of our 150 year history! Other key events from 1994 include the first episode of Friends being aired, the Channel Tunnel opening, Nelson Mandela elected as South African President and Wet Wet Wet topping the charts for what felt like the whole year (you know the one).

Gail has held the Chamber together through thick and thin

so although we wish her well, we'll also really miss her. Warrington Chamber royalty.

Take care, Stephen



Shaping skills, strengthening business

For many businesses across Cheshire & Warrington, finding and developing the right talent remains one of the biggest challenges to growth. The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is helping employers turn that challenge into an opportunity.

At its heart, the LSIP brings Cheshire & Warrington's businesses, educators and local leaders together to align skills with growth.

By turning employer insight into action, the plan is helping to build a future-ready workforce, improve access to good jobs and ensure the region continues to thrive in a changing economy.

South & North Cheshire Chamber of Commerce leads this work as the designated Employer Representative Body for the area. Our role is to ensure that the voice of employers sits at the centre of how local skills and training provision evolves.

Businesses across the region have recently contributed their views through surveys, consultations and

sector discussions. These insights are helping build a clear picture of workforce challenges, skills gaps and future demand.

This evidence is already informing discussions with education and training providers, shaping how courses, apprenticeships and training programmes respond to the real needs of employers.

The next LSIP Report, due in summer 2026, will bring this intelligence together and set out updated priorities to support productivity, workforce development and economic growth across Cheshire & Warrington.

However, the LSIP is more than a report, it is an ongoing partnership between business and education. Employer insight is essential to ensuring skills development reflects what organisations need now and in the future.

Apprenticeship Levy Changes

Businesses should also be aware of changes to the apprenticeship levy coming into effect from 1 April.

While the reforms introduce greater flexibility in how levy funds can be used and transferred, they also shorten the timeframe for spending levy contributions. Funds will now need to be used within 12 months rather than the previous 24 months.

This means levy-paying employers will need to plan their levy use more actively. Funds that remain unspent after 12 months will expire and return to the Treasury.

One option is levy transfer, where businesses can share unused funds with other organisations,

including SMEs and supply chain partners. This helps support apprenticeships locally while ensuring levy contributions are put to productive use.

The LSIP team can support levy-paying employers who want to explore transfer opportunities, helping connect organisations and ensure funding is used where it can have the greatest impact.

To find out more about the LSIP or discuss apprenticeship levy opportunities, contact the LSIP team LSIP@sccci.co.uk



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Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive

EMR joins Circularity in Practice initiative

Warrington-based European Metal Recycling (EMR), a global leader in reprocessed materials, has joined the newly launched Circularity in Practice initiative as a founding member, supporting a nationwide effort to turn the renewable materials economy into practical action across UK industry.

Circularity in Practice, inspired by His Majesty King Charles III, brings organisations together to rethink how materials are used in the places where people live and work – keeping valuable resources in use for longer through reuse, remanufacturing and high-quality recycling.

For EMR, the initiative reflects a simple reality: tomorrow's products depend on today's materials.

Every day, materials sitting in workshops, factories, vehicles and landfills hold the potential to power the next generation of infrastructure. At EMR, the company's role is to keep those materials in use.

Working with businesses across construction, manufacturing, and infrastructure, EMR recovers metals and plastics that would otherwise be lost. Across EMR sites, those materials are sorted, processed and prepared for reuse or recycling before returning to supply chains as high-quality circular materials.

By keeping those resources in use – again and again – EMR helps reduce carbon, cut waste to landfill, strengthen the UK's long-term resource security and protect the resources the world depends on.

The company also works with manufacturers to design products with recycling in mind – because the circular economy starts long before a product reaches the end of its life. It starts at design, ensuring the materials in today's products can be recovered and recycled into the next generation of goods.

Bill Firth, General Manager Business Development at EMR, was a guest speaker at the Circularity in Practice launch event on 16th March.

Bill Firth said: "It is a great honour to be a Founding Member of Circularity in Practice initiative. It's inspiring to be part of turning circular economy thinking into real-world action and changing how we value and manage our finite resources. At EMR we see every day that tomorrow's products depend on today's materials. But achieving true circularity will only happen if we work together – sharing not just resources, but knowledge and experience too."

Chris Sheppard, CEO at EMR added: "The circular economy is at the heart of everything that we do at EMR. We create circular materials from our recycling activities which

are then supplied back into manufacturing supply chains to ensure that we do not need to extract resources from the planet."

The initiative encourages businesses to pledge to plan, act, partner and share progress as they embed circular thinking into their operations. Founding signatories include organisations from across construction, manufacturing, property, and professional services. By sharing practical examples and working together across supply chains, the initiative aims to unlock the commercial and environmental value of circular systems.

With more than 150 sites and

around 4,000 colleagues worldwide, EMR already processes millions of tonnes of materials each year – returning high-quality recycled metals and plastics to global supply chains and powering the circular economy at an industrial scale.

As industries look for ways to reduce carbon and secure materials, initiatives such as Circularity in Practice show what is possible when businesses work together to make the most of existing resources.

For more information on EMR, visit uk.emrgroup.com



Bill Firth, General Manager Business Development at EMR meets His Majesty King Charles III.



DV8 Designs celebrating 20 years of design thinking

This year marks a very special moment for Chamber member DV8 Designs as they celebrate turning 20 years old!

Managing Director and Founder Lee Birchall said: "As we reflect on two decades of creativity, passion and hard work, we just want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has been part of our journey. And as always, a special thank you to our amazing clients who put their utmost trust in us - it's always a privilege to bring your ideas to life."

"We would also like to thank our exceptional suppliers, whose continued support helps us consistently deliver outstanding

results for our clients."

"And of course, a huge thank you for Team DV8 for their dedication and creativity over the years. This journey would not be possible without you."

Since launching in 2006, they have grown the team, expanded its client base across hospitality, commercial and aviation sectors, collaborated with both national and international brands, won numerous architecture and design awards, enjoyed many team social events, taken part in charitable initiatives, and had the honour of speaking at industry events.

To celebrate this 20-year milestone,

they have pulled together some of their favourite highlights from along the way, take a look at their

journey at www.dv8-designs.co.uk/dv8-designs-celebrating-20-years-of-design-thinking



Mum launches online safety products business after being inspired by young son

Inspired by her young son's rare bleeding condition, a Warrington mum has launched her own business designing wearable safety products for children and vulnerable adults, such as wristbands and tags that clip to clothing, bags, lunch boxes and more.

Using QR and NFC technology, one scan or tap brings up emergency contact information and medical information should that person need help - potentially lifesaving critical info.

Boosted by a special Enterprise Accelerator grant of £500 from Warrington Chamber Plus, the online www.SafeandSnappy.com business is the brainchild of Woolson mum Becky Dutton-Geraghty, whose son Bobby has a rare bleeding condition, severe haemophilia type A.

Becky said, "I can't always be with him, so in the event of an emergency, I wanted a product that could speak for him when I couldn't.

"I built the software so people can set up accounts and edit their emergency and medical info at any time. Keeping it up to date and relevant, unlike engraved products. Bobby's medication

amount depends on his weight, so I wanted a product I could update anywhere, anytime.

She currently has three product lines.

"Scan me if I'm lost" (perfect for everyday families on busy days out, travel, holidays, or non-verbal or SEND kids. Also great for dementia adults, aimed at reuniting them more quickly.

"Scan in a medical emergency" (perfect for kids and adults with medical conditions, so people can access why to do in an emergency, where their medication is kept, how to administer it and emergency contacts)

"Scan for my 'can't eat' list of food allergies. (Perfect for kids going to tea at other people's houses or adults every day. List their can't eat list and where their Epi pen is kept etc)

Meanwhile, she has also started a pilot project inside a Warrington school, designing a system for keeping children safe on school trips.

If you are thinking of starting a business or have a new business less than six months old, you can contact the Chamber and apply for an Enterprise Accelerator grant.



Barrow Electrical and North West Cancer Research inaugural Charity Golf Day

Barrow Electrical is proud to announce its maiden charity golf day and evening gala in partnership with North West Cancer Research, scheduled for Friday, 10th July 2026.

Hosted at the prestigious Mere Golf Resort in Knutsford, this event aims to raise vital funds to address the regional disparity in cancer outcomes.

The event holds deep personal significance for organiser Laurence Barrow. Following a family member's brain cancer diagnosis in June 2025 and subsequent treatment at The Walton Centre, Barrow Electrical joined North West Cancer Research's 25% Club. This initiative addresses the stark reality that residents of the North West are 25% more likely to die from cancer than those in other parts of the UK due to significant underfunding in regional research.

The event offers a full itinerary designed for corporate networking and high-level competition:

- 18-Hole Championship Competition: A premier golfing experience for teams of four.
- VIP Amenities: Packages include a pre-round breakfast and a welcome gift bag for every player.

- Evening Gala Dinner: A three-course gala dinner for participants and guests.

- Professional Coverage: The VIP Corporate Team package includes complimentary professional event photography and digital screen promotion.

Organisations are invited to support this life-saving cause through several tiered packages designed to maximise brand visibility:

- Headline Sponsor £5,000 - Team entry, gala dinner for eight, naming rights to a hole, and prime branding.
- VIP Corporate Team £1,100 - Entry for four players, gala dinner for four, and logo inclusion in event collateral.
- Additional Options £500 - Choices include Hole Sponsorship, Longest Drive, or Closest to the Pin.

For Sponsorship Inquiries: Contact Jimmy at jimmy@nwcw.org

Every single penny raised will go directly to North West Cancer Research to fund vital projects across the region.

For Team Registration, contact Laurence at laurence@barrowelectrical.co.uk



GOLF DAY

10
JULY 2026

TEE UP FOR LIFE-SAVING CANCER RESEARCH

MERE GOLF RESORT
KNUTSFORD

VIP CORPORATE TEAM PACKAGE:

- PRE-ROUND BREAKFAST
 - WELCOME GIFT-BAG FOR EACH PLAYER
 - 18-HOLE CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION FOR FOUR PLAYERS
 - THREE-COURSE GALA DINNER FOR FOUR
- ADDITIONAL TICKETS FOR GUESTS CAN BE PURCHASED ON REQUEST.

£1100

Promotion as part of the package includes: Company logo on programmes and digital screens, mention on North West Cancer Research LinkedIn and complimentary professional event photography.

For more information and to register your team:
laurence@barrowelectrical.co.uk



Local MD launches Executive Peer Advisory Group

Warrington's leadership community is set to benefit from a new executive peer advisory group as Steven Mortimer launches Vistage locally.

While many business networks focus primarily on connection or similar interests, Vistage combines peer support with intentional structured challenge, world-class speakers and one-to-one executive coaching, all designed to improve the quality of leadership decisions.

Following 30 years in industry, 20 years in leadership and a decade operating at executive level, Steven is bringing a chaired, confidential forum to the region for leaders who want more than networking. They want honest conversations, sharper judgement and measurable progress.

In a fast-changing business environment and a continually changing geo-political landscape, CEOs, MD's and leaders are expected to deliver clarity, make high-stakes decisions and guide their teams through uncertainty. They need to project confidence and clarity when decisions are often far from it. It can be a very lonely position where focus on the business and your people is so intense, its easy to forget about yourself.

With a heritage dating back nearly 70 years and a global member access to over 45,000 members across almost 40 countries, Vistage is one of the world's longest-standing CEO peer advisory organisations. Within that community, there is almost no problem that someone hasn't faced before and is able to help with. Independent analysis by Dun & Bradstreet shows that Vistage member companies consistently outperform their peers by 2.2x, evidence of the power of disciplined peer accountability.

But for Steven, the story is personal: "I joined Vistage myself as a member during a period of significant pressure in my role as Managing Director", Steven states. "Growth targets were demanding, strategic decisions were complex, and every call carried consequences for people's livelihoods. Outwardly, you are expected to project certainty. Internally, the weight and the sleepless nights can be relentless".

"What I found from my group and my Chair was not just advice, but clarity and action. Through a proprietary structured and disciplined approach to issue processing, I was surrounded by a diverse selection of senior leaders who challenged my thinking, asked better questions, and helped me see what I couldn't see on my own. It was like having my own private board of directors, literally"

"Coaches, NEDs, mentors and market specific groups, all have value, but they remain a single source of perspective. In Vistage, I encountered a room of experienced operators from different sectors, with no competitors, no politics and no hidden agendas. Just honest, informed challenge and support."

"For the first time in a long time, I wasn't being politely agreed with. I was being tested. And I realised that was exactly what I needed."

The impact extended beyond strategy. It influenced how Steven approached leadership more holistically.

"Through the discipline and accountability of the group, not only did I make and action decisions quicker through the accountability of my peers which naturally led to my business improving. I also became more intentional about my wellbeing, energy and health. I lost weight. I reduced my alcohol

intake. I improved my sleep. I became a better father and husband."

"I learned that leadership is only one dimension of who you are. When you neglect the other parts of your life, performance in all areas eventually suffers."

Now, as a Vistage Chair, Steven is launching a new peer advisory group for leaders in the Warrington area who want to raise their standards and drive better outcomes.

Members of the group will all share several important characteristics. Most importantly, they will all have a growth mindset. They are leaders who remain curious, open to challenge and committed to improving both themselves, their organisations and that of their peers.

"Leadership is demanding. The stronger the leader, the stronger the business. But strength doesn't come from carrying everything alone. It comes from sharpening your thinking, protecting your energy and surrounding yourself with the right challenge."

If you are serious about raising your standards, not just maintaining them, this may be the right environment for you.

Leaders interested in exploring whether the group would be the right fit are invited to connect directly with Steven for a confidential conversation.

steven.mortimer@vistagechair.co.uk

www.linkedin.com/in/mortimersteven



Today Team announces sponsorship of Warrington Wolves Scholarship player Lawson Vella

Supporting local sport and investing in the next generation is a core priority for Today Team. The company has officially announced its sponsorship of Lawson Vella, a Warrington Wolves Scholarship player, for the 2026 season.

The sponsorship forms part of the club's recognised Player Development Pathway. Delivered by the Warrington Wolves Community Foundation, this initiative supports young athletes as they transition from grassroots rugby league into a professional environment.

The Warrington Wolves Player Development Pathway is designed to identify, develop, and support talented young players at every stage of their journey. Lawson's progression reflects the strength of this pathway and the depth of rugby league talent in Warrington. Alongside his involvement with

the Wolves Scholarship, Lawson has also captained Latchford Giants, demonstrating significant leadership and commitment at the community level.

This sponsorship holds particular significance for Today Team's Managing Director, Jamie Boyd, whose own rugby league journey began in the local area. A former homegrown Warrington Wolves player, Boyd joined the club while playing for Crosfields ARLFC. His firsthand experience with junior rugby league and community clubs is the driving force behind the company's commitment to structured development pathways. The connection between the two also comes full circle; last season, Boyd had the privilege of presenting the Today Team U14s trophy to Lawson at the 2025 Warrington Cup Final.

Commenting on the sponsorship,

Jamie Boyd said: "It's great to be involved and support Lawson as he progresses through the Warrington Wolves pathway. From what I've seen, he's got a bright future ahead of him. Grassroots and junior rugby league played a huge part in my own journey,

so supporting that pathway is something I really believe in."

The entire team at Today Team wishes Lawson, his teammates, and the wider Scholarship programme every success in the year ahead.



No Brainer partners with AI consultancy to train entire team as 'vibe coders'

Search-driven content agency No Brainer has launched a partnership with a pioneering AI consultancy that will see its entire team trained as 'vibe coders' – embedding AI-led product thinking across the business.

The Warrington-based agency is the first in the North West to formalise a partnership of this kind with its partners NoCodeLab.ai, with the collaboration underway and four exciting new AI-powered products already in development.

The collaboration with NoCodeLab.ai, an expert-led AI Skills and Capability building company run by Sara Simeone and Deborah Cleary, will help No Brainer unlock the practical potential of AI tools beyond experimentation and is designed to improve the AI literacy of the agency's whole team.

The partnership kicked off with a team-wide 'vibe coding' day held at No Brainer's Warrington HQ, bringing together every staff member to work hands-on across a series of live product ideas.

The session focused on building practical skills in prompt engineering, AI-assisted product development and rapid prototyping, with the aim of turning AI from a bolt-on tool into part of day-to-day delivery. Each team member is now playing an active role in building the company's AI product suite, with a view to making them industry-ready within weeks.

The move forms part of No Brainer's company push to invest in team growth, 'intrapreneurship', and to ensure its staff are equipped to help clients navigate the rapidly

changing intersection of search, content, Digital PR and AI.

Gary Jenkins, Managing Director at No Brainer, said: "AI is already reshaping how people search and discover brands, products and information, which sits right at the heart of what we do as an agency – so we didn't want to just play at this.."

"Our partnership with NoCodeLab.ai is about giving the whole team the confidence and skills to build with AI, not just talk about it, and this is our commitment to the team in terms of building their AI literacy.

"AI helps us accelerate our effectiveness and creativity, and this is an investment in our people as well as the business – giving the team future-facing skills that align with how we already prioritise training, development time and long-term growth at No Brainer. We're excited to use our products with clients and new prospects, and we're already making sure we have the necessary developer oversight. Some of these, we think, will be real gamechangers."

Sara Simeone, Founder of NoCodeLab.ai, said: "Vibe coding helps teams build confidence with

AI and understand what's possible much earlier in the process. When people across a business can prototype ideas, test assumptions and explore solutions before code is written, the end result is usually stronger and more considered".

"Working with the team at No Brainer has been a real pleasure, and they are the first agency in the region to complete training of this type. They're a great example of how AI skills, creativity and collaboration can come together to create tools that are practical and genuinely valuable."



Chamber member recognised among UK's top-rated professionals following national press feature

Warrington Chamber Plus member and Warrington local, Heather Hiley, has been recognised among the UK's top-rated professionals, following a recent feature in The Times, marking a significant milestone in a career defined by client-focused advice and consistent excellence.

The recognition reflects a combination of outstanding client feedback and professional achievement. With a consistent 5-star rating on Google Reviews, Heather has built a reputation for delivering clear, personalised financial planning that helps individuals, families and businesses feel confident about their financial future.

This latest accolade follows on from winning the prestigious Mike Wilson Award last year, an honour that celebrates professionalism, integrity, and a commitment to delivering exceptional client outcomes within the financial services partnership at St James's Place.

Reflecting on the recognition, Heather commented: "It's incredibly rewarding to see the positive impact of long-term client relationships reflected in both independent reviews and industry recognition. My focus has always been on helping people make better financial decisions, whether that's planning for retirement, protecting their families, or building a clear strategy for the future."

Providing retirement planning, IHT planning, investment planning and protection strategies, Heather offers holistic financial advice with an approach rooted in understanding each client's broader goals, not just their finances. This ensures that advice is not only technically sound but also aligned with what matters most to the individual or business owner.

As an active member of Warrington Chamber Plus, they regularly engage with the local business community and value the opportunity to connect with fellow members. They can often be found

attending Chamber events and are also accessible via the Chamber's online directory, offering a familiar and approachable presence for those seeking insight or guidance.

Looking ahead, there are plans to expand further over the course of

the year, with more to be shared in the summer as the next phase of growth takes shape.

To get in touch please see www.hhfinancialplanning.co.uk heather.hiley@sjpg.co.uk 07775594802





Bathgate Business Finance launches Wales base at M-SParc

Chamber member Bathgate Business Finance has expanded its operations with the launch of a base at M-SParc in Garwen, Wales.

Officially opened in 2018 and part of the University of Bangor network, M-SParc is a hub for knowledge-based businesses, innovation, and digital growth in North Wales. As part of its partnership, Bathgate will provide dedicated support with business finance for tenants, as well as businesses operating across North Wales.

The initiative is led by Bathgate Director and business development manager (BDM), Ian Adams, who lives in North Wales, and BDM, Gary Beggs, who will offer free business reviews, and provide opportunities to discuss funding needs or explore opportunities, sharing their expertise to help businesses find the best solutions to meet their needs.

Bathgate has supported a host of Welsh businesses over its 35 years in operation, brokering deals

through its extensive network of funders and providing own-book lending from The Bathgate Capital Fund, and it has worked closely with the Bank of Wales and Development Bank of Wales.

Recent deals include £114,000 for Anglesey-based chocolatiers Mr. Holt's, a co-investment supporting an additional loan of £150,000 from the Development Bank of Wales, to facilitate the opening of a new factory, and £7 million working capital facilities for a Welsh manufacturing business.

Working with Richard Fraser-Williams at Business Wales, it has also provided £1.1million to allow the refurbishment and transformation of The Crown in Bodedern into a contemporary gastropub, a £524,000 funding package to the historic Market Inn in Llangefni, allowing it to purchase kitchen equipment and furniture, facilitate extensive building works, and launch an accommodation offer, and brokered a £550,000 deal through funder Reward to

secure the purchase of Anglesey-based hotel and wedding venue, The Gwesty Carreg Br n Hotel in Llanfairpwllgwyngyll.

Bathgate Director, Ian Adams, said: "We are excited to join the community at M-SParc and support its mission to ignite ambition and innovation to power a sustainable Wales."

"Working with businesses across North Wales, we have seen the enormous potential for even greater innovation and economic growth, leading to employment, greater opportunities and prosperity for local people and communities."

"We want to support and strengthen that potential through our North Wales base. The team is looking forward to sharing its expertise to help businesses thrive and grow."

Olwen Davies, Contracts and Commercial Manager at M-SParc, said: "We are delighted to welcome Bathgate Business Finance as a

new virtual tenant at M-SParc. As a specialist provider of tailored commercial finance solutions, Bathgate Business Finance supports businesses with funding strategies designed to enable long term finance solutions. We look forward to supporting their continued success and fostering new collaborative opportunities within our dynamic network."

Since its establishment in 2018, M-SParc has made significant impact, providing a home for 52 businesses, creating more than 105 jobs and delivering more than 280 events. Supporting its objective to promote equality, diversity and the Welsh language in all of its activities, 83 per cent of people based at M-SParc can speak Welsh and 40 percent are learning.

To learn more about Bathgate Business Finance, www.bathgatebf.co.uk or contact Ian Adams on ian@bathgatebf.co.uk / 07880186846 or Gary Beggs on gary@bathgatebf.co.uk / 07496423803

New Business Awards event to celebrate 150 years of Warrington Chamber and the Wolves!

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of Warrington Chamber of Commerce, plans are underway to relaunch the Warrington Business Awards under a new brand.

Warrington Business Awards Plus will take place at the Halliwell Jones Stadium on Thursday, October 15 and be open to all businesses in and around the Warrington area.

The event will also help celebrate 150 years of Warrington Wolves, who are key members of the Chamber and the local business community.

It follows on from the successful rebrand of the historic Chamber of Commerce as Warrington Chamber

Plus following a merger with the Warrington Business Exchange.

With more than 300 members it is the largest and longest established business group in the town.

Chamber Chief Executive Stephen Fitzsimons said: "The Warrington Business Awards have existed in various guises over the years and the previous organisers put on a great event in 2022.

"We have rebranded and relaunched a new Warrington Chamber Plus and our directors felt now was the right time to recognise the great achievements of businesses in and around our town who do so much to support the local economy and community.

"It is also a fantastic opportunity to celebrate 150 years of the Chamber and Warrington Wolves."

"This will be a community event open to all.

Various sponsorship opportunities and how to enter will be announced in the coming weeks," added Stephen.

There will be 10 titles up for the grabs. For further information or interest in the event please email Business.Awards@warringtonchamberplus.co.uk

WCP Annual Business Award Categories:

- Business of the Year

- SME of the Year
- Entrepreneur of the Year
- Business Man of the Year
- Business Woman of the Year
- Young Person / Apprentice/ Student of the Year
- Outstanding Achievement
- Charity of the Year
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Employer of the Year



Dolce Schools Catering partnership accelerates sustainability drive

Warrington-based Dolce Schools Catering has announced new partnerships with Olio and ReFood as part of its ongoing commitment to sustainability and reducing food waste across the schools it serves.

The collaborations will enable Dolce – which caters for 1 in 20 schools in England and strong growth across Wales – to further minimise the environmental impact of its operations while supporting local communities and contributing to renewable energy generation.

ReFood – the UK’s number one food waste recycler – collects unavoidable food waste that would ordinarily go to landfill and processes it at its advanced anaerobic digestion facilities. There, food waste is transformed into biogas, a renewable energy source. Across ReFood’s three UK plants, this biogas generates enough electricity to power around 13,600 homes every year.

Meanwhile, Olio works with schools to ensure that any good-to-eat surplus meals are rescued and shared with the local community through its app-based network of volunteers. The initiative allows schools to reduce food waste while helping families and residents in their local area access nutritious food that might otherwise go to waste.

The partnership comes at a time when food insecurity remains a pressing issue across the UK, with around 11 million adults experiencing food insecurity and an estimated four million children starting the day hungry.

Ben Sheppard, Operations Director at Dolce Schools Catering, who is leading the sustainability drive, said: “Reducing food waste has always been a key part of how we operate at Dolce. Our teams work hard every day to plan menus carefully, manage stock effectively and ensure that as much food as possible is enjoyed by pupils.

“However, in a school environment it’s not possible to eliminate food waste entirely. Pupil numbers can vary day-to-day, and uptake of school lunches can fluctuate. That’s where our partnerships with ReFood and Olio make such a difference. They allow us to ensure that any unavoidable waste is handled responsibly – whether that’s being turned into renewable energy or shared with members of the local community who need it.”

One of the first schools to benefit from Dolce’s initiative is Hawarden High School in Flintshire, where the partnerships launched in February this year.

ReFood now collects the school’s food waste bins on a weekly basis and any surplus meals that are still perfectly good to eat are made available for collection and redistribution through Olio whenever the school has spare food.

Simon Budgen, Headteacher at Hawarden High School, said: “Working with Dolce, Olio and ReFood has completely changed how we approach food waste at Hawarden High School. Instead of worrying about unavoidable waste, we now know that anything left over will either be transformed into renewable energy or shared

with people in the local community who can benefit from it.

“It’s incredibly positive for the school. Our students are becoming more aware of sustainability, and staff feel proud to be part of a system that ensures surplus food is used responsibly rather than going to waste. It’s a simple idea but one that’s making a real difference.”

With more than 130,000 meals prepared daily across its network of 650 schools, the partnerships form part of Dolce’s wider sustainability strategy, which focuses on reducing waste, supporting communities and ensuring that school catering plays a positive role in both environmental and social outcomes.

By combining waste reduction, food redistribution and renewable energy generation, Dolce aims to ensure that as little food as

possible goes to waste while maximising the positive impact of the meals it serves every day in schools across the UK.

To find out more please visit www.dolce.co.uk



■ Ben Sheppard, Operations Director at Dolce Schools Catering.



Digital agency grows team following record year and new client wins

Wilderspool-based digital agency, Morgan Digital, has welcomed two new senior people into the business after a record 2025 and its biggest client win to date in 2026.

The business, founded by former Culcheth High School student Callum Morgan, has seen significant growth over the past 12 months. Alongside Morgan Digital, Callum is also a co-director of two Warrington attractions, Halloweenville and Spring Land. Seeing all three businesses reach new highs in 2025 has reinforced his belief that well-run businesses can thrive in the town.

Callum said: “Warrington is home for me, and I’ve always wanted to grow the business here. There’s a huge amount of talent in the area, and being based in Warrington hasn’t held us back at all. It’s allowed us to grow the right way and keep good jobs and decision-making local.”

As part of that growth, Morgan Digital has appointed Naomi Larkin as Operations Director and Holly McEvoy as Marketing Operations Manager, strengthening its leadership

team as demand continues to increase across website design, social media and paid marketing services.

Callum added: “Both Naomi and Holly join us with great pedigrees. For both of them, it’s the first time they’ve worked for a Warrington-based employer. I think that says a lot about how the town is changing, and how experienced people are choosing to build their careers locally rather than commuting into city centres.”

With a growing team, an expanding national client base, and strong roots in the local business community, Morgan Digital continues to invest in people and capability from its base in Wilderspool, while proving that ambitious digital businesses can be built and scaled from Warrington.

Callum concluded: “I’m really grateful for the support we’ve had, both locally and beyond Warrington. The last year has been a huge step forward, and I’m looking forward to seeing that momentum continue.”



Engineering firm continues growth in Europe with new office in Poland

Lymm-headquartered Key Integrated Services, a leading mechanical and electrical engineering company, has continued its growth in Europe with the establishment of a new office in Poland.

The new base will support existing clients on the continent as well as enable the business to further expand its operations across Europe in countries including France, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Spain and Sweden.

"We've been serving customers across Europe for a number of years, and given our expansion plans, we felt now was the ideal time to establish a fulltime presence," says Mark Poulton, CEO at Key Integrated Services. "Poland, located in Central Europe, is the perfect location to expand our operations across the continent. The new office will initially tap into the expertise and resources of the UK business with a view to the local operation building their own team in the future as the business grows."

Based in Katowice, Poland, the new

company will offer the full suite of mechanical and electrical services offered by the UK operation including decarbonisation, HVAC, low- and high-voltage installations and process engineering. As well as targeting established Key Integrated Services industries such as food & beverage and health & life sciences, the team will also pursue key European markets including automotive, manufacturing and paper and packaging.

The new business will be led by market entry and growth specialist Adrian Cios. Adrian has decades of experience in the engineering space with most of his time spent at Beck & Pollitzer, a leading global provider of machine installation and relocation services. During his career, he has been called upon to establish new operations in markets across Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

"Key Integrated Services has an excellent business model – one that I can see being successful in Europe," comments Adrian Cios, director – Europe, Key Integrated Services. "Mark has built the

business around what works best for the customer – bringing people, products and services together to meet specific client challenges.

"As well as identifying opportunities within Key Integrated Services'

existing client base, I'm looking forward to leveraging my own contacts as well as working with the wider leadership team to introduce new services to further expand our customer offer."



Chamber partnership drives £155,000 investment in local communities

Business introductions through Warrington Chamber of Commerce have helped leverage significant funding for Warrington's most vulnerable residents.

The Warrington Fund has

celebrated a remarkable first year, supporting 17,106 residents through 23 community projects and engaging 128 volunteers, with £155,000+ awarded in grants.

The innovative partnership,

delivered by Cheshire Community Foundation, brings together businesses including Sellafeld, EMR, C4 Projects, Crest Medical, Amentum, BGEN, Flex, Warrington Borough Council, Steve Morgan Foundation and private donors to tackle social exclusion in Warrington.

Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive of Warrington Chamber of Commerce, has played a crucial role in building the fund's success by connecting Cheshire Community Foundation with the business community. His introductions to companies like Crest Medical have helped establish a sustainable funding model that addresses critical local needs.

"I'm passionate about supporting Cheshire Community Foundation because they truly understand how to turn business investment into meaningful community impact," said Stephen Fitzsimons. "As a trusted partner, they've demonstrated time and again their expertise in identifying where funding can make the biggest difference. Through the Chamber, we've been able to introduce them to businesses who share our commitment to Warrington's future, and the results speak for themselves."

Despite Warrington's economic success, one in three children live in poverty and food bank usage has increased by 202% since 2019. The Warrington Fund was established to address this reality through a three-tier grant system: strategic grants up to £30,000, project grants up to £10,000 and micro-grants up to £1,000.

Major impact highlights include Pure Insight supporting 64 young people leaving the care system, Dad Matters helping 860 family members, Warrington Wolves Charitable Foundation delivering accessible sport to 460 children with disabilities and Radio Warrington reaching 11,000 listeners to combat loneliness.

One father supported by Dad Matters shared: "I went from thinking I would be useless to feeling like I can actually do this. I'm enjoying being a dad and I know my baby feels that."

The fund also demonstrated how even £500 can create lasting impact. StoryStitchers received a micro-grant that helped them build capacity and secure further funding. "We really appreciate how straightforward this entire process has been," they said.

With demand for support services rising due to the cost-of-living crisis, benefit delays and food insecurity, Cheshire Community Foundation is seeking new business partners by April to continue this vital work.

Businesses interested in making a donation of any size can contact Tracey Andrews at tracey.andrews@cheshirecommunityfoundation.org.uk or 07798 810557.

The Warrington Fund brings together businesses, individuals and the community to create lasting change, focusing on health & wellbeing, education & employment and improving community cohesion across the town.



Family-run firm wins High Sheriff's Award for Excellence in Enterprise

Warrington-based family-run business Barrow Electrical has proven that community impact outweighs corporate size after being crowned the winner of the High Sheriff's Award for Excellence in Enterprise.

Laurence and Claire Barrow accepted the prestigious award at a ceremony held at the University of Chester, joined by the High Sheriff Joëlle Warren MBE DL, Lady Redmond MBE, the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, and her husband, TV producer Phil Redmond. The category recognises businesses that have shown outstanding commercial growth and resilience.

In what many are calling a true "David vs. Goliath" victory, Barrow Electrical emerged triumphant in a field dominated by corporate giants, including those with turnovers exceeding £20 million. This proves that a dedicated, family-run team from Warrington can lead the way in both enterprise and community impact.

The judges' decision was rooted in Barrow Electrical's deep commitment to the region. Beyond their commercial success, the company was recognised for its significant social impact, driven by consistent support for multiple organisations and charities. For Barrow Electrical, "excellence" isn't just about the balance sheet; it's about the lasting positive impact they leave on Warrington and the wider community.

Fresh off their High Sheriff Award win and upcoming invitation to the King's Garden Party at Buckingham

Palace, Barrow Electrical is now looking towards applying for the King's Awards for Enterprise. Even as the accolades grow, the heart of the business remains the same: it's always about the team.

Laurence Barrow said: "It was an honour to be recognised alongside such large-scale companies, but the real pride comes from knowing this award belongs to the entire Barrow team. They are the ones on-site every day, representing us with our clients and delivering the high standards we have become known for. We simply wouldn't be celebrating this milestone without their hard work and dedication."

The High Sheriff's Award is one of the region's most respected accolades, celebrating leadership and resilience. For Barrow Electrical, the victory highlights a team capable of managing complex, high-standard projects for its clients while never losing the "personal touch" that defines a local family business.

Stephen Fitzsimons, Warrington Chamber Plus of which Barrow Electrical are a proud member, said: "It was an honour to attend the High Sheriff Awards and witness Barrow Electrical receive recognition for their efforts from peers across Cheshire. Laurence, Claire and the team have worked really hard to grow the business, whilst always giving plenty back through their charitable and community-focused activities. The company is a rising star, and the Chamber will continue to support them in maximising their potential."

While the awards now sit in their Warrington office, the team is already back on site, continuing

to provide the multidisciplinary electrical solutions that have made them a local success story.



Warrington Veterans and families invited for a coffee

Veterans and their families who live in the Warrington area, are invited to pop-in for a catch-up and brew, at a monthly Help for Heroes Cafe.

The sessions are organised by Nick Settle, who is the Community Builder for the Charity, on the second Wednesday of every month, at The Engine Rooms, Warrington. Nick said: "We want to create a warm and inviting atmosphere for veterans and their family members, to come along for a friendly chat. We know that veterans welcome the chance to meet with other like-minded people, which can help them deal with feelings of isolation."

"Veterans can sometimes feel they are forgotten by society. And if they're living with physical injuries, disabilities or mental illness they can become isolated and their mental health can spiral down. We want to do something about that."

The Office for Veterans Affairs and Family Survey (2022) shows that nearly one in three veterans who live in the UK experience loneliness. It's estimated that there are more than 6,800 veterans living in the Warrington area. The

Charity supports veterans and their families from any branch of the UK military - regulars or reserves - irrespective of length or place of service, and locally embedded civilians who worked under the command of UK Armed Forces.

Nick added: "There's no need to sign up for anything. Veterans and their families can just turn up and say hello, meet with other veterans, and find out about other services that the Charity has to offer."

"I'm hoping to find one or two veterans who are interested in volunteering to help build local, resilient networks for veterans and their families, to make Warrington a welcoming place for veterans."

The Cafe sessions run on the second Wednesday of every month, from 9:30- 11:30am at The Engine Rooms, Birchwood Park.

You can find out more information on Facebook www.facebook.com/events/1411188740730230/1411188744063563/?active_tab=about or by contacting Nick nick.settle@helpforheroes.org.uk

Help for Heroes champions the Armed Forces community and

helps people live well after service. The Charity supports veterans and their families with their physical and mental health, as well as welfare and social needs. It has already supported tens of thousands - and won't stop until every veteran gets the support they deserve.

The Charity supports veterans and

their families from any branch of the UK military, regulars and reserves, irrespective of length or place of service, and locally embedded civilians who worked under the command of UK Armed Forces.

To get support visit helpforheroes.org.uk or call 0300 303 9888



Cockhedge Shopping Centre sold after driving 98% occupancy surge

Asset manager and developer Altered Space has completed the sale of Cockhedge Shopping Centre in Warrington to Sheet Anchor Evolve, following a multi-year programme of urban regeneration and asset repositioning.

The project has successfully increased occupancy to 98% by floor area (94% by unit count), strengthened the tenant mix and introduced complementary uses such as leisure and food and beverage.

Altered Space still has ownership of a standalone 10,000 sq. ft unit within the retail park, where it previously secured full planning permission for a new GP hub capable of serving up to 12,000 patients. The aim is to deliver the healthcare facility during 2026–27.

The Cockhedge scheme has been owned and managed by Altered Space since 2019. Originally developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the centre had experienced declining occupancy due in part to the expansion of competing retail destinations in Warrington town centre. In response, Altered Space implemented a strategy to 'rightsize' and modernise the scheme, improving its long-term

viability while unlocking land for future town centre regeneration.

The programme included the demolition of approximately 65,000 sq. ft of redundant retail space to create a future residential development site, alongside a comprehensive refurbishment of the remaining commercial scheme.

Completed at the end of 2025, the works introduced four new external-facing retail units, a contemporary façade treatment, upgraded entrances and improvements to the public realm and car park.

As part of the transformation, the centre was also rebranded to reflect the heritage and identity of the local area, working with branding specialists Studio DBD.

Michael Brown, co-founder of Altered Space, said: "Cockhedge presented a classic town centre challenge, with an over-provision of legacy retail space that no longer aligned with modern demand. Our strategy was to reshape the scheme into a more sustainable and relevant commercial offer while simultaneously unlocking the long-term redevelopment potential of the wider site.

"The successful sale of the

commercial element reflects the value created through that repositioning, and we're pleased to see the asset move into its next phase under new ownership. Looking ahead, Altered Space remains committed to the ongoing regeneration of the wider Cockhedge site, with ambitious plans to further enhance its mixed-use offerings and community focused spaces."

Alongside the commercial repositioning, Altered Space has worked in partnership with Warrington Borough Council to bring forward a wider regeneration vision for the area. In 2022, outline planning permission was secured

for a residential masterplan of up to 900 homes across part of the Cockhedge site and adjacent council-owned land, including the former Newtown House office building.

The masterplan was designed by LIKE Architects with planning consultancy support from Lichfields and sets out a framework for a new high-density residential quarter within Warrington town centre.

The sale to Evolve marks a significant milestone in the long-term regeneration of the Cockhedge area, with the commercial scheme now successfully repositioned and the wider residential vision for Cockhedge continuing to progress.



FuelHub renews nutrition partnership with Matchroom Boxing

Premium meal prep company FuelHub has announced a renewed 12-month partnership with Matchroom Boxing as the organisation's official nutrition partner.

The new agreement reflects a shared commitment to wellbeing, high standards, and long-term collaboration.

This will see Warrington-based FuelHub continue to provide premium, nutritionist-designed meals, fuelling the entire Matchroom team across its UK headquarters in Brentwood, Essex, and its Bristol-based office. It will also support Matchroom chairman Eddie Hearn, Matchroom Sport founder and president Barry Hearn OBE, and Matchroom Boxing CEO Frank Smith personally, alongside Kai Peacock, Matchroom's head of fitness and wellbeing, ensuring nutrition underpins the demanding schedules of Matchroom's leadership and staff.

FuelHub also sponsors Matchroom's Fight Day 5k, a community-focused running event led by Eddie Hearn and held alongside key fight nights. The initiative brings fighters, fans, and partners together around fitness and wellbeing, extending Matchroom's culture of excellence beyond the ring and into everyday life.

FuelHub also featured in the 2025 Netflix documentary series Matchroom: The Greatest Showmen, highlighting its role

within Matchroom's approach to nutrition and wellbeing on a global stage. This renewal signals a clear commitment from both organisations to continue building a relationship founded on trust, shared ambition, and mutual support.

That focus on nutrition and wellbeing sits at the heart of FuelHub's wider work across elite sport. Since launching in 2019, FuelHub has become a trusted partner to teams and organisations across more than 15 sporting disciplines, including Team GB, the Premier League, England Rugby Union, and Super League Triathlon. Its premium, chef-prepared meals are designed to fuel the potential of everyday high-achievers through effortless, balanced nutrition.

Michelle Laithwaite, co-founder and CEO at FuelHub, said: "This renewed partnership with Matchroom reflects how closely aligned our values are. Matchroom is an organisation built on ambition, intensity, and high standards, and that mirrors everything we stand for at FuelHub. As a premium meal prep company, we transform the health and wellbeing of everyday high-performers through effortless nutrition, enabling them to achieve more, whether that's pushing boundaries in business, striving for athletic brilliance, or managing demanding schedules.

"To be fuelling the Matchroom

team across its key locations is a huge step forward, and we're proud to play a role in creating the conditions for their people to thrive day in, day out."

Eddie Hearn, chairman at Matchroom Sport, said: "Success isn't just about what happens on a fight night, it's also about the people behind the scenes and the standards you set every day. Nutrition plays a massive role in that, and FuelHub truly understands what it takes to support a busy, high-demand environment. We're pleased to continue our partnership with

them for what promises to be an exciting future together."

Frank Smith, CEO at Matchroom Boxing, added: "At this level, performance is built on consistency, and nutrition plays a key role for both our fighters and the wider Matchroom team. FuelHub delivers exceptional quality day in, day out, helping support the demands of a high-performance environment. This renewed partnership reflects the trust we've built and the ambition we share as we continue to raise standards across the business."



Birchwood Park marks 80 years at the heart of the UK's nuclear story

Birchwood Park in Warrington is marking a significant milestone this year, celebrating 80 years since the first meeting of the UK's atomic energy programme took place at the Risley site in a disused canteen.

That meeting, held on 4 February 1946 and led by Sir Christopher Hinton, later Lord, established the area as a focal point for nuclear coordination, design and innovation, bringing together an initial team of just 12 people tasked with designing, coordinating and delivering the UK's atomic energy programme.

From that moment, Risley became the design authority and heart of the nation's emerging nuclear infrastructure.

Over the following decades, teams based at Risley – now Birchwood Park – were responsible for the design, coordination and delivery of some of the most significant achievements in UK nuclear history, including the development of sites like Sellafield Springfields, and Capenhurst.

Eight decades on, Birchwood Park

continues to play a central role in the UK nuclear sector.

Today, it brings together over 6,000 nuclear specialists from more than 30 organisations in one dedicated nuclear cluster, uniquely supporting activity across the entire nuclear lifecycle. From research and design through to operations, decommissioning and waste management, it is the highest concentration of nuclear employment in the UK.

This enduring role and celebration comes at a time of renewed momentum for nuclear.

The North West remains the UK's leading nuclear region, with the sector forecast to grow by more than 8% annually and employment expected to increase by almost 50% by 2030, according to new figures highlighted by the Northern Nuclear Alliance in its Nuclear Week in Parliament 2026 paper.

From post-war reactor design to modern clean energy technologies, Birchwood Park's story reflects the evolution of the UK's nuclear industry itself – combining long-standing engineering excellence

with collaboration and innovation that continue to shape the sector's future.

Martin O'Rourke, Commercial Director at Birchwood Park, said: "This anniversary is a reminder that Birchwood Park has never been a peripheral site in the UK's nuclear story – it has been central to it for eight decades.

For many people, that story is personal – with second and third generations of families building their careers here. As the sector looks ahead, that continuity of skills and experience remains just as important as the innovation shaping the future.

With increased investment and demand for nuclear skills, our focus is on ensuring Birchwood Park, in partnership with the Northern Nuclear Alliance (NNA), continues to enable collaboration, innovation and long-term growth – not just for the North West, but for the UK's energy future."

The North West is home to the UK's most comprehensive nuclear ecosystem, including the Northern Nuclear Alliance, Amentum,

Cavendish Nuclear, Rolls-Royce, The UK National Nuclear Laboratory and a globally recognised nuclear supply chain.

Together, the region hosts almost 50% of the UK's nuclear research and innovation activity, reinforcing its position as a cornerstone of the country's nuclear ambitions.

To find out more, visit: www.birchwoodpark.co.uk/80-years-of-nuclear



Digital tools help United Utilities enhance carbon management

With its huge £13 billion investment period underway, Warrington-based United Utilities and its partners are harnessing digital tools to drive its carbon management.

The water company for the North West is ambitious about accurately measuring – and reducing – the carbon impact of its activities as it delivers the largest environmental programme in the region for more than a century.

Now, United Utilities has partnered with Mott MacDonald to embed the engineering, management and development consultancy's Moata Carbon Portal into its AMP8 capital delivery programme to enable it to accurately measure the carbon impact of both the construction and whole life operations of its infrastructure projects.

Moata Carbon Portal is an important tool in supporting United Utilities deliver its Net Zero ambitions.

Kaz Kundi, Principal Engineer, Carbon, in United Utilities'

engineering innovation team explained: "We have been measuring the carbon impact of our projects for seven years, but as we are now working with more partners than ever before, finding a consistent approach to doing this was proving challenging.

"During the last year we have worked closely with the team from Mott MacDonald to embed Moata Carbon Portal for us and our tier 1 and tier 2 delivery partners. It is very encouraging to see how this digital tool has been embraced by our partners and it is now being used across the capital programme."

Moata Carbon Portal enables project teams to produce whole life carbon assessments using the latest industry-standard emissions factors, in addition to utilising United Utilities' asset carbon models. It can also be used to review carbon hotspots across projects and programmes, enabling teams to prioritise carbon reduction across key assets and materials.

Kaz Kundi added: "Utilising digital tools for carbon management and measurement is important as it helps streamline the process of collating and analysing carbon data. Moata Carbon Portal is an exciting step forward as it enables us to collaborate and share data more efficiently with our delivery partners giving us all improved carbon insights across our capital delivery programme.

"As well as giving us a better understanding of the carbon impact, the data will also help

our engineering teams make informed decision to drive down carbon costs."

Priyesh Depala, Mott MacDonald's senior principal decarbonisation consultant said: "Our Moata Carbon Portal creates a single repository of carbon data for a broad group of users. As the bank of data grows, so too does the intelligence gathered from a wide range of projects helping raise awareness across the whole supply chain."



Improve your health and wellbeing!

Take a step in the right direction this spring by focusing on your health and wellbeing. If you're not sure where to start, the NHS quiz (www.nhs.uk/better-health/healthy-choices-quiz) can help you identify areas of your lifestyle where small changes could make a big difference.

These lifestyle changes can make a big difference:

- Drink less alcohol – The free NHS Drink Free Days app (<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/nhs-drink-free-days/id1196694906>) helps people cut down on alcohol by choosing a few alcohol-free days each week. It provides simple, practical support to help people stay on track.
- Quit smoking – If you are a

smoker, quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health – and your wallet. With the right support, it's easier than you think. LiveWire's SmokeFree Warrington Service (<https://livewirewarrington.co.uk/lifestyles/stop-smoking>) can help you every step of the way.

- Move more – Whatever your age, or stage of life, being physically active is great for both your body and mind. Warrington Borough Council's getting active webpage (www.warrington.gov.uk/getting-active) highlights local opportunities, from free parkruns and green spaces, to LiveWire gym memberships.
- Eat well – A balanced diet made up of a variety of foods helps

your body get the nutrients it needs to function, grow and repair. Visit WBC's website (www.warrington.gov.uk/healthy-eating) for guidance and support on healthier eating.

For more information and guidance visit the healthier lifestyles page www.warrington.gov.uk/healthier-lifestyles

Individual Placement and Support in Warrington

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is a proven employment support model that helps people in structured treatment for drugs and/or alcohol to find and maintain meaningful employment. IPS enables individuals to view work as a realistic and achievable part of their recovery journey much earlier within the treatment journey than ever before.

Using a personalised, strengths based method, IPS focuses on supporting people to secure paid employment in roles they choose, often within just weeks of being referred.

Once someone starts work, Change, Grow, Live (www.changegrowlive.org) in Warrington and the Growth

Company (www.growthco.uk) continue to provide tailored support to both the employee and the employer. This ongoing guidance helps sustain employment for as long as possible or enables a smooth transition into a new role if needed.

Employment plays a vital role in long term recovery from drug and alcohol misuse. It offers structure, financial independence, and a renewed sense of purpose—key factors in reducing the risk of relapse.

The Warrington and Halton IPS service is currently performing above national levels. While the average time from joining the programme to starting work in England is around 135 days, locally people are achieving employment in just 45 days.

IPS provides pre screened, job ready candidates, along with dedicated transition support for both you and your new recruit. You can access a committed and resilient workforce, supported by free, ongoing onsite professional guidance. For more information email Labisi Brimah, Senior IPS Employment Specialist: Labisi.Brimah@gcemployment.uk





Export Documentation Services

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

- Certification of United Kingdom Certificates of Origin
- Certification and Legalisation of Arab Certificates of Origin
- Certification of agency agreements, invoices, other documents
- Certification of EUR1 movement certificates
- Certification of EUR-MED movement certificates
- Certification of GSP Form A preference certificates
- Advice on import and export procedures

(This service is also available electronically)

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Full Page	£313+VAT

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The copy deadline for the next edition of Insight magazine is

May 20th

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

info@warrington-chamber.co.uk



■ Mark Borzomato (CEO of River Capital), Richard Styles (Chairman), Olivia Dyer (FD), Danny Costello (CEO), Nick Costello (Founder)

Built For Athletes powers up with NatWest's £1m growth investment

Built For Athletes (Functional Backpacks Ltd), the category-defining backpack brand of the fitness sector, headquartered in Stockton Heath, has secured a £1.025 million funding package from NatWest.

The facility, comprising a £525,000 trade loan and £500,000 invoice finance, will enable the business to accelerate its global growth strategy, invest in new product development, and further advance its sustainability initiatives.

Founded in 2018 by two brothers Daniel and Nicholas Costello, both of whom have backgrounds in fitness, finance and marketing. Built For Athletes has rapidly established itself as a leader in the sports and active lifestyle sector. The company is renowned for its

best in class, design-protected backpacks tailored to the needs of dedicated fitness enthusiasts, as well as its successful partnerships with global brands such as Alpine FI, Williams FI, Red Bull FI, Borussia Dortmund FC, and Hyrox. Built For Athletes has become the go-to brand for the gym and training community.

The new NatWest funding will support Built For Athletes as it diversifies its product offering, expands brand presence internationally, and invests in technology and creator content to enhance its digital sales strategy.

Danny Costello, Chief Executive Officer at Built For Athletes, commented: "This new finance facility with NatWest marks an important step forward for

Built For Athletes as we execute the next phase of our growth strategy. The facility provides us with enhanced financial flexibility to invest confidently in product development, operational capability, and international expansion.

NatWest's clear commitment to our long-term vision and their willingness to support our ambitions reflects a depth of partnership we greatly value, and one that we believe will underpin the continued, sustainable growth of the business."

Nathan Johnson, Senior Relationship Manager at NatWest, said: "Built For Athletes exemplifies the kind of innovative, high-growth business that is shaping the future of the UK's sports and

retail sector. NatWest is proud to provide the financial solutions and expertise to help them reach the next level."

Committed to responsible and sustainable practices, with an ESG strategy at its core, Built For Athletes designs durable products to challenge fast fashion waste. They also partner with BSCI-audited manufacturers, use 100% recyclable packaging and employ eco-efficient logistics. Their social and governance commitments include supporting employee wellbeing, fostering diversity, and maintaining transparent decision-making processes. Such initiatives align closely with NatWest Group's focus on championing sustainable business growth and positive community impact.

Miller Homes appoints new Marketing Manager for North West region

Warrington-based Miller Homes North West has strengthened its regional team with the appointment of Emily Williams as Marketing Manager, bringing more than four years' experience in the housebuilding sector to the role.

Emily joins the five-star homebuilder following her most recent position as Marketing and Brand Manager at Plumlife Homes, where she led brand strategy and marketing delivery across the business. Prior to this, she held the role of Social Media and Digital Marketing Manager at Wain Homes, overseeing digital campaigns and driving engagement across multiple developments. She began her housebuilding career with Barratt Developments plc as a Marketing Executive after graduating from the University of Liverpool with a

degree in Marketing with a Year in Industry.

In her new role at Miller Homes North West, Emily will be responsible for leading the region's marketing strategy across its growing portfolio of developments, supporting sales activity and further strengthening the brand's presence across the North West.

Speaking about her appointment, Emily said: "I am absolutely delighted to be joining Miller Homes, one of the most prominent and respected housebuilders in the UK. The North West is such a vibrant and competitive market, and I'm excited to play a part in showcasing the fantastic homes and communities being delivered across the region. Miller Homes has a strong reputation for quality and customer service, and I'm

looking forward to building on that momentum with the team."

Clare Noakes, Sales Director for Miller Homes North West, added: "We are very pleased to welcome Emily to the North West team. She brings with her a strong background in housebuilding marketing and a clear understanding of how to position developments effectively within a competitive market. As we look ahead to what promises to be an outstanding year for the region, Emily's experience and fresh perspective will be a real asset in supporting our developments and driving continued success."

Miller Homes North West currently offers a range of new build homes across sought-after locations including Rainford, Coppull, Widnes and Hale, Manchester. With a strong pipeline of developments

in planning and due to launch, the region is well positioned for continued growth and is set for a record year as it expands its presence across the North West.





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