

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR SHROPSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

NOVEMBER/
DECEMBER
2020

Your Chamber, Your **VOICE**

IN BUSINESS - FOR BUSINESS

Page 12

On Her Majesty's
Service

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New members to engage with

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| <p>BIRMINGHAM Energy & Bioproducts Research Institute (EBRI) 027 204 3420 Bioenergy Research Institute EBRI provides practical support to Shropshire companies to help them develop low carbon products and services - at no cost to the business.</p> <p>Duckside IT 0333 066614 IT support provider for business around Shropshire</p> <p>BISHOPS CASTLE Sandbag Ltd 07955 70757 Distributor of nail and beauty products in UK and internationally</p> <p>The Protection Zone Ltd 0208 47112 Distribution of antibacterial coating</p> <p>BIDDIACROFT Uvelo LTD 07946 70830 Manufacturing - Electronic Sub Contractors</p> <p>The Bridgnorth Bus & Coach</p> | <p>OSWESTRY Luke Black Limited 01828 61775 Furniture finishing and decorative arts</p> <p>SHREWSBURY Inspire Bids Ltd 07724 467350 Supporting businesses in all aspects of bidding and tendering from full on end to end BID Management, bid writing reviews and process consultancy</p> <p>RDC Safety Limited 07943 36340 Health and safety consultants and training</p> <p>PCB Solicitors LLP 07942 26148 Solicitors, Commercial litigation, debt recovery, Landlord/Tenant property and company matters</p> <p>Tanki Ltd 07781 41682 A new approach to toilet tissue, made without glue and from sustainable products</p> <p>Premier Care Training Limited 07943 36740 Care and training courses - adults and children</p> | <p>Essex Limited 01330 010 0140 Telecommunications</p> <p>Amboplastics Limited 01952 684022 Manufacturer of Packaging, presentation and promotional products</p> <p>Agrolista UK Limited 01952 618149 Landscape, amenity, forestry products, turf renovation and weed control</p> <p>Resourcebank Recruitment Ltd 01952 28100 Management Recruitment & Resourcing Consultancy</p> <p>MDT Reprographics Ltd 01952 250201 Colour / Black and white photocopying, full reprographic service including binding etc.</p> <p>WEM Tandem Comms 07776 316747 Offer specialist communications, engagement, leadership facilitation, campaign planning, public engagement, media training and presentation skills to public and private sector organisations, teams and individuals</p> |
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The deadline for the January/February edition is Friday, November 26th. Publication date is Friday, January 8th, 2021. Please note: due to the ongoing situation and the effects of COVID-19 on our business community, some events and activities mentioned may no longer be going ahead. Please check on each businesses own website for further clarification.

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Helping to shape the county's future

As we head towards the end of 2020 leadership is now a must have for Shropshire businesses.

Leadership from government, leadership from local stake holders and leadership within our businesses. At a time when Covid-19 refuses to go away and we approach the end of our transition away from EU membership the challenge to all is very real. Of course, leadership is only one of several key ingredients needed, however all great battles are won with great leadership and courage, this won't be any different.

Your Chamber is on the front line supporting you at national level through Ministerial engagement by our Westminster team, regional through our connectivity with the West Midlands Chambers and links to the Midlands Engine and locally through stake holders. Our research working with you our members has helped inform and shape government policy that we see today, that work continues.

We are all aware of the challenges that people seeking employment face with none more difficult than those faced by our young people. Your Chamber is in the privileged position of having the connectivity with you and the wider business community to help make a difference and we are committed to using it to develop our workforce of the future and support this challenge to our society. You will be aware that the government launched an initiative called Kickstarters to help our 16-24 year olds into 6 month employment opportunities, as a Chamber we were actively involved in the development of this programme as part of a steering group and embraced the launch in September. Nothing could have prepared us for what happened next as you our business community stepped up and overwhelmed us with your commitment to play your part. At the time of writing we are approaching 400 vacancies offered across Shropshire and this is just the beginning as every day it is growing.

The coming months bring unique and difficult challenges that are best overcome by working together, we are up for it are you?

Richard Sheehan
Chief Executive Officer,
Shropshire Chamber of Commerce

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Law firm's client service is highly praised

A Shropshire law firm has been named by a respected national guide as being one of the best in the West Midlands for providing excellent service to its clients.

The Legal 500 guide ranks law firms based on independent research - and Lanyon Bowdler was among the best-performing firms in the West Midlands in the guide's client service survey.

In The Legal 500 guide itself, Lanyon Bowdler is highlighted for its expertise across 13 practice areas, including being ranked at Tier 1 for agriculture and estates for the fourth year in a row, and maintaining Tier 2 rankings for personal injury; commercial litigation; commercial property; and personal tax, trusts and probate.

It has been ranked in a higher tier this year for corporate and commercial, recognising the growth of this busy team.

The guide is based on feedback from clients, barristers and professionals, who score law firms across a range of criteria, and the directory's separate client service benchmarking survey gave Lanyon Bowdler its highest scores for the firm's 'communication and case matter management'.

Managing partner, Brian Evans, said he was proud of the firm's standings in the guide.

"The Legal 500 is a highly-respected guide in the profession because it is based on direct feedback from clients," he said.

"We are therefore extremely pleased that we received our highest scores for how we manage our cases and communicate with our clients.

"Our strapline is 'Our People, Your Team' and this independent verification from The Legal 500's research demonstrates our clients very much feel we deliver on that.

"It's also pleasing to see that our expertise across so many practice



Brian Evans of Lanyon Bowdler

areas has once again been highlighted by the guide, particularly our agriculture and estates team being placed in Tier 1 for the fourth year running.

"I would like to thank everyone in the Lanyon Bowdler team for their dedication to always aiming to achieve the very best outcomes for their clients. It's clear from the results of this independent research that our clients are very satisfied with the level of service they receive from the firm, which is heartening to see."

As well as the 13 practice areas included in the guide, a number of Lanyon Bowdler's lawyers are named as recommended lawyers in The Legal 500.

In all, 38 lawyers are highlighted, including Kay

Kelly, head of clinical negligence, and Neil Lorimer, head of personal injury, who are named as leading individuals in their fields.

Emma Broomfield, clinical negligence; Stephen Scully, crime; Louise Howard, personal injury; and Neil Davies, personal tax and probate, are all named as rising stars, while Claire Vale, contentious probate; Dawn Humphries, personal injury; Debbie Humphries, personal injury; and Edward Burrell, corporate and commercial, are named as next generation partners.

The guide includes a wealth of testimonials for the firm, including: "Well-established and respected in Herefordshire and Shropshire and offers many solicitors in expert fields.

"The teams in personal injury and clinical negligence are both very strong - the best in Shropshire but they could compete with any team in the country.

"Neil Lorimer is one of the finest solicitors in the country. Amazing attention to detail, leaves no stone unturned, wonderful track history of results, really tenacious."

Visit www.lblaw.co.uk for more information about Lanyon Bowdler.

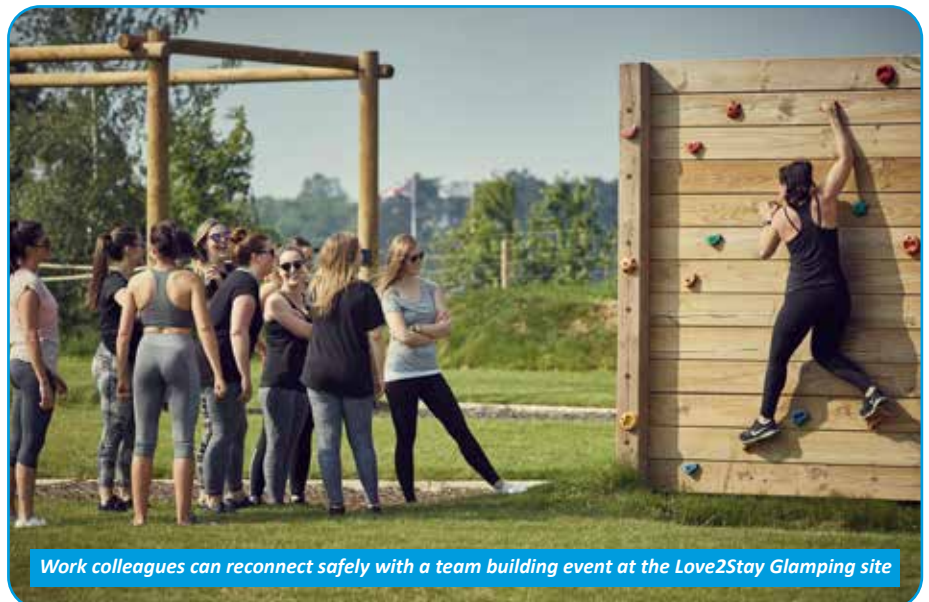
Give your team a boost

Love2Stay Glamping site, which is owned and operated by Salop Leisure has announced the launch of a new socially distanced team-building package; available for all organisations no matter the size. The service will help motivate employees who have been affected by social separation brought about by remote working..

Located on the outskirts of Shrewsbury, the 22 acre resort boasts 11 luxurious heated safari lodges all with private hot tubs, a chemical-free outdoor swimming pool, a purpose-built assault course, onsite fitness, activity lake, 122 touring pitches and business facilities - making Love2Stay the ideal place to host a safe and socially distanced team building day, overnight corporate away days and off-site meetings. The resort will also welcome remote workers who simply want a different place to work for the day rather than their home.

Chris Skitt, Park Manager at Love2Stay said: "Employers have an important role to play in helping to develop the social confidence of their employees, especially given the challenging circumstances of the past six months.

"While meetings and conferences slowly returning, we expect proximity-based team building will take longer. We've designed new approaches, and also modified existing ones to enable groups to participate in quality



Work colleagues can reconnect safely with a team building event at the Love2Stay Glamping site

activities whilst observing social distance protocols.

"Our outdoor activities, and beautifully designed resort and enhanced cleaning protocols will allow work colleagues to reconnect safely with one another, have some fun and also achieve meaningful outcomes."

According to a new survey by UK job board Totaljobs, almost half (46%) of UK workers have experienced feelings of loneliness during their time in lockdown.

70% found the loneliness they experienced to have had a negative impact

on their overall wellbeing with only 6% believing their imposed isolation had any positive effect at all.

Two-fifths of workers (41%) said lockdown had a detrimental impact on their sleeping habits, a quarter (24%) on their living arrangements, 37% on stress levels, 33% on their self-esteem and 30% on their eating habits.

To book your team building event at Love2Stay, visit <https://www.love2stay.co.uk/team-building-in-shropshire> or call 01743 583124.

Mazda MX-30 – The EV with ‘Jinba Ittai’

Arriving at Furrows Group early in 2021, the Mazda MX-30 is Mazda’s first all-electric production vehicle and part of an electrification strategy that has already seen Mazda M Hybrid mild hybrid systems fitted as standard to the Mazda3 and Mazda CX-30, plus selected Mazda2s.

A stylish and versatile crossover, the Mazda MX-30 features an AC synchronous electric motor and a 35.5kWh lithium-ion battery that delivers a range of approximately 124miles. It comes with AC charging up to 6.6Kw and DC rapid charging designed to meet 125A Combo Charging standards. Alongside the development of efficient combustion engine technology such as the Spark Controlled Compression Ignition Skyactiv-X petrol engine, the fully-electric MX-30 is part of Mazda’s philosophy of the right power source in the right place at the right time, formed from the company’s ‘well-to-wheel’ approach to emissions measurement.

Equally, like every Mazda, the MX-30 has been conceived with the goal of ‘Jinba Ittai’ at the forefront of the development process. A

Japanese phrase for horse and rider as one, the spirit of Jinba Ittai can be found in every Mazda where the connection between driver and car is a key element in what makes a Mazda a Mazda. No car exemplifies this more than the Mazda MX-5 and its focus on driver engagement, lightweight design, communicative controls and balanced handling. Sharing the MX moniker - that’s only worn by Mazdas that challenge convention to create and deliver new values in a segment - the Mazda MX-30 has been designed with the aim of delivering the kind of driver engagement not traditionally found behind the wheel of a battery electric vehicle.

Infusing an EV with this typical Mazda feel of a car that reacts to the driver’s intentions instantaneously, providing greater confidence and enhanced driver enjoyment was key to the MX-30’s development. When applied to an electric vehicle, the ongoing quest for the ultimate Jinba Ittai driving experience starts from the ground up with a choice of a battery size that’s perfectly considered for the often-opposing demands of whole life CO2 consideration, performance, range, charging times and weight.

Combining Mazda’s next-generation Skyactiv-Vehicle Architecture with a 35.5kWh lithium-ion battery the Mazda MX-30 avoids the excessively high kerbweight of many EVs. Mazda’s next-generation Skyactiv-Body architecture is enhanced in the MX-30 through an increase in rigidity and energy transmission efficiency. Incorporating the battery pack as a part of the bodyshell’s ring structure greatly increases diagonal rigidity. Specifically, the frame that surrounds the battery pack is connected to the body in 20 locations. Straight crossmembers sandwiching the battery pack from above and below combine with a reinforced ring structure for the rear axle mounts to significantly reduce the delay in the transmission of inputs.

With UK pricing for the full Mazda MX-30 range to be announced later in the year, the Mazda MX-30 First Edition will go on sale at Furrows Group early



The new Mazda MX-30 is the makes first all-electric production vehicle

in 2021 and offer a stylish and driver focused Mazda BEV. Available with a choice of free-of-charge Ceramic Metallic or Polymetal Grey Metallic single colours, the First Edition can also be ordered with either £950 three-tone Ceramic Metallic or £1,250 three-tone Soul Red Crystal Metallic.

If you are interested in the Mazda MX-30 or would like more information, please call Furrows Mazda on 01743 454444 or visit the website www.furrows.co.uk/mazda

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Celebrating the greatest flavours of Shropshire



Beth Heath with some of the goodies

Shropshire Festivals are used to showcasing hundreds of small, local food and drink businesses at their annual festivals. As they have been unable to hold their usual events throughout 2020, the award-winning team have decided to bring those businesses together in a brand-new way, diversifying to launch the Shropshire Hamper Company in time for Christmas gift buying.

With options starting at £15.99 going all the way up to a 'bountiful' hamper for £149.99, there are plenty of hamper options packed with products from the local region.

Director of Fun at Shropshire Festivals, Beth Heath, comments, "I used to put hampers together well before I launched the Shrewsbury Food Festival. I've returned to hampers to offer people a gift that celebrates everything that is great about this region.

"People want to support local small businesses and by purchasing a Shropshire hamper you are not only supporting my business, but all the many small producers we buy from. I'm so pleased we have found a physical way to work with our exhibitors, that doesn't need to exist virtually!

"With Christmas approaching we hope our collection meets all your gift buying challenges – the hard to buy for partner or the person who has everything but loves good food and drink! We are also completely equipped to take on large corporate orders and can offer bespoke options to make sure your workforce, clients and potential customers can all be gifted in the most thoughtful way possible!"

Visit shropshirehamper.co.uk to view the full range.



Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage Nigel Huddleston MP meeting volunteers from SVR

Chuffed with funding

The Severn Valley Railway is one of 445 heritage organisations across the country set to receive a lifesaving financial boost from the government, thanks to the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, to help them through the coronavirus pandemic.

As the announcement was made on Friday, October 9, the railway was preparing to welcome the Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage Nigel Huddleston MP. The Minister will meet the footplate crew of one of the SVR's steam locomotives and visit a unique mobile exhibition inside a specially adapted brake van. He'll also talk to some of the 1,800 volunteers who, alongside its paid staff, are crucial to the success and continuation of the SVR.

445 organisations will share £103 million, including the Severn Valley Railway to help restart vital reconstruction work and maintenance on cherished heritage sites, keeping venues open and supporting those working in the sector.

The railway will receive £906,000 to help it through the next six months. The money will pay for staff salaries, and enhanced security measures to protect the heritage assets owned by the SVR. These will include CCTV and fire detection systems, as well as fire and intruder alarms.

As part of the SVR's survival plan, the grant will help improve its digital and social media communications to better interact with communities and engage a wider audience. The railway will also recruit a health and safety specialist to ensure it can operate to the best standards both behind-the-scenes and in customer-facing environments, with the additional safety demands that are necessary because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This vital funding is from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage and the Heritage Stimulus Fund - funded by Government and administered at arm's length by Historic

England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Both funds are part of the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund which is designed to secure the future of Britain's museums, galleries, theatres, independent cinemas, heritage sites and music venues with emergency grants and loans.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said: "As a nation it is essential that we preserve our heritage and celebrate and learn from our past. This massive support package will protect our shared heritage for future generations, save jobs and help us prepare for a cultural bounce back post-Covid."

The Chairman of Severn Valley Railway (Holdings) Plc Nick Paul CBE said: "This funding will play an essential part in the SVR's survival through the pandemic. We expect to have lost around £2.5 million in revenue this year, as a direct result of the lockdown and subsequent restrictions.

"Although we've been running services again for more than two months now, we won't be able to make up for such a severe drop in income.

The Severn Valley Railway plays a huge part in the Midlands economy and is close to the hearts of the 250,000 visitors who come to us every year.

"Thanks to this generous government funding, we'll be able to keep the railway running so it can continue to be a source of community pride in the future."

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund said: "It is absolutely right that investing in heritage should be a priority during this crisis and this support by Government is crucial. Heritage creates jobs and economic prosperity, is a major driver for tourism and makes our towns, cities, and rural areas better places to live.

"All of this is so important for our wellbeing and will be particularly vital when we start to emerge from this incredibly difficult time.

"Our heritage is still facing a perilous future – we are not out of the woods yet. But this hugely welcome funding from Government, and the money we continue to invest from the National Lottery, has undoubtedly stopped heritage and the organisations that care for it being permanently lost."

"This funding will play an essential part in the SVR's survival through the pandemic" – Nick Paul CBE, Chairman Severn Valley Railway (Holdings) Plc

Award for influential Niamh



Award-winning Niamh Kelly of The HR Dept Shropshire

A Shropshire woman has scooped 'HR Consultant Director of the Year 2020' in the prestigious national 'Influential Businesswoman Awards', following the expansion of her successful Shropshire Business.

Niamh Kelly founded The HR Dept Shropshire in May 2018, providing employment law and human resources support to small and medium sized businesses. She recently launched The HR Dept Wrexham and Chester.

Although she recognises smaller businesses face a unique employment challenge to balance short and medium-term survival prospects; Niamh doesn't believe that she is bucking the trend by expanding.

"With widespread redundancies almost inevitable over the coming months, employers should combine immediate survival plans with longer-term people strategies to help them adapt to the lasting effects of the coronavirus crisis" she says.

Government support for business and staff includes the newly expanded Job Support Scheme and a raft of loan schemes and grants.

"It's an incredibly challenging juggling act," says Niamh. "Practically, emotionally and financially, the costs of getting things right and wrong over the coming months and years will have potential to make or break a business.

There will invariably be some businesses which, unfortunately, will end up insolvent. However, others have opportunities to pivot and adapt to the rapidly-changing world which this crisis is going to leave behind".

Niamh warned against the danger of losing vital inside knowledge from the business – valuable experience which may have taken many years to accrue but could be quickly lost.

"While it may be tempting to divert directly to redundancy as the least risky option," she says, "I would advise caution before losing valuable experience and training from any business. Talk to your employees. You may think redundancy is the only option, but you might be surprised with the ideas you they come with up as alternatives!"

Niamh said that the pandemic has accelerated change which was already underway, for example the rapid growth of flexible working.

"Business owners should keep abreast of what is a rapidly-changing situation, or risk severe impact on their futures. The worst thing to do is pretend none of this is happening," she says.

Are you considering what the next steps are for your business and the implications for your staff?

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HR DEPT

Preventing People Problems

Improvise, adapt and overcome challenges

What a year it has been for business, notwithstanding the significant trauma and distress for the sufferers of Covid-19, it has been an unprecedented disaster for the businesses affected too.

In March Black Hawk Laser Games in Oswestry watched the slow progress of the virus across the globe from its new larger unit with its corresponding increase in rent, council tax, insurance etc and hoped it would not reach them or would have minimal impact. 14th March was the last trading day for 4 months, as a leisure-based business Black Hawk was in the first tranche to close and in one of the last to open.

Black Hawk Laser was founded in 2013 when managing director and veteran Paul Farry enjoyed a game of laser tag with his son Will. This triggered an idea which grew to the opening of their own laser tag arena near Oswestry in February 2014.

Black Hawk Laser has entertained countless children and adults over the years and went on to move into those larger premises in December 2019. They have always looked to broaden its appeal by introducing additional activities and never has this been more important.

In 2017 Black Hawk introduced its escape room and has since created and operated 3



Paul Farry of Black Hawk Laser Games

escape rooms to the delight and frustration of the players. The current room is named Lost in Space and features a spaceship falling through space from which the players must

escape via an escape pod. A series of puzzles and games allow the players to work their way through the rooms until, hopefully, they escape.

In 2018 Black Hawk purchased its first set of Intager Laser Tag Equipment and finding the kit to be the best they had found went into talks to represent Intager Hungary in the UK. UK Intager has helped and supported many new businesses in their launch of laser tag and provided new kit to existing organisations including the MOD, Army Cadets, Parkdean Resorts and the Royal Marine Cadets.

During the lockdown period Black Hawk looked again at how they could encourage customers to return and as part of the plan launched Black Hawk VR to bring the latest virtual reality entertainment to the UK market. Not only will visitors be able to play the latest VR games but again Black Hawk has entered an agreement to distribute the products across the UK and beyond.

So Autumn 2020 brings the amalgamation of those supply elements into Black Hawk Distribution so that they can offer a package of leisure and entertainment products to the UK market.

So it is onwards and upwards or as they say in the Army, Improvise, Adapt and Overcome.

Feeling fabulous at studio

Beauty is more than skin deep at the Elite Skin Studio in Newport, Shropshire, which aims to give clients the very best in skincare treatments. Now with a complete new rebrand, they are set to help their clients feel even more fabulous than ever before on their journey to skin confidence.

The studio is run by mother and daughter duo, Anne and Fliss Ashton, who began their business with a vision of creating a calming space for their clients to escape and unwind. Guided by science, their treatment plans are designed to make customers look and feel rejuvenated, revealing a natural glow that starts from within.

Their specialist treatments include; Cynosure Laser Hair Removal, Dermalux LED Phototherapy, Environ Advanced Facial Treatments and Peels, CACI Non-Surgical Face Lifts, Electrolysis, Microblading and also a wide range of rejuvenating beauty treatments.

As Elite's reputation has grown, so has their brand, and the duo felt it was the right time to give the studio its own facial treatment. Over the past few months, they have been working away quietly behind the scenes to create a fresh new look for the studio, both on the high street and online. They wanted to give Elite a clean and modern look which would reflect the leading skincare treatments they use, inspiring trust in their customers.

With beautiful new signage and interiors, they have created a warm and welcoming atmosphere that exudes sophistication. From



Mother and daughter duo – Anne Ashton pictured with daughter Fliss at Elite Skin Studio

the colour palette to the typeface and logo, every detail has been carefully designed to deliver a glowing confidence, empowering everyone who enters their studio. They also have an elegant new website that is very user-friendly, giving customers a relaxing experience right from the start of their journey.

"We have been working on our journey and the rebrand of Elite for a while now, and despite the uncertainty that this year has brought all of us, we're pleased to be able to share our positive news, and welcome clients into our new Studio"

"Elite was founded twenty years ago, and in that time we have had the pleasure of treating hundreds of clients with the latest

in technological skin advancements and award winning cosmeceutical home care. In this new chapter for Elite, reflecting on what is happening in the wider world, we want to emphasise the importance of spending quality time on yourself, by guiding you on a journey to improved skin confidence and self-esteem. Our goal will always be for you to leave us feeling amazing, inside and out!"

Head on over to their new website now to find out more about their specialist treatments and to book an appointment. The team at Elite Skin Studio are on hand to guide you on your journey to skin confidence, and will leave you feeling simply fabulous.

For more details, please visit the website: www.eliteskinstudio.co.uk

Low carbon help for county firms

Businesses are facing increasing pressure from customers to provide low carbon products and decarbonise their supply chain. It has been estimated that the UK low carbon economy could grow by an estimated 11% per year until 2030 – at a rate 4 times faster than the rest of the economy*.

In order to help Shropshire businesses maximise opportunities in this thriving market, the Energy & Bioproducts Research Institute (EBRI) at Aston University is offering one-to-one events specially designed to help companies develop new low carbon product and service innovations, as well as get value from a variety of waste material.

Manufacturing, engineering, waste management, construction, financial services, agricultural, packaging, as well as food and drinks industries amongst others, can all benefit from an exclusive low carbon challenge consultation with EBRI.

“There are all sorts of options”, says Tim Miller, EBRI’s Director of Engagement, “Redundant material such as food waste, cardboard boxes, plastic waste, sawdust, waste oils, manure, hay straw, sugar beet residue, spent grain waste from breweries are only a few examples of waste that could potentially open up fresh possibilities”.



He continues: “Not only can we support entrepreneurs looking to either develop new low carbon products and services or turn waste material into energy, we can also help business owners looking to maximise the sustainability and energy efficiency of their property and land developments”.

During a 30 minute-consultation session, EBRI will discuss the particular low carbon challenge that the company is facing so that its team of experts can then devise a bespoke summary of their recommendations, research findings and other useful information to help the business. This will be provided a few days later at no cost to qualifying companies**.

This autumn EBRI will be holding low carbon challenge consultation sessions on the following:

- Agricultural Waste
- Brewers, Vineries, Cider Makers & Distillers
- Buildings & Sites
- Food & Drink
- Plastics
- Wood & Cardboard

To book a slot interested businesses can email bioenergy@aston.ac.uk, visit <https://bioenergy-for-business.org/help-available-this-autumn-low-carbon-challenge-consultations/> or call 0121 204 3383.

*<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy/clean-growth-strategy-executive-summary>

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Rotarians learn about role of the High Sheriff

Rotary clubs from across the area joined together for a special online meeting to learn more about the High Sheriff of Shropshire.

More than 60 Rotarians joined the meeting on Tuesday (October 6th) to hear from speaker Dean Harris about the role and its history, as well as her key causes and projects.

The meeting was hosted by the Rotary Club of Telford Centre, who were joined by members of the Rotary Clubs of Ironbridge, Newport Lite, and The Wrekin.

Dean said: "I was delighted to get the chance to speak to so many Rotary Club members, sharing with them some information about my causes of domestic violence, addiction, and childhood poverty and deprivation. They asked some interesting questions and I hope the evening gave them a real insight into my aims as we go into the second half of my shrieval year.

"The Rotary Clubs do a fantastic job within the Shropshire community, and I am thrilled they have continued their good work despite Covid-19, now conducting their weekly meetings via Zoom rather than in-person.

Chris Moore, President of the Rotary Club of Telford Centre, added: "Not only was it a great privilege to host this event but also it was fascinating to hear the enthusiastic way in which the High Sheriff has approached her year and her intention to forge close links with as many organisations as possible in support of local charitable and community activities.

"I know I am speaking on behalf of all of the clubs who attended this virtual event in saying how much we enjoyed the evening and how grateful we are to her for taking the time to speak to us all"

Search 'High Sheriff of Shropshire' on Facebook and Instagram to find out more

about Dean's key causes, meetings and projects; and to nominate an unsung hero for a High Sheriff award, visit the website at www.highsheriffofshropshire.co.uk.

Telford Centre Rotary:

*John Morris-Roberts – 07756 491 074
dorohn@blueyonder.co.uk
www.telfordcentrerotary.org
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Rotary Club of Ironbridge:

*David Jeffries – 07703 538 815
davidjeffries1947@outlook.com*

Rotary Club of Newport Lite:

*Jeremy Crabbe – 07932517647
jeremycrabbe@btinternet.com*

Rotary Club of The Wrekin:

*Chris Mansell & Tom Kane – 07980 867 528
chrismansell49@gmail.com*

All businesses should be involved with the White Ribbon campaign

Domestic abuse is one of the key causes the High Sheriff is focusing on during her year in office – and she's calling on all Shropshire organisations to make it their priority too.

With one in four women and one in six men impacted in their lifetime, eradicating domestic abuse is something which Dean Harris believes is a cause the entire business community should unite behind.

Dean is a staunch supporter of White Ribbon UK, part of a global movement aimed at ending male violence against women and girls. They do this by engaging with men and boys and asking them to fulfil the White Ribbon Promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women.

The charity acts as a catalyst encouraging people to individually and collectively take action and change their behaviour - working together with supporters, ambassadors, champions, organisations and policy makers to raise awareness, educate and campaign to bring about change right across England and Wales.

Dean says: "We know categorically that there are women working within Shropshire businesses who are experiencing domestic abuse. There are also men perpetrating that violence when they go at home at night. It's not enough for businesses to say they are against domestic abuse, taking action and signing up to be part of the White Ribbon campaign sends a clear message: we will not tolerate male violence against women and girls."

Ambassadors and champions can sign up to take the White Ribbon message into workplaces, communities and to their peers. A White Ribbon Accreditation Programme also ensures organisations that sign up (large or small, from the public, private or charity sector) take a strategic approach to ending male violence against women by engaging with men and boys, changing cultures and



Mrs Dean Harris, High Sheriff of Shropshire



raising awareness. Gaining the accreditation helps organisations to make a difference in their communities; improve organisational culture, safety and morale; increase the knowledge and skills of staff to address violence against women; become an employer of choice; and improve the experience of customers and stakeholders.

"Violence against women is a prevalent and preventable issue – aside from the ethical duty businesses have towards their employees, there are many more effects of domestic violence such as the impact on productivity, workplace culture, organisational reputation and success.

"Turning a blind eye to the issue or assuming your business will never be impacted is not the answer. We need all Shropshire organisations to take a stand against male violence towards women. If your own mother, sister or daughter was impacted by domestic abuse then you would no doubt do all you could to help – by taking part in the White Ribbon campaign, you're helping women who are mothers, sisters and daughters too."

Organisations can also get involved in White Ribbon Day 2020, which takes place on Wednesday 25th November, by hosting an event, using social media and creating videos.

For more information, visit www.whiteribbon.org.uk. Search 'High Sheriff of Shropshire' on Facebook and Instagram to find out more about Dean's key causes, meetings and projects; and to nominate an unsung hero for a High Sheriff award, visit www.highsheriffofshropshire.co.uk

Leading accountants' Cheshire acquisition

A leading Shropshire, Mid and North Wales firm of accountants, business advisors and tax specialists has acquired Cheshire-based Howard Worth Chartered Accountants in a move that underlines its ongoing and ambitious growth strategy.

WR Partners, which is headquartered in Shropshire and recently underwent a major rebrand, secured the business as part of long-term plans to significantly increase its reach geographically, and to provide an opportunity to offer its breadth of expertise across a range of business services to a wider client base.

Based across two offices in Northwich and Nantwich, Howard Worth has a strong client base, adding to the WR Partners' portfolio of more than 6,000 clients across offices within the Midlands and Mid and North Wales.

Helen Spencer, Managing Partner at WR Partners, said: "We're absolutely delighted to integrate Howard Worth into the WR Partners business. It extends our reach into areas where WR Partners is less well known and+ comes at a truly exciting time for the business following our rebrand from Whittingham Riddell."

Helen added that while many accountancy firms may have been impacted by the challenges faced due to the coronavirus pandemic, due to the broad range of business advisory services offered by WR Partners the company was in a strong position to continue to support its clients to weather the



Tim Lwin, Fran Johnson and Andrew Hague, formerly of Howard Worth Chartered Accountants

current storm. Staff from Howard Worth will join the 180-strong WR Partners employee base, bringing with them a similar forward-thinking ethos and client care values.

Helen added: "Not only do both businesses share robust commitments to nurturing and maintaining the very best relationships, working in true partnership with their clients, we also bring in depth knowledge of the local areas served.

"By bringing the additional expertise of Howard Worth into our existing team we are enhancing our focus on supporting clients' current and future growth aspirations."

The Partners of Howard Worth Accountants said the joining of the two businesses was a "perfect match" and that both companies would work together to bring about a smooth transition.

Both Howard Worth and WR Partners are members of the UK200Group, the UK's leading professional services group of independent quality assured chartered accountancy and law firms.

To find out more about how WR Partners could help your business, contact the team on hello@wrpartners.co.uk or telephone 01743 273273. <https://wrpartners.co.uk/>



WR Partners expand their reach into Cheshire

We are proud to announce the acquisition of Howard Worth to push forward our ambitious growth plans.

Find out more at wrpartners.co.uk

Capitalising on a rural renaissance

Landowners need to act now to capitalise on the rural property boom and continuing staycation market, says leading chartered surveyors Madeleys.

There has been a huge increase in demand for rural properties in Shropshire following the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, with a 60 per cent increase in homebuyer enquiries as people look to swap their city lives for a rural idyll.

Paul Madeley, of Much Wenlock-based Madeleys Chartered Surveyors, who has been working in the industry for more than 20 years, said that this has been the busiest increase in rural home interest he had seen.

"People are no longer looking to live close to the big cities," he said. "They want to be in the countryside with big gardens and more land.

"Which presents the perfect opportunity for landowners in Shropshire."

Paul is encouraging those who are interested in converting buildings or barns to act now in order to secure planning permission.



Paul Madeley

"If you've got a building or barn on your land that you don't use, why not think about converting it into something completely different," he added.

"Whether it's residential, commercial or industrial, there are lots of options to explore.

"But now is the time to act. Securing planning permissions and development rights can take a couple of months so if you're thinking about it, get in touch now and we can help."

He added that the continuing staycation market also offered great opportunities for people to get the best out of their rural assets.

"There's no signs of the British staycation market slowing down, with continued uncertainty around foreign travel caused by the pandemic there's evidence that demand is outstripping supply.

"We've helped people transform rural buildings on their land into beautiful holiday lets, and have gained planning permission to site yurts, glamping pods and camping facilities.

"While the demand is out there, people often don't see the diverse uses in the land that they own. It often takes a fresh pair of eyes to help them realise the potential, which is where we come in."

Madeleys Chartered Surveyors can help landowners secure planning permissions, apply for grants as well as give valuations and general advice. To find out more visit madeleys.co.uk, call 01952 727007 or contact by email via enquiries@madeleys.co.uk



Ford Village Hall Committee Members Janice Laxton and Tracy Greenside pictured with SWG's Nigel Stephens and Julia Baron from Shropshire Rural Communities Charity

Village hall makeover

Work has been completed on a village hall near Shrewsbury after it won a competition for a makeover.

Ford Village Hall was the winner of the SWG Community Building Award organised by SWG Construction, which has offices in Welshpool and Shrewsbury, and the Shropshire Rural Communities Charity.

The competition was run to find a community building in need of some improvements, with the winner receiving £1,000 in the form of materials and professional expertise from SWG.

Work has now been completed with Ford Village Hall benefiting from new toilet facilities and an upgraded meeting room.

Nigel Stephens, of SWG Construction, said: "This project was the first to benefit from the SWG Community Building Award and we are delighted with the results, improvements which can now be enjoyed by the whole community.

"We invited applications from all over Shropshire asking custodians of community buildings to tell us why they should receive the award. We had an excellent response and Ford Village Hall came out on top.

"SWG has close ties to the community and we are always ready to help out where we can - this award is an extension of that and a way of helping those who have supported us by using our services for more than 20 years.

"The project was delayed a little by the

coronavirus pandemic but we were able to get it completed as soon as we possibly could, improving the toilets and refurbishing the meeting room which included a new ceiling and redecoration to really brighten it up and make it more welcoming.

"We want to say a big thank you to AGS Projects who also helped with some key elements of the project."

On behalf of the Ford Village Hall Committee, chair Katharine Robinson, said: "We are really grateful to SWG for the work - the improvements look fantastic and will hopefully encourage more members of the community to come and use the hall.

"We have concentrated on the hall's meeting room, known as the Urwick Room, and the toilets which were in desperate need of attention.

"The Urwick Room is an ideal space for activities and meetings but hasn't been used much in recent times because of its appearance."

Julia Baron, chief executive of Shropshire Rural Communities Charity (RCC), said:

"We were delighted to get involved with the SWG Community Building Award and it's great to see these improvements, which will make a big difference to everyone who uses the hall.

"Buildings like Ford Village Hall are a vital resource to the community and are maintained and run by hard-working volunteers who often don't have the budget or resources to carry out improvement work themselves. Improving buildings like this makes them more viable for the future."

"We were delighted to get involved with the SWG Community Building" – Julia Baron, chief executive of Shropshire Rural Communities Charity

New lease of life for tired building

Upcycling: a relatively recent concept to transform waste or unwanted products to add artistic or environmental value, but not a new notion for Keim Mineral Paints Limited, a business whose eco principles hark back to 1878. For one of their recent projects based in Fitzrovia, London, W1, the paint manufacturer helped to breathe a new lease of life into a tired building, improving, and protecting the exterior for generations to come.

Anton Boekhoudt, National Architectural Business Development Manager helps to explain, '27 - 29 Whitfield Street is office space located in the Charlotte Street conservation area of Central London. It was a building with an outdated exterior, which lacked kerb appeal and in need of modernisation. We worked with Stagg Architects, using our combined expertise and knowledge to improve the use of the space and completely refashion the façade. A single storey roof extension was added as well as creating flexible space at both ground and lower ground levels.'

Keim Mineral Paints are well known for their eco-friendly credentials. Their paints are hand crafted to not only look good, but allow buildings to breath, reflect light, and are inherently incombustible. Keim are acknowledged leaders and specialists in the manufacture of mineral paints.

Anton Boekhoudt supplies the background: "Our strap line is 'Colour For Ever' which is quite subtle but significant, as our exterior paint lasts for at least 15 years, with numerous examples in our portfolio where our paint has performed for over 100 years.

"I use the word 'performed' because Keim Mineral Paints will protect surfaces against influences such as rain, UV radiation and micro-organisms which can attack less durable surfaces.'

At 27- 29 Whitfield Street, several colour samples were trialled. With the building's render removed, the natural brickwork beneath was revealed.



27- 29 Whitfield Street – before



27- 29 Whitfield Street – after

Stagg Architects in conjunction with the local Conservation Officer chose a colour that harmonised with the Grade II listed modernist building next door.

Keim Mineral Paints not only employ a team of production specialists based in Telford who hand craft the paint, but a colour consultant of over 30 years' experience who advises clients on shades and texture.

For this project Keim Restauro® Lasur was sampled and applied as part of a trial in four shades, a service which Keim offer to architects, and end user clients. The colourwash creates a subtle homogenous decorative effect for brickwork and totally transformed the brick façade. Unlike oil-based paints, it contains only natural ingredients, and creates a microporous, moisture vapour permeable chemical bond, to both protect the brickwork and add a degree of water repellence.

Anton Boekhoudt sums up this project's achievements, 'This is a fine example of an eco-friendly project, revamping a tired building to give it a fresh lease of life, using natural products. This protective coating, we supplied will last for years without the need to re-paint. Think of the labour, cost savings and benefit to the environment! There is a little bit of Keim heritage there, that has improved the building's kerb appeal and wrapped it for prosperity.'

Keim Mineral Paints Limited are a UK subsidiary of Keimfarben, Diedorf, Germany and specialise in hand crafted eco-friendly paints for both interior and exterior applications.



Hospice welcomes £10,000 pandemic donation

One of Shrewsbury's oldest companies has donated £10,000 to support Severn Hospice which has seen fundraising halted by the pandemic.

The generous donation by Morris Lubricants, which celebrated its 150th birthday last year, comes as a welcome boost to the hospice which opened its first superstore in a 6,000 sq ft building rented from the company exactly two years ago.

In normal times, the superstore sells a wide range of items donated to the hospice. However, due to COVID-19 regulations, it is currently not trading and is instead being used as a centralised stock sorting warehouse to support the hospice's chain of shops.

The charity has 28 high street shops and an eBay shop which, before the pandemic, were contributing more than £1 million towards the hospice's work.

Severn Hospice cares for and supports thousands of families across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Mid Wales who are living with an incurable illness.

Norma Ross, the hospice's director of income generation, said the pandemic has created an incredibly challenging financial situation for the charity.

"The impact has been huge," she said. "We have to raise another £2 for every £1



The Severn Hospice Superstore, Shrewsbury

we receive from the NHS and overnight we lost almost all of our ability to generate that income.

"Our shops shut, our fundraising events were cancelled and our supporters were told to stay at home.

"Morris Lubricants' incredibly generous £10,000 donation is hugely appreciated. We are not out of the woods yet financially and support, such as that from the company, means so much to us.

"We are determined to be able to provide the high standard of care for our patients

and their families that we are renowned for. Although the world has changed, we just can't stop caring."

Edward Goddard, joint executive chairman of Paterson Enterprises, parent company of Morris Lubricants and Morris Leisure, said: "We are pleased to be able to support Severn Hospice which does such fantastic work caring for and supporting families across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Mid Wales.

"The pandemic has been an especially tough time for the hospice and we are keen to do whatever we can to help ease this burden."

Annual golf day is a hit

Staff from two Shropshire companies have renewed a friendly rivalry to raise cash for a charity that's close to their hearts.

The teams from Henshalls Insurance Brokers and Nick Jones Wealth Planning took part in the second annual Bryan Cutter Golf Challenge competition at Lilleshall Hall Golf Club.

And the competitive colleagues raised £600 for the Severn Hospice in memory of Bryan who died earlier this year after a long and courageous battle with cancer. He was a much-loved colleague and friend at Henshalls, and was well-known across the Shropshire business community.

Henshalls director, Martin Pitchford, said: "It was a marvellous day. Lilleshall Hall Golf Club looked after us so well, and they presented the course in magnificent condition.

"We were delighted to have raised such a great total for a cause that means a lot to us all – it's a wonderful way to honour Bryan's life and his memory, and we're looking forward to planning next year's event already.

"As for the competition, it was a hard-fought challenge, with the Nick Jones team eventually coming out on top and keeping a firm hand on the trophy they won in the inaugural event at Shrewsbury Golf Club last year."

Nick Jones, from Nick Jones Wealth Planning, in Shrewsbury, said: "The tournament created some really positive friendly rivalry, and we were delighted to help Henshalls raise money in Bryan's memory.

"We're very pleased to have retained the



Martin Pitchford (from Henshalls) and Nick Jones (from Nick Jones Wealth Planning)

trophy despite some strong competition from the Henshalls team, and we'll be aiming for a hat-trick of wins at next year's event."

As well as colleagues from both companies, the teams each included a golf professional – Jon Gidney (for Nick Jones Wealth Planning), and Mark Shervill from

Lilleshall Hall Golf Club (for Henshalls). To help boost the charity total still further, Mark Shervill also auctioned off two coaching playing lessons.

Henshalls has its head office in Newport, a branch in Shrewsbury, and is in partnership with Bayliss & Cooke in Stafford.



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Approach to employee wellbeing is noted

A Telford-based reputation management and communications agency is celebrating success after being named a finalist in one of the most prestigious categories of a national awards scheme.

Zen Communications Ltd has been selected as one of the shortlisted businesses in the Employer of the Year category of the SME National Business Awards 2020. The awards recognise the shining lights of the SME community across a range of industries, with the Employer of the Year category specifically highlighting those who go above and beyond to look after their own teams.

Judges were impressed with Zen's overarching commitment to championing every member of its team, and in supporting each individual to have complete autonomy over their role, their future, and the growth of the agency itself. The business was also commended for its pioneering evolution of the traditional working week, which has seen the usual 9am-5pm day abolished and replaced with an ethos which enables everyone to deliver their hours, their client workloads, and their other Zen responsibilities whenever, and however, they wish.

In addition, the judges acknowledged the agency's dedication to providing tailored training and development opportunities, access to health and wellbeing programmes, and its ongoing commitment to ensuring every one of its team members benefits from a genuine life:work balance.

Felicity Wingrove, Managing Director of Zen Communications, explained: "It's a huge honour to be shortlisted in such a popular and esteemed category and we're absolutely delighted to have



Felicity Wingrove,
Zen Communications

been recognised. This last year has naturally been a challenging time for us, as it has been for every business, but it's also presented us with opportunities to further evolve the agency and introduce new and innovative ways of working that have brought significant benefits to both our exceptional and talented team, and of course our amazing clients.

"We've embraced flexible working for a few years now and introduced many of our initiatives pre-COVID - already having the systems and processes in place to ensure safe and effective working from home. Many businesses are claiming flexible working arrangements at the moment, but they're simply not structured to operate these in the 'normal' world.

"Whilst we're of course immensely proud to be leading the way in the adoption of true flexible

working, it's a very real tragedy that what we're doing is considered to be remarkable and not the norm. The outdated 9-5 working day has not been fit for purpose for a long time, but particularly now when we find ourselves in a very different world than 12 months ago. We absolutely owe it to our teams, our clients, and our businesses to make flexible working so much more than a convenience or a tick box just for now - instead we need to adapt and develop our approaches for the long-term."

The winners of each category of the SME National Business Awards 2020 are scheduled to be announced later this year.

For further information please call 01952 200722, visit the website at www.zen-communications.co.uk or contact by email on hello@zen-communications.co.uk

Double award joy for property agent

Leading property services company Belvoir Telford is celebrating after scooping two top honours at the prestigious **ESTA Customer Service Awards** - all judged on reviews from real customers.

Belvoir Telford claimed the Gold Award for Landlords in the Best Letting Agent 2020 West Midlands region and the Best in County award for Shropshire. Both categories were voted for by landlords.

The ESTAs, which are sponsored by Zoopla, are the biggest awards in the UK property industry. This year, the winners were announced on YouTube by TV personality Phil Spencer in the first ever virtual awards in their 17-year history.

Simon Bell, managing director at Belvoir Telford, said they were thrilled to have had such a successful night at the ceremony.

"We are delighted to have been honoured with two awards at this year's ESTAs, which recognise Belvoir as a trusted place to let a property in both Shropshire and the wider West Midlands region.

"As the awards are given based on the experience of our customers, it shows that the way we do business - with honesty and integrity - is really rated by our landlord clients."

The latest awards bring Belvoir Telford's tally of ESTAs to 17 in just eight years of entering.

The national awards are powered by ESTA's own customer review platform, which recognises the best estate and letting agents for customer service based on ratings from clients who have been through the whole moving experience with an agent. This year's



Angela, Sharon and Simon of Belvoir Telford celebrate on hearing of another two ESTA national awards

results were calculated from 45,000 customer reviews.

Location, Location, Location presenter Phil Spencer, who has hosted the awards every year since their inception in 2003, said: "There's never been a more appropriate time to highlight and celebrate the importance of customer care as agents strive to do the right thing for their clients whilst protecting their businesses and families. The ESTAs are the purest kind of recognition any property firm can receive because it's real customer review ratings from real clients that decide the winners."

Simon Brown, founder of the ESTAs, added: "When we started we wanted to create a set of property awards which were completely pure, where winners were selected solely on customer service ratings from actual customers. Seventeen years and over half a million reviews later, the ESTAs is now the customer review platform of choice for property professionals and the most prestigious award an agent, a conveyancer or mortgage broker can win in the property industry."

For more information about Belvoir Telford visit belvoir.co.uk/offices/telford

Award-winning recruitment and HR solutions too



The team from ResourceBank Recruitment celebrating after winning at the UK's most prestigious recruitment awards

Telford-based ResourceBank Recruitment are celebrating after winning at the UK's most prestigious recruitment awards.

Scooping the title for "Outstanding Outsourced Recruitment Organisation", the judges remarked how they were impressed by their ability to truly understand the client and implement bespoke processes that really work.

Celebrating 25 years
ResourceBank has reached another milestone in 2020, reaching its 25th year in business. There have been a number of charitable acts to mark the occasion, including the building of a school in Nepal, the planting of 25 new trees in the region and a virtual walk between its Telford and Henley on Thames offices.

Flex recruitment for Shropshire organisations
The company has been able to continue operating during the Covid 19 pandemic, by adapting their processes, enabling staff to work from home, and using the latest technology to ensure candidates can be interviewed remotely and safely. As well as continuing to service their large outsourced recruitment contracts they implemented a

new "Flex" recruitment service specifically for businesses small or large whose HR or recruitment teams are over stretched and without the resources to cope with the hundreds of applications that most advertised jobs are receiving currently. This service is flexed to suit the organisations needs and can be switched on and off as required.

HR support for Rightsizing

With the precarious state of the economy and the end of the furlough scheme, many companies are in the unfortunate position of having to downsize and reduce staff numbers. ResourceBank offers a variety of outplacement solutions including group workshops and 1-1 support to enable people being made redundant to move successfully on to the next chapter of their working life.

Expert HR support is also available, providing experienced HR consultants to use their expertise wherever needed, be it with rightsizing, change, consultations or policy reviews.

Special offers are available to Shropshire Chamber of Commerce members so if you need any support with recruitment, HR activities or rightsizing, please call/email Charlotte Todd-Smith on 07734 972679 charlotte.todd-smith@resourcebank.co.uk

As well as continuing to service their large outsourced recruitment contracts they implemented a new "Flex" recruitment service

Book your 'virtual' seat at the Business Awards

Shropshire Chamber of Commerce's annual business awards are going ahead this year – but in a virtual format. The competition, in its 20th year, has grown into one of the largest and most respected events of its kind in the region.

The Oscars-style ceremony was due to be held at Telford's International Centre this summer, before Covid-19 forced a change of plan.

Instead, the award winners will now be crowned during a live streamed event on Friday, November 20.

Entries have now closed for the competition but you still need to register to view the live stream www.shropshirebusinessawards.co.uk.

A number of sponsorship opportunities are still available, as well as advertisement slots for commercial breaks during the live stream. For details, send email to awards@shropshire-chamber.co.uk or call 01952 208200.

"We originally had plans for our largest ever awards event this summer, which was also including a huge conference and exhibition, to mark the competition's 20th anniversary," said Shropshire Chamber chief executive Richard Sheehan.

"Clearly, this wasn't possible in the current climate, but we were determined to create some form of event to reflect the amazing resilience and achievements of Shropshire businesses.

"We may only be crowning our winners virtually, instead of in person, but these awards will still deliver the usual top-level showcase for the amazing companies we have across all corners of our county."

He added: "It has never been more important to celebrate the extraordinary adaptability, innovation and success that is Shropshire business."

There are 10 categories in the 2020 virtual awards, including the showpiece Company of The Year title, for an all-round star performer, won last year by Knockin-based construction company Paveways.

Other regular categories which are returning include Outstanding Customer Service, Best Small Business – which is also open to new businesses – Business In The Community, Best Manufacturer, and International Trade.

The awards also include new categories recognising excellence in Workplace Health & Wellbeing, Digital Innovation, Corporate and Environmental Responsibility, Education And Apprenticeships for businesses building important links with education.

Thank you to all of our sponsors

2020 Virtual Business Awards Sponsors

A focus on Exploitation and Vulnerability

A crucial insight into the hidden world of exploitation and vulnerability in Shropshire will be shared with businesses and individuals as part of a police-led webinar.

West Mercia trainers Vicki Ridgewell and Karen Perry are set to host three online sessions through the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce – open to members and non-members – focused on organised crime gangs, child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and modern-day slavery.

The training has previously been run for specific groups in Telford and Wrekin but is now being opened up to anyone who wants to attend, with the Chamber partnership happening thanks to Dean Harris (High Sheriff of Shropshire) who recently attended a course with Vicki and Karen.

Dean said: "The course was a real eye-opener to me about the kinds of things happening right here in Shropshire, specifically around the sophisticated and creative techniques being used around the 'hidden high street' and in the criminal exploitation of children.

"I feel very strongly that every parent or carer needs to know exactly what's going on, learn how to spot the signs and what to



do if they suspect their child is vulnerable. As well as a personal responsibility for all of us to be aware of the issues, I believe the onus is also on Shropshire businesses to inform themselves; this isn't just about protecting your own children, but protecting every child, young person and vulnerable adult in the county."

A parent and professional who has

previously attended the session said: "I wish I had known more when my daughter was at risk and that I had had access to this informative talk. Exploitation is invisible. Don't assume your child is not at risk, being targeted and or feeling scared and vulnerable. We need to know more than our children to keep them safe".

West Mercia Force Lead Inspector Ram Aston added: "Our communities play a crucial role in helping us to protect those who are vulnerable to being targeted by criminals looking to exploit them and it is important everyone is aware of the signs and what to look out for. It is also important to know what to do and who to raise concerns with if they do suspect someone is being criminally exploited. It may be they are wrong but we would rather the concerns be raised as if they are right it could help protect that child, young person or vulnerable adult from further harm."

The sessions will be held on Monday 23rd November from 12pm to 2pm, 2pm to 4pm, and 6.30pm to 8.30pm. Each features the same content so individuals should book on to just one session.

Visit www.shropshire-chamber.co.uk/ events to book.

Electrical contractors expand to give back to the community

Shropshire and Mid-Wales based electrical contractors, Nexus Electrics Ltd, continues with their innovative approach to health and safety in the workplace through their recent expansion.

Family-run electrical contractors, Nexus Electrics is known for their involvement in community causes, local business growth and giving back. Nexus has its own Giving Back Scheme which is where the team manage their schedule to ensure time is allocated for giving back to the community. This work is done purely to benefit the business, organisation or charity Nexus Electrics is carrying out work for.

After a recent period of growth, Nexus Electrics has been able to expand their team, meaning they can accommodate not only more electrical contracting works throughout Shropshire and Mid-Wales, they can also offer more time and resources for their Giving Back Scheme.

This scheme has included work for The Ark in Shrewsbury as part of their service to provide for homeless people. Other work includes, food banks, local schools and colleges and local children's football team, The Dragons.

With recent times proving the importance of community support, and helping local businesses, Nexus Electrics is doing all they can to get behind this.

Nexus Electrics was also responsible for the installation of multiple defibrillators across the local area of Oswestry to ensure the safety



of all workers in the area, meaning they are always within easy access of life-saving equipment.

The growth of the team, to include two new members, Mr Dave Gough and Mr Ross Hindle, mean Nexus can continue to proudly carry out electrical contracting for Shropshire and Mid-Wales through day-to-day work and their Giving Back Scheme.

Director of Nexus Electrics, Mr Ian Hodgkiss, said "Giving back to our community is so important to us. We feel very lucky that we have been able to continue to grow as a business despite recent events and we would

like to use this opportunity to help other local businesses do the same"

Nexus Electrics Ltd is a family owned and run company and this is reflected in their business values.

Mr Hodgkiss said "We are proud and excited to welcome new members of our team, not only for the growth of Nexus Electrics but for the growth opportunities we can now provide for other business. Here is to all of us bouncing back"

To find out more about Nexus Electrics and how they can keep your home and business safe, visit www.nexuselectrics.co.uk



Joseph Fletcher-Hunt, Senior Associate, Laura Gandy, Associate Solicitor, Chris Mitchell, Dispute Resolution & Insolvency Partner, Ben Mason, Employment Law Partner, Nick Clarke, Senior Partner, Simon Mawdsley, Family Law Partner, and Associate Solicitors Steph King and Jennifer Harrison

Magnificent seven promotions

Shrewsbury-based law firm Aaron & Partners has announced a series of promotions in several of its specialist departments.

Aarons, which also has offices in Chester and Manchester, has announced seven promotions within the firm, with Ben Mason promoted to Employment Law Partner at its Shrewsbury office.

Having first joined the legal practice in 2015, Ben advises both commercial and individual clients and, will now play a leading role within the firm's renowned Employment Law department, overseeing all aspects of the team's development and further growth in the region.

Ben is joined by Chris Mitchell, a Dispute Resolution and Insolvency Solicitor, and

Family Law Solicitor Simon Mawdsley, who will both become Partners operating primarily from the firm's Chester office.

The firm's renowned Real Estate team has seen three promotions, with Joseph Fletcher-Hunt becoming a Senior Associate and colleagues Steph King and Laura Gandy promoted to Associate Solicitors.

Jennifer Harrison has also been made an Associate Solicitor within Aaron & Partners' Corporate and Commercial team, advising on a wide variety of corporate matters including company acquisitions.

Ben Mason said: "I'm very grateful for all the opportunities I've had during my time at Aaron & Partners and it's been fantastic to see the team continuing to grow in the region. This is a huge landmark in my career and I'm looking forward to the new role I will play as a Partner."

Nick Clarke, Senior Partner at Aaron &

Partners, said: "I'm really pleased to welcome Ben, Chris and Simon as Partners.

"They've all made significant contributions to our excellent performance in recent years and their promotions are recognition of their hard work and the high standard of service they continue to deliver to our clients.

"This year has obviously been challenging for everyone and it has given me great pleasure to see the resilience and flexibility that the team have shown. Therefore, more than ever it has been important for us to recognise excellent performance through promotions.

"We've always aimed to create an environment where our people can develop and progress with us so it's incredibly satisfying to see so many people moving forward with their careers through these promotions."

County law firm recognised among the best

Shrewsbury-based legal firm Aaron & Partners is celebrating impressive rankings in the latest edition of The Legal 500 – a comprehensive guide to the top professionals working in the UK's legal market.

A total of 46 individual recommendations have been awarded across 17 practice areas in this year's independent guide, reinforcing the firm's position as one of the region's top practices.

They include Corporate and Commercial Partner, Stuart Scott-Goldstone, who maintained his position on the prestigious 'Leading Individuals' list with his department also being recognised as one of the best in the region.

Partners Hugh Strickland and Stuart Haynes were also highly recommended for their work within the Corporate and Commercial team, with Hugh also being recognised for his work leading Aaron & Partners' Banking and Finance team.

The firm's Wills, Trusts and Tax team improved its position in this year's Legal 500 rankings, being described as "highly professional" with Partners Lynda Richards and Clive Pointon both recommended.

Family Partner Neil Hobden was highlighted on the list for his expertise



Nick Clarke, Senior Partner at Aaron & Partners

in the financial aspects of relationship breakdown, whilst department head, Richard Barge, was highly recommended.

Ben Mason, who leads the Shrewsbury Employment Law team, was recognised for his work with the Professional Footballers Association, maintaining his position on the coveted list alongside Helen Watson who was highly recommended within the same team.

Shrewsbury-based Agricultural and Estates Associate, Ben Brassington was also recommended in this year's guide, alongside Simon Ellis, Head of the Real Estate team.

Nick Clarke, Senior Partner at Aaron & Partners, said: "This year's impressive

rankings are testament to the hard work and commitment our teams continue to show.

"After what has been a challenging year for everyone, I'm proud to see so many members of the firm recognised in this renowned and highly-regarded directory. There are some very significant individual achievements this year with many maintaining their rankings, as well as some new recommendations.

"Our focus has always been on delivering excellent outcomes for our clients, and the latest Legal 500 listings reflect that ongoing commitment."

Across Aaron & Partners' Shrewsbury, Chester and Manchester offices, a total of 17 areas of work were ranked in The Legal 500 list, with a combined total of 29 lawyers obtaining 46 recommendations.

Working across the firm, Keith McKinney, a Partner in the Planning, Environmental, Energy and Regulatory team, was named in the guide's 'Next Generation Partner' list for the first time this year.

Dispute Resolution Partner, John Devoy, and David Harries, who heads up the firm's Planning, Energy, Environmental and Regulatory team, also retained their places on the prestigious 'Leading Individuals List' having been named in 2019.

Self-employed urged to seek help

A Shropshire accountancy expert has reassured self-employed business owners they will receive ongoing support as the Coronavirus pandemic continues – but only if they meet the required criteria.

Martyn Bramwell, Tax Manager at Dyke Yaxley Chartered Accountants, in Shrewsbury and Telford, said the Government had extended the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).

“The SEISS Extension Grant will continue to provide critical support to the self-employed, but this time round, there are extra conditions that you’ll need to meet in order to qualify.”

Martyn said business owners – including members of a partnership – must initially be eligible for the current SEISS scheme.

“You don’t need to have made a claim previously, but you will need to declare that you are actively trading, that you intend to continue to trade, and that your income has been reduced due to Covid-19.

“The qualifying period for the new extension grant is from November 1 and the date of your claim.”

Martyn said the new tighter conditions were the requirements



Martyn Bramwell of Dyke Yaxley

to be actively trading and the impact by reduced demand, with HM Revenue and Customs expected to release further guidance in the coming weeks.

The extension will provide two grants and will last for six months from November 1 through to April 30, 2021.

“The first grant will cover the first three months of that period, and it will be a taxable grant covering 20% of your average monthly trading profits paid in a single instalment that’s capped at £1,875 in total.”

Martyn said the policy had been drawn up to broadly provide the same level of support for self-employed business people as for employees who are receiving help through the Job Support Scheme.

“The ongoing support will be welcome news for self-employed entrepreneurs across Shropshire, and it comes at a time of real concern with Covid-19 continuing to dominate the world around us.

“If you’re unsure whether you may be eligible for the extension grant, seek out professional advice to make sure you’re not missing out on valuable assistance.”

Connected home offering expands with leading IoT solutions provider

Bristol-based Homelync are an award-winning, innovative technology firm that specialize in smart home integration and analytics technology. With industry-leading expertise in the Internet of Things (IoT), software development and integration, the Homelync team are at the forefront of this progressive market.

Aico’s acquisition of Homelync will provide a complementary technology platform to present a synergistic approach to IoT, analytics and data management across the connected home arena. Aico’s innovative SmartLINK Gateway provides real-time data insight into Fire and Carbon Monoxide alarm systems across housing stock.

Social housing accounts for 20% of all UK homes and with smart technology and the connected home vastly becoming commonplace, managing data is becoming difficult with multiple, non-integrated dashboards resulting in fragmented data, loss of insight and limited scalability. Homelync’s development of an IoT Analytics and Integrate Platform provides an innovative solution to these connected home issues. The platform facilitates the seamless, end-to-end integration of IoT technologies into one user-friendly dashboard, giving landlords more effective property management.

Commenting on the investment Aico Managing Director Neal Hooper said: “Aico and Homelync is a perfect partnership – Aico being the UK market leader in Fire and CO detection and Homelync complementing this with advanced data insight and analytics across associated



Neal Hooper, Managing Director of Aico and Luke Loveridge, CEO of Homelync

housing environmental sensors including temperature, humidity, energy usage and gas boilers. Complementing Aico’s Gateway which provides real time data insight into connected Fire and CO alarms within a property, Homelync’s advanced machine learning and analytics of this collective data will provide our customers with state of the art data insight across their connected properties. We are extremely excited around the value this is able to bring to customers across the social housing sector and look forward to continuing innovations and progression across the Connected Home and IoT arena.”

Through the partnership with Homelync, this valuable data can be integrated with analytics from associated environmental sensors providing complete, integrated, and effective asset management.

Speaking following the announcement,

Homelync CEO Luke Loveridge acknowledged the significance of the investment and the future strategic partnership; “Our vision is to harness new technology to make social housing smarter, safer and more efficient. The strategic investment by Ei and the future close collaboration with Aico will help us accelerate our objectives in this regard. The vendor agnostic, open sensor ecosystem we have developed is 100% complementary to what Ei offers its customers today. Add to this our team with decades of experience in software, hardware, machine learning and local government, and we believe we have the essential ingredients for a very successful partnership.”

This exciting move will see Aico expand its footprint in the Connected Home Arena with the acquisition of game changing complementary technology.

Meet and greet for apprentices

Senior managers from yoghurt giant Muller have visited Telford College to meet and greet the company's latest cohort of apprentices.

The college's relationship with the Market Drayton-based company goes back many years.

Eight more Muller apprentices have now just begun their training at the college, as part of a five-year plan which will also include an HNC in engineering.

Three members of the senior leadership team from Muller – maintenance and apprenticeship manager Alan Filmer, head of engineering Stuart Ellison, and operations director Roger Emery met up with new cohort and took part in their induction programme.

Alan said: "We're looking forward to develop our already blossoming relationship with the college who source and train all of our apprentices.

"We've been working with Telford College for a number of years for our apprenticeship programme - some of our early apprentices are now in pivotal roles within the company."

The latest batch of Muller apprentices at Telford College include Harvey Plimmer, 20, from Shrewsbury, 18-year-old Clark Wolsgrove from Oswestry, and Brandon Lewis, 16, from Newport.

Harvey is a former Belvidere school student, Clark went to the Marches school, and Brandon has come from Burton Borough school.

Harvey said: "It's been a fantastic experience for my first day, and it was exciting to meet some of the senior leadership team from Muller.

"I've enjoyed seeing the facilities at Telford College and it all bodes well for the future."

Telford College's assistant principal for employer engagement, Sue Gomer, added: "It was a pleasure to welcome Alan, Stuart and Rob, and strengthen our ongoing relationship with Muller to develop the company's future workforce."



The Muller visitors meet their latest intake of apprentices



Members of the Muller leadership team with Telford College staff Beckie Bosworth, Rob Lees and Sue Gomer

Rewarded for 'stepping up' during Covid crisis

A Telford College apprentice who helped a Shropshire company to re-start manufacturing operations after the Covid-19 lockdown has been rewarded with a permanent job – and picked up an award.

Toseef Subhani, 20, is the most recent manufacturing apprentice to complete his training with Lime Green Products in Much Wenlock.

The former Charlton School student has embraced the chance to acquire hands-on skills to manage the processes of dry mix lime manufacturing, and become a valued member of the production team.

"I've very much enjoyed my career with Lime Green to date, in particular the laughs we all have whilst doing our jobs," said Toseef, who has also worked on Shrewsbury's Flaxmill restoration project.

"I am enjoying learning the new skills that provide me with optimism for my future, the relationships we all have as small team, and teaching others."

Toseef's newly-acquired skills played a key role in helping Lime Green Products to re-start manufacturing after the depths of the Covid lockdown.

"I was happy when, during the Covid lockdown, I was asked to 'step up' to the plant control room and felt good that I was one of the first to be called back from furlough," he said.

His motivation and commitment have earned Toseef a permanent position at Lime Green Products – as well as a 'Significant Achiever' award from the Telford College apprenticeships team.

"My aims for the future are to carry on my training and education within Lime Green and maybe one day lead others," he said.

Lime Green production manager Chris Sedgley said: "Toseef is a remarkable young man who has a lot of time for all of his colleagues and supports management beyond his years.

"I personally am thankful for having Toseef as an integral part of my team, and wish him all the best in his career aspirations in the future."

While Toseef progresses his career at the company, a fourth



Toseef Subhani receives his 'Significant Achiever' certificate at Lime Green Products in Much Wenlock

apprentice, Joel Gennard is following in his footsteps seeking qualifications in industrial environment and manufacturing operations.

"The apprenticeships are invaluable to a company like ours as the skills are learnt through hands-on training," said Simon Ayres, managing director at Lime Green Products.

"Lime Green will continue to be an active supporter of the Government's ESFA Apprenticeship Scheme which offers good quality trainees able to support the expansion of the business."

Providing the driving force for business export activity

Chamber Patron Clickingmad is supporting the region's exporters by building bespoke web platforms for businesses to grow their international sale.

The Bridgnorth-based company has seen a significant rise over the last 12 months in the number of web projects which have involved building and translating websites for international markets.

It is also just one of a few web design agencies in the country to be working alongside the Department for International Trade (DIT) to help businesses grow their export potential.

Managing director Shaun Carvill puts demand for such web services down to several factors.

He said: "With the UK's impending exit from Europe, many businesses are looking to gain a foothold into new markets beyond the EU. They are looking for a global presence and with this comes a demand for their websites to be translated into languages which address their newly identified target audiences.

"Increasing internet availability around the globe is also having an impact because it means that new markets are constantly being created.

"And, it's those businesses which have already adapted their web assets that are seeing success because they are ready to trade much more quickly and effectively."

The Clickingmad team draws on the expertise of professional translators but according to Shaun, it's not just about the language.

"Adapting a website for a more global audience involves making sure web platforms, workflows and web architecture accommodate multiple cultural conventions and tap into relevant buyer behaviours," he said.

"Design trends are also very different around the world and this must be taken into account when targeting new markets."

Clickingmad, which is celebrating its 20th year in business, has recently completed internationally focussed projects for Wrexham-

based Tension Control Bolts, Ignition Components in Walsall and a website in German and hosted in Germany for Wednesbury-based manufacturer Floorstak.

Arnie Glausiusz from Tension Control Bolts said the newly translated website had helped to boost the company's export sales substantially.

He said: "Being able to communicate with our customers in their language has played a really big part in securing new international business.

"But it's not just about fulfilling a sales order. The website is a vital tool which enables us to reach out and establish new relationships with customers and strengthen those we already have with existing customers.

"I would certainly advise other businesses to invest in having their website translated into other languages. The coronavirus pandemic has had unprecedented effects on society and the UK economy. In these challenging and uncertain times investment in an international website is essential to broaden global reach."

Recent research demonstrates the importance of country specific websites with 65% of consumers preferring product information in their own language.*

Studies have also shown that up to 40% of consumers won't purchase products listed in a different language* and this is particularly important when it comes to complex, technical product data.

Shaun added: "It's assumed that more and more UK businesses will be looking to sell products and services into a range of countries from 2021 onwards once the UK leaves the EU and opportunities for trade across the rest of the world open up.

For more information on the services offered by Clickingmad visit <https://www.clickingmad.com/> or email info@clickingmad.com. More information about Tension Control Bolts can be found here <https://www.clickingmad.com/case-studies/tension-control-bolts>.

** <https://alexika.com/blog/2020/08/17/why-translation-matters-40-will-not-buy-in-other-languages>

"Being able to communicate with our customers in their language has played a really big part in securing new international business"

On the shortlist for an international award

Shropshire Chamber of Commerce Patron member Clickingmad is in the running for an international award for its digital creativity and innovation.

Bridgnorth-based web-agency Clickingmad has been shortlisted for the Best Digital Rebrand Award at the 2020 Digital Impact Awards which is Europe's largest celebration of digital work in the communications sector.

The company, which is led by managing director Shaun Carvill, has been recognised for the work it has undertaken to re-design and build a new website for Ascot Lloyd - one of the UK's leading independent financial advisers.

Shaun and his team will have to wait until early next year to find out if they are crowned winners of the award but in the meantime are celebrating making the shortlist.

"We would obviously like to go on and win the award but getting this far is hugely rewarding," said Shaun.

"To be recognised as a serious contender for this award against agencies

from across Europe is fantastic and a huge credit to the team.

"We would like to wish all the other shortlisted businesses the very best of luck and look forward to meeting them at the awards presentation."

The awards, which are in their 10th year, aim to set an industry-wide benchmark in digital stakeholder engagement and past winners include corporate brands such as Jaguar Landover, HSBC, Diageo, Barclays, Salomon, Bostik, Skoda UK and Shell Retail UK, to name but a few.

Clickingmad worked with its client Ascot Lloyd over a period of nine months to deliver the new website which has now catapulted it to the forefront of its sector for digital innovation.

The award winners will be announced at a ceremony at the Grand Connaught Rooms, in Central London.

For more information on the services offered by Clickingmad visit <https://www.clickingmad.com/> or email info@clickingmad.com



Clickingmad Ltd Managing Director
Shaun Carvill

In line for two industry prizes



Network Telecom, part of Enreach, has been shortlisted for two awards at this year's Comms National Awards. The awards are one of the most prestigious in the telecoms calendar.

The provider has been shortlisted for the Best Reseller Innovation award for its industry-leading touch screen desk phone, NT Multimedia. The phone does everything that a smartphone can do and includes built-in video conferencing, something that has proved a huge help for its customers working remotely.

Network Telecom has also been nominated for the CSR Award based on its continued support of chosen charity, Severn Hospice. Last year the provider raised over £9000 for charity and continues to support Severn Hospice and the great job they do.

Duncan Ward, Chief Executive Officer, commented on the nominations 'We're thrilled to be nominated in two categories at this year's CNAs. This is a fantastic recognition of how hard our teams have been working. We're up against some stiff competition and we're looking forward to the virtual awards night.'

Network Telecom will find out if it has won on October 22nd via a live streamed awards ceremony.

Leadership team grows at communications specialist

Network Telecom, part of Enreach, has expanded its Senior Leadership Team with two key appointments.

Steve Webb joins Network Telecom as Director of People and Culture, with Paul Roscoe starting as Director of Operations.

With a vast background in HR and a wealth of experience in the telecoms industry, Steve joins Network Telecom after 16 years at BT. Heading up the provider's People and Culture department, a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, Steve will focus on Network Telecom's employees, internal processes and company culture.

With over 20 years' experience in operations and telecoms, Paul joins the business after 9 years at Vodafone.

He will be leading Network Telecom's engineering and support teams to ensure the best possible customer experience. Paul's vision is to safeguard and augment the efficiency of the provider's service operation to facilitate development and long-term success for both Network Telecoms and its customers.

Steve and Paul both join Network Telecom at a strategic level with the view to taking the business forward, continuing to grow



Steve Webb, Director of People and Culture, with Paul Roscoe, Director of Operations

the company across the UK and as a part of Enreach.

Duncan Ward, Chief Executive Officer at Network Telecom, said of the appointments; "We're thrilled to welcome Steve and Paul to the Network Telecom team.

"Both bring with them invaluable

industry knowledge and will be pivotal to our future development as part of Enreach, in terms of product portfolio, customer experience and our company's culture.

"We've got ambitious growth plans for the months ahead and Paul and Steve will be integral to our success."

Collaboration brings us Shropshire Business TV

Three Shropshire media organisations have joined forces to launch an exciting new broadcasting venture for the local business community.

Shropshire Business Live TV is a monthly magazine-style show which will be live streamed across a series of platforms.

It is being editorially supported and driven by the teams behind Shropshire Business and Shropshire Live, featuring a mixture of news, panel-style debate, expert advice and analysis.

The show will be produced and delivered by Yarrington, the award-winning event management company which has built a new TV studio at its headquarters in Shrewsbury.

Launching on October 22, Shropshire Business Live TV will be available to view on the channel's own website, www.sbltv.co.uk, as well as Shropshire Business and Shropshire Live's platforms, www.shropshirebiz.com, and www.shropshirelive.com.

Carl Jones, editor of Shropshire Business, will host the shows. He said: "With face-to-face interaction still severely limited, we've all been looking for new and innovative ways to get our messages across.

"For the past couple of years, our magazine has been involved in successful Shropshire Business Live breakfast seminars, run in conjunction with Nick Jones Wealth Planning.

"With these having been cancelled for the foreseeable future, and with the new Yarrington studio on our doorstep, we felt this would be a fresh and creative way for the business community to stay connected, informed – and hopefully entertained too."



Chris Pritchard, left, editor of Shropshire Live, with Carl Jones, editor of Shropshire Business, on the SBL TV set at Yarrington in Shrewsbury

The first show will include a high-powered panel debate on the future of the Shropshire events and hospitality industry, plus a host of other studio guests and expert analysts.

Chris Pritchard, editor of Shropshire Live, said: "Shropshire Live and Shropshire Business are at the heart of the local business community, sharing news online and in print to thousands of business readers every month.

"We are excited to be teaming up with Yarrington with this new venture to create Shropshire Business Live TV, which I am sure will be a great addition and benefit to the local business scene."

Mark Allsop, managing director of Yarrington, added: "Businesses want to connect and engage with their audiences while staying safe, and doing it through a TV show is a perfect solution.

"Our new studio facility here in Frankwell is ready for action, and we're all looking forward to producing a fabulous series of shows."

There are a range of sponsorship and advertising opportunities available for companies wanting to get involved, and broadcast their messages to a wide audience in a new and exciting way.

Contact the team at www.sbltv.co.uk, or follow the Twitter account @tv_shropshire.

Helping to develop bio-gas refuelling station

Thomas Consulting are part of a design team providing various services within a sustainable fuel revolution that is happening up and down the country with client CNG Fuels.

CNG fuels provide Bio-CNG (Bio compressed natural gas); biomethane is derived as a bi-product from the decomposition of animal and food waste. This is a sustainable; cost effective alternative to diesel; but can also be used for electricity generation and heating.

Thomas Consulting are proud to have been involved in developing the design for Europe's largest CNG refuelling station in Warrington that opened in March 2020, the station is capable of refuelling 800 HGVs per day.

Services provided have included site environmental assessments and ground investigations, drainage strategies and design along with civil & structural



engineering design for a number of refuelling stations across the country. Several more facilities have already opened; with the potential for a further 49.

Biomethane can give transport fleets a cost saving of 35-40% when switching from diesel engines; it also offers ultralow NOx and particulate emissions with

84% CO2 reduction from well-to-wheel greenhouse gas emissions.

Developments are within existing industrial/commercial areas located close to distribution centres for many supermarkets, courier's, and high street retailers. The plan is to increase the strategic network further and allow the UK to match or beat our counterparts in running more environmentally sustainable fleets and achieve the UK's goal of Net Zero by 2050.

With many of the large supermarket chains eager to reduce their carbon footprint, their use of Biomethane fuels to power their delivery fleet has led CNG expand their network of supply stations for improved nationwide supply. Sites have now been completed in Lancashire, Cheshire and in Birmingham, with new fuelling stations currently being designed for sites from Avon to Edinburgh.

£5m training centre for Telford

A new £5million centre for health and social care training is set to be created at the University of Wolverhampton's Telford Campus.

The new Marches Centre of Excellence in Health, Allied Health and Social Care will provide state-of-the-art training facilities for the next generation of key workers.

The Centre, which has received £3.5m Growth Deal funding from the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), will enable students to gain hands-on, real-life experience of the profession they will enter and ensure they have the skills and knowledge to benefit employers.

The project will involve transforming existing space in the Angad Paul Building at the Telford Campus in Priorslee to create new skills and simulation facilities that can be used across health and social care disciplines.

The Centre will proactively address shortfalls in health professionals across the Marches area, with an emphasis on local people and students who will become key workers within the area.

The new facilities will include a room for paramedic science and other disciplines, a mock house, various teaching spaces and new student social spaces.

There will also be an immersive reality suite for emergency planning and simulations of a variety of clinical and non-clinical settings, interview and mock office



An artist's impression of the centre for health and social care training

environments for social work training and student collaboration spaces.

A new Anatomage Room will be created, following on from the success of similar innovations at the University's Wolverhampton and Walsall Campus. This will feature a state-of-the-art Anatomage table which allows students to 'see' inside the human body.

The first phase of the project will see the development of new academic courses, apprenticeships and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses at the Telford Campus from March 2021.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Geoff Layer, said: "The University is committed to training and upskilling those wishing to make a difference in key worker professions. The new Marches Centre for Excellence in Health, Allied Health and Social Care is part

of our ambition to create a more innovative and technologically enabled learning environment. This new development will transform the training of health and social care professionals for the Marches area and we would like to thank the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership for sharing and supporting our vision.

"This exciting project builds upon the introduction of nursing provision at our Telford Campus in September 2019. This was developed in collaboration with Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust and we are continuing to work with local NHS and other health and social care partners to develop courses that meet local demand."

Mandy Thorn, chair of the Marches LEP, said: "The vital role that key workers play in our society has been all too evident in recent months and this pioneering new centre will ensure that future generations of health and care professionals from this region can be trained in the latest skills and to the highest standards.

"That is good both for the physical and mental wellbeing of this region and its economic vitality. We are delighted to have been able to support the project."

Involved in the project are architects Broadway Malyan, Faithful & Gould as the client-side project manager and Gleeds as Project Management and cost management services.

For further information about studying health courses at the University, visit the website www.wlv.ac.uk/health

Shropshire Chamber of Commerce Patrons . . .



Always be yourself

Thomas Consulting is celebrating its 40th year of business, set up by a group of engineers from the Telford Development Corporation, WH Thomas and Partners was formed in 1979 and the business has grown to form three offices across the country. Thomas Consulting provide consulting Civil and Structural Engineering services covering domestic works to assessments for nuclear power stations. We take a break with Hazel Durham, Associate Structural Engineer at Thomas Consulting.

Who is someone you admire, and why?

With the current situation across the globe I admire everyone that has undertaken a vital role as a key worker by helping to keep us safe, healthy and ensure that there is food on our tables. Thank you.

Tell me three pet hates?

Rudeness is my number one pet hate, manners cost nothing!

Fruit teas – they promise so much with the aroma and usually don't deliver on the taste.

When you are (or were) out for a meal and you order dessert but someone else in the group does not order a dessert but they then steal bits off everyone else's dessert. I like dessert!

What's a typical day like for you?

My husband and daughter are not morning people so most mornings consist of me getting up and ready first so that I can set about getting them up and going. Some days it is more successful than others, but we manage to leave the house clothed, fed and hair brushed.

The best days are when I can get absorbed into structural design calculations and the 9-5 day just disappears in a flash. Otherwise you will probably find me looking into cracks or holes and taking photographs of them. Thank goodness we don't have to get films developed anymore.

Do you have any skills or talents that most people don't know about?

There is nothing that would get me onto a talent show; well maybe the outtakes for the worst singing. My singing is so bad that my music teacher at school told me to mime because he needed the numbers in the choir to look good.

If you could be anywhere, where would you be?

This is difficult, I love skiing, love the beach but I think I am happiest when I am at



Hazel Durham from Thomas Consulting

home with the wood burner on and a mug of hot chocolate.

Flashback to when you were 10 years old. What did you want to be when you grew up?

I thought growing up was optional.... I used to want to be the usual suspects such as a teacher, doctor, vet, journalist (like Kate Aida). I had always been fascinated with building dams and structures but didn't appreciate that engineering was an option until I was a bit older.

If we went to 'happy hour', what would you order?

Pretty much anything, hot days probably a G&T, if it's 'out-out' then I'd be perusing the cocktail list and I'm not adverse to a beer festival.

Finish this sentence. On Sunday mornings, you can usually find me...

...cleaning the house, if I'm honest; if I am not doing that then it is watching my daughter play mini-rugby or us all heading off mountain biking before a roast dinner.

How do you want people to remember you?

No statues please.

What do you think are the best skills that you bring to your job?

I think the most important skill that you can bring to any job or situation is listening. I have to remind myself to do that though as it is not a natural skill.

Name three words that best describe you.

Loyal, considerate, pessimistic.

How do you think your colleagues would describe you?

I tend to be the helpful one; not that I give people the answer straightway but guide them to find it themselves. I think coaching, mentoring and supporting colleagues is

important for any team or business to thrive or grow.

What do you want to make sure you do before you die?

I haven't drawn up a bucket list of things to do before I die, yet. I have done a few things that I didn't think I would ever do like a parachute jump, skiing and snowboarding. I like to make the best of an opportunity that comes my way and to be happy.

What's a goal you have for yourself that you want to accomplish in the next year?

My daughter and I have decided that we are going to teach ourselves to crochet. Doilies anyone?

What are your highlights or lowlights of your career so far?

My highlight would be when I collected by certificate for becoming a Chartered Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. The 142nd President of the ICE at the time was Quentin Leiper from Bridgnorth, so a special local link too.

Lowlights will be losing my calculator in the backfill to the abutment of Alconbury Interchange on the A1(M). I liked that calculator.

What publications do you regularly read?

It's usually a recipe book or food magazine. I love trying new recipes but give my daughter a choice and it would be spaghetti bolognese morning, noon and night; except Fridays when one of the meals must be fish and chips.

What are you happiest doing, when you're not working?

My husband would say that I am happiest when I am asleep. My daughter thinks I am happiest doing the cleaning (I really don't know where she gets that idea). I think I am happiest when doing yoga, especially if I have managed not to fall over.

What are some causes you care about?

During lockdown it has made me realise that as a family we should do more to reduce our impact on the planet. We are not perfect by a long stretch but are making small changes. We have changed our way of shopping and are doing more locally using the butcher and green grocers instead of the supermarket and are reducing the products that we buy that are packaged in plastic containers or plastic wrap.

What do you do with friends and family in your spare time?

As a family we enjoy mountain biking and love visiting Coedy Brenin and Llandegla mountain bike trial centres. It helps to offset the effects of the cooking.

What would be your personal motto?

I'll borrow something from Oscar Wilde: "Be yourself, everyone else is already taken."

Corporate member is named

Reech, Shropshire's leading full-service marketing agency, has been selected to become 2021 Corporate Members of Shropshire Chamber of Commerce.

Having originally joined the Chamber as entry-level Members in 2011, Reech are proud to become Corporate Members in celebration of ten years' association with the Chamber. Representing the industry, Reech will be the only Marketing Agency to join the exclusive initiative - with only ten Corporate Memberships available in the first year.

Recognised locally, nationally and internationally, the enhanced Corporate Membership includes enrollment to a Senior Management Training Programme, priority access to additional training places, events and exclusive sponsorship opportunities.

Founded in 2009, Reech is an award-winning, full-service marketing agency located on Shrewsbury Business Park. With services including Branding and Design, SEO and Social Media, and Web Design and Development, Reech has helped hundreds of local organisations stand out from the crowd, including: Shrewsbury Town Football Club, Fletcher Homes, Nock Deighton, Montgomery Waters, and Salop Caravan Sites.

Rob Hughes, Managing Director of Reech, said: "Reech is in Shropshire, for Shropshire. Whether our team are designing a new brand



Dena Evans, Creative Director at Reech, Mia Carter, Director of Membership for Shropshire Chamber of Commerce and Reech Managing Director Rob Hughes celebrate the news

identity or a bespoke WordPress website, we are passionate about helping local businesses enhance their marketing.

"Continuing to support the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce by becoming Corporate Members will allow us to proactively seek opportunities to work with other Shropshire-based businesses and charities."

To commemorate their upcoming 11th birthday, Reech are offering Shropshire Chamber members 11% off agency rates

throughout November 2020. Please get in touch to arrange your free marketing consultation. Mia Carter, Director of Membership at Shropshire Chamber of Commerce said "We are delighted to welcome Reech to our Corporate membership programme as our marketing representative.

"The new level has been built for organisations who wish to develop their leaders with continual professional development in five key areas of business.

Training partnership invests in the future

3pluk, are specialists in ecommerce fulfilment and integrated ecommerce technology solutions, supporting clients to grow their businesses, wherever they are based in the world.

Following a rebrand and further expansion of their services both in the UK and international, 3pluk have enlisted the support of local training provider, SBC Training to support the setup and commencement of their new training programme.

The 3pluk training programme will encompass a range of training opportunities for all existing and future employees and will include Warehouse Operative Level 2 and 3 training, Business Administration and Customer Service Apprenticeships and Higher-Level Apprenticeships, such as the Institute of Leadership and Management qualifications, alongside short courses in Health and Safety and First Aid at work.

Alex Carter, Account Manager at 3pluk comments "It is fantastic that all team members have been invested in and given the opportunity to take part in training. I am very much looking forward to learning with SBC Training."

3pluk have been working with local training provider, SBC Training to support learners and build the most relevant and beneficial training courses for all team members. This has resulted in a holistic and flexible training offer, which suits the varied roles, within the business.

Dave Wyatt, Managing Director



Emily Challender, Business Development Manager, SBC Training; Sam Audley, Accounts Assistant 3pluk; Phil Beattie Warehouse Supervisor, 3pluk; Iwan Morgan, Warehouse Supervisor and Dave Wyatt, Managing Director of 3pluk

of 3pluk, highlights why training is so important for the team.

"We have a wealth of experience across the warehousing, logistics and technology sectors and cater for all ecommerce fulfilment requirements and software integrations. The new training programme will support all of this knowledge and learning and keep all team members up to date with new technologies and working practices, including lean management, and facilitating change.

I am very much looking forward to supporting the team with their training, in partnership with the team of knowledgeable Assessors at SBC Training."

To discuss this press release or for further information please contact Joanne White, Business Development Manager.

Phone: 01743 644176 E-mail: joanne@3pluk.co.uk Website: www.3pluk.co.uk

3PLUK is a trading name of 4PLUK Ltd. 4PLUK Ltd, Bunker 166, Argoed, Kinnerley, Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 8DH Registered in England & Wales No. 08401992

Colin Thaw, Managing Director at SBC Training said "It is great to be supporting 3PLUK with their staff development programme.

Apprenticeships can be a great way of providing new skills and knowledge that help businesses to grow sustainably.

Our team aim to provide a flexible solution for business which helps to achieve tangible 'bottom line' benefits. I very much look forward to developing a successful relationship with the team at 3PLUK".

3pluk have also expressed their interest to be part of the government's new Kickstart Scheme, which is due to start at the end of the Autumn.

More than 1,000 small firms get assistance through lockdown

You can try a different outlook on Wednesday



Room with a view – enjoy a change of scenery

Looking for a new meeting place or a working from home office space? Love2Stay has introduced 'Workspace Wednesdays' especially for Shrewsbury small businesses, freelancers and those still working from home looking for a different space to co-work and network.

It is welcoming those self-employed, working from home or anyone who is looking for a new meeting place, to Love2Stay, which can provide a comfortable, relaxed space and free Wi-Fi/Internet.

For just £10, you will have your own table area with plug, bottomless hot drinks and a filled brioche roll of your choice.

Sit in a relaxed coffee shop with beautiful, natural views out towards the Wrekin, giving you a new environment to create inspiration for your work and host those all-important (socially distanced) meetings.

See www.love2stay.co.uk/activities/WORKSPACE-WEDNESDAY/RcAvkgv13o

A digital marketing consultancy based in Shrewsbury battled through lockdown to help keep 1100 clients across the UK afloat.

InSynch, established in 2005, with headquarters in Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth, provides marketing services to a variety of sectors, as well as mentoring, training and consultancy to government and EU funded programs.

When lockdown hit, all the training courses the company was set to deliver to government bodies and EU programmes stopped immediately.

CEO, Eddy Webb, said: "A third of our digital marketing retainers were wiped out within two weeks, our main source of income, and projections showed this could fall further.

"All mentoring sessions with businesses were cancelled by the projects we were working for. We realise we were fortunate in that we were able to deliver our services remotely but nevertheless, we had a choice to make in terms of whether we took advantage of the furlough scheme or took another approach."

The company had taken on new staff in March and Eddy said he considered briefly furloughing staff to bridge the gap in income but decided to take a different approach and fight for the business.

"The easy route would have undoubtedly been to furlough staff," he said. "But we felt we wanted to not only try and safeguard our business but also to be around to help other businesses stay afloat. We decided not to furlough any staff but instead create a strong team, train new staff and keep the resources as normal.

"After changing things internally and creating a digital working environment for ourselves with communication channels we were then able to help our clients pivot and change how they worked, exploiting new opportunities, and taking fresh ideas to them to help them survive.

"We offered free one-to-one consultancy sessions to any business, delivering over 200 during lockdown as well as free training webinars for businesses across the UK.

"We helped Government and EU funded projects to gear up for remote delivery by demonstrating how we could make remote meetings work just as well for mentoring sessions, helping them choose online delivery methods and writing guides on how to use meeting software so that businesses felt more confident among other things.

Within InSynch and externally via



Eddy Webb, CEO of InSynch

clients, staff were surveyed to check on their mental wellbeing and working preferences and marketing was ramped up and expanded to other areas, as the company realised that geography was no longer seen as a barrier by potential clients.

"The results of this shift in working was that we very quickly replaced much of the income we had lost, with new clients and new work," said Eddy.

"So much so that in the month of June we took on twice as many clients than any other month in the history of the company.

"Over 900 remote meetings held from April to September. Pre-lockdown that number was zero! The average number of meetings we are able to hold with clients has gone up significantly due to efficiencies – so we are serving our clients better."

The company has also delivered 62 online training courses, partnering with companies including the Marches Growth Hub, between April and September and estimates 18,600 miles have been saved by delegate and trainer travel, which equates to approximately 5 tonnes of CO2.

"We supported over 1000 businesses between April and September and we were able to help our clients recover revenue to above pre lockdown levels. Clients who had to cancel originally, are coming back on board and clients have signed up with us from much further afield.

"We have a happy team of staff, with greater levels of communication and collaboration than before lockdown.

"The business is now changing its entire working model and using this as an opportunity to shift permanently to a new way of working and helping all our clients to do the same."

For more details, contact InSynch on 01743 455989, visit insynch.co.uk or email enquiries@insynch.co.uk

Contract for new Shrewsbury school facilities

Building contractor Pave Aways has been awarded an £8.44m contract by Shropshire Council to expand primary school provision in north Shrewsbury.

The new flagship facility in Featherbed Lane will allow Sundorne Infant School and Nursery to move from its existing home on Corndon Crescent and relocate on to the same site as Harlescott Junior School, enabling the Haughmond Federation to consolidate its infant and junior provision on a single site.

The new provision will include a nursery setting, two nursery classrooms, four reception classrooms, eight classrooms for Key Stage 1, four classrooms for Key Stage 2, a pupil support hub, hall, kitchen, offices and meeting rooms.

Pave Aways will use innovative design and building methods to create a carbon neutral building to support Shropshire Council's ambition to reduce its emissions to zero by 2030.

Public consultation will start next week and building work, subject to planning permission, is expected to start in early 2021.

Ed Potter, Shropshire Council's Cabinet member for children's services, said: "We're investing in the provision of additional primary school places in north Shrewsbury and we're pleased with the appointment of Pave Aways, following a competitive tender process, to deliver this very important and exciting capital project for the children and communities of Sundorne and Harlescott."

Steph Peters, Executive Head of the Haughmond Federation, added: "We are very excited about the upcoming development and believe it will have great benefit for the community. The two schools already work very closely together and really welcome this next step. We look forward to working with Shropshire Council and Pave Aways."

Managing Director of Pave Aways, Steven Owen, said: "This is a flagship project for Shropshire Council and we will work closely with the local authority, Shropshire Council's Property Services



An artist's impression of the proposed new development. Credit: MHA Architects

Group, school leaders, staff, parents and pupils to deliver the vision of a carbon neutral building that is future fit.

"As a local business with employees and a supply chain rooted in the county, this contract will provide a substantial economic boost for Shropshire along with valuable training and work experience opportunities. Several of our team, including our commercial director, attended the junior school so it is a project very close to our hearts."

Pave Aways is working with specialist educational architect MHA Architects, which has been designing quality educational spaces for more than 45 years, on the design and build contract.

Director, Andrew Callicott, said, "We are excited about the transformation of the existing school. This new development will provide high quality learning and teaching spaces which is aligned with the Government's pledge to help create modern school environments. The new facilities will provide an excellent basis to help improve the overall learning experience for pupils and staff in north Shrewsbury."

Travel agent protects 1,290 holidaymakers

Peakes Travel Elite, Shrewsbury's award-winning travel agent, has supported 1,290 passengers so far by re-booking or refunding their holiday since the pandemic began. Despite having Covid-19 restrictions to deal with, as well as floods earlier this year, the company is still looking after its local customers from their travel agency in the town centre.

Claire Moore, managing director at Peakes Travel Elite, said, "If there is ever a time to book your holiday through a travel agent – that time is now! We can offer customers a high level of protection and reassurance. If you book with us, you benefit from ATOL bonded and ABTA protected holidays. We pass on that protection to our customers, which means they will always be refunded if anything goes wrong with their holiday plans. If you compare that to booking directly for example, you often would not get that refund, and you would probably end up spending hours on the phone trying to save your



Claire Moore, managing director at Peakes Travel Elite

holiday plans or recoup your money. Here at Peakes Travel Elite we do the legwork for you.

"We've battled on for our customers. We're still here, still on the high street, and

still working hard to provide our customers with amazing holidays.

"As lockdown hit, we worked tirelessly day and night to bring our customers safely back to the UK. Since then we have rebooked and refunded well over a thousand holidays - steadfast to our commitment of providing premium customer service.

Peakes Travel Elite have taken the decision to stop working with any tour operators who have treated the agency or their customers unfairly during the pandemic.

Mrs. Moore adds, "Currently there are a reduced number of countries which are safe to travel to, but what has been great is the amazing feedback from those customers who have been able to go away. In many instances, extra paperwork and admin is needed, but Peakes take care of all those details for you - making sure stress-free holidays are still possible.

"We will continue to provide protection and reassurance to holidaymakers in the region, by always being here, no matter what is happening in the world!"

To speak to one of the Peakes Travel Elite team visit them in their shop on Mardol in Shrewsbury, call 01743 233234 or visit peakestravelelite.co.uk for more information.

Giving a voice to the forgotten

Every person needs a voice and a small Shropshire based CIC, Parental Education Growth Support (PEGS) are providing that voice for a forgotten group of people. Child to parent abuse (CPA) is when parents are exposed to physical and emotional abuse displayed by their child and occurs in approximately 1 in 10 families. For parents dealing with CPA, overcoming feelings of shame and addressing the scepticism often faced from friends and family are two significant challenges to beginning their journey to safety.

PEGS formally launched at the beginning of 2020, at a time when the need for their services was just about to escalate. With the covid-19 lockdown, many families have felt a 'pressure cooker' effect, not least those affected by CPA, who have sometimes found

their situation becoming significantly more dangerous. For those families, PEGS has become a lifeline – linking parents to other parents for peer support and ensuring that they understand 'they are believed, and they are not alone'.

PEGS are a small, but growing team, with lived experience of CPA, who can offer important support for parents suffering abuse at home in what may be a life-threatening situation. They have designed an approach involving support and education targeted at both parents and the wider community. By increasing awareness and providing agencies and public sector groups with the skills and capability to identify, understand and address the challenges of CPA, PEGS is hoping to see and encourage change.

During lockdown, tackling domestic

abuse has been high on the government's agenda and legislation is currently being progressed through the House of Lords which will require employers to create a domestic abuse policy for their staff. As just over 56% of parents have reported CPA has affected their ability to work, PEGS also works with employers on a consultative basis to ensure appropriate support is provided.

Lockdown has accelerated the need for PEGS services but they have risen to the challenge, are growing quickly and are actively seeking more funding to help as many parents as possible to ultimately provide positive futures for families in the UK. If you'd like further information, please contact

Email hello@pegssupport.com and visit www.pegssupport.com

Media specialist launches new site and branding for Ultimate

Reech Media has announced the launch of a new brand and website for Shrewsbury based fitness and events company, Ultimate.

Founded by Simon MacDonald, Ultimate provides a wide range of health and fitness services, including boutique fitness classes at The Shrewsbury Club, fitness weekends and Fitness Festivals and Mud Runs. Ultimate are also the driving force behind the popular Shrewsbury 10k, sponsored by Mercedes-Benz of Shrewsbury.

Inspired by Ultimate's personable approach, Reech Media transformed the existing brand to reflect the company USPs: experience, class concept and a focus on wellbeing. This started with the development of a new name for the company – Ultimate, which was previously known as Ultimate Fitness Experience. Reech then developed a new brand identity and logo to carry throughout the Ultimate brand. The new branding is modern, clean and impactful with a logo concept that has been seamlessly carried throughout the company's other ventures and events for an instantly recognisable brand.

The development team at Reech then built a WordPress platform that is functional and sleek in design to showcase everything Ultimate has to offer. The website is contemporary and authentic, yet practical, with clear calls to action to provide users with information on each fitness event, client testimonials and keep up to date with the latest company news. An integral feature of the new website is the ability to book classes online*.

Reech Media Creative Director, Dena Evans, commented: "This has been a really



Reech Head of Design Adam Preece with Simon MacDonald

"This has been a really exciting project for us to work on as we've provided Ultimate with a fully-managed service" –
Reech Media Creative Director,
Dena Evans

exciting project for us to work on as we've provided Ultimate with a fully-managed service.

"All of our teams have touched this project in some way – from branding and design, to content creation and videography, down to the development of the new website. We're really pleased with the final results and are proud to help Ultimate relaunch their business with a brand and website that more accurately reflects their brand ethos."

The website is boosted with bespoke photography, that showcases the diverse range of classes and services available from Ultimate, which also includes 1-2-1 Personal Training sessions with Simon and his team.

Following launch of the website,

Reech Media has provided further support to Ultimate with the development of a bespoke social media launch video to help communicate the new-look company to current and prospective clients, which is in-line with the bold new brand and website.

Simon MacDonald, Founder of Ultimate, said: "It was important the new branding and website did not alienate anybody, and that we retained our friendly and approachable feel to inspire everyone from complete beginners to fitness fanatics.

"With clear navigation links and fastloading times, there's no waiting around – our new website is at the front of the race!"

To learn more about Ultimate, their services and events, visit the website www.ultimatefitnesssevents.uk.

*Classes delivered by Ultimate are only available to registered members of The Shrewsbury Club.

Putting homework back on the agenda

Government plans to get people back to work after a sustained working from home directive during lockdown took a serious hit when the Prime Minister announced a return to the policy to avoid a second wave of coronavirus.

It's a sad fact of life. Covid is still with us and any hopes of things returning to normal after lockdown were quickly dashed with news that one area after another was having further restrictions imposed to slow the spread.

The announcement from the Prime Minister means we must all work from home again if we are able and it looks likely that this will be the case for some time to come.

There are some positives for a return to homeworking. We have been there before and know that it works. Productivity didn't seem to suffer too much for most employees and businesses during lockdown - but it's important to run through a few steps for employers to ensure working from home remains viable for employees and safe for businesses.

Look after your health

A big problem with working from home is the loss of the workplace structure and long periods of isolation from fellow employees and employers. In short, the daily routine of going to work. The effects on mental health and wellbeing could become a major problem with a further sustained period of remote working.

It's important to stay in contact with your staff to ensure all is well, they know how to use the equipment you have provided for them to work remotely, they take regular screen breaks and have a structured day to work to.

Provide the right equipment

We all need the right equipment to enable us to carry out our job efficiently. Remote workers are going to need a laptop or PC, a good broadband connection and a phone.

Having provided the equipment, it needs to be set up correctly and be compatible with home working. Setting up a Virtual Private Network, or VPN, means being able to access Wi-Fi networks from any remote working location while protecting privacy - ensuring a secure connection to another network over the internet.

Security at all times

Data and other sensitive information are more at risk with staff working from home so it's important that your IT team creates the right environment for employees to work as they need to while ensuring remote working won't risk a security breach.

You will also need to put a working-from-home policy in place so you and your staff will know what is expected of them and that they don't do anything to jeopardise company security.

Maintain a watching brief

Supervising staff is more difficult if they are working from home but it's important to keep track of how work is progressing to keep on top of contracts being filled, deadlines met and orders and services complied with to ensure the continued smooth running of the business.

Work can be tracked and monitored in real time allowing you to head off any potential problems, break down tasks, assign projects and time to hit required targets.

For more about how we can help keep your business secure, call us on 01743 290588 or email katy@pcnetsolutions.co.uk

It's important that your IT team creates the right environment for employees to work as they need to while ensuring remote working won't risk a security breach

Currency advice for all

With severe fluctuations in the currency markets brought on by the simplest of political statements, now more than ever planning in your currency dealings is paramount. Here at Severn Diamond we have been using a Chamber benefit for several years, in truth the service we get more than pays for our membership. moneycorp is a simple and cost-effective way for all your currency requirements. We used to do all our foreign exchange thru a high street bank, £25.00 to send a payment overseas, £12.00 to receive money in, exorbitant charges for running the account and a poor exchange rate when buying Euro's.

With moneycorp payments are £5.00 for what they call a 1-2-day service, we find the money has nearly always transferred same day. Our customers pay directly into our Euro account, no charge. Whilst we do not get interest on money in the Euro account, we do not pay any bank charges for this facility, so I call that a win. And finally, exchange rates. When I do check there is always a favourable swing, having just checked as I write this (15th September 2020) the difference is £32.30 per €1,000 purchased. That saving goes straight to our bottom line, and can often offset market volatility, if you buy currency for your business take a look at this Chamber benefit, as we discovered it really is worth the time.

To learn more about moneycorp's free FX health audit or to talk to their team of experts call 0203 823 0526 or email ChamberFX@moneycorp.com



Ready for silver anniversary

One of Shropshire's leading digital agencies has designed and developed a brand new e-commerce website for EverEdge, who are celebrating their 25th Anniversary this year.

Source in Frankwell, Shrewsbury has worked closely with EverEdge for over 20 years and were asked to create a mobile-friendly, e-commerce website to maximise online sales and enable product enquiries.

Additionally, the expert team of in-house website designers and developers were tasked with building a bespoke, interactive tool that allows customers to select the shape, style and size of their desired planter to create a custom item for their garden.

The new site provides a solid

online foundation for EverEdge with the customer journey being a focal point throughout the design process. This ensures ease of use for all customers and offers excellent user experience at every stage of the purchase process.

The result is an interactive and engaging site that provides a 'look-book' of inspiring project ideas for both commercial and domestic clients. A new suite of modern iconography and stunning illustrations were created and provide additional visual interest and complement the products perfectly.

Source is proud to share strong, long-standing relationships with all of our clients, and believe working in collaboration to understand and achieve their objectives is the key to any successful project.



It's a revolutionary solution in the fight against coronavirus

A revolutionary protective coating that is proven to kill bacteria and viruses - including some forms of coronavirus - for up to a year is now available for homes and businesses across the UK.

Liquid Guard®, a single-application spray unlike anything currently available on the UK market, is easy to apply and will provide 12 months of protection on surfaces in just 6 hours.

Shropshire-based approved UK retailer, Protection Zone has brought the award-winning antimicrobial solution to the UK home and SME market to provide an effective and simple solution that will help people protect homes and workplaces from the spread of common, and potentially life-threatening illnesses.

Liquid Guard®, works by creating an antimicrobial nano-coating on surfaces that will rupture germs cell walls, killing any bacteria, virus and fungi that come into contact with it.

The spray has passed more than 30 independent, internationally recognised tests and has been proven to kill some forms of coronavirus, Influenza A and E. coli. It is also currently undergoing tests against SARS-CoV-2 (commonly known as COVID-19) at one of Europe's leading test laboratories.

Piran Littleton, Managing Director at Protection Zone said: "The COVID-19 pandemic has forced everyone to prioritise their health and safety in a way we've not seen in generations.

"Whilst Liquid Guard was developed in



Piran Littleton, Managing Director at Protection Zone

2018, and has been used in larger commercial settings, the product was inaccessible for most people, which is why we felt it was important to bring this revolutionary product to a wider UK market in a form that can be easily applied within homes or workplaces to create highly sanitised and disinfected environments. It's ideal for homes, offices, cafes, hairdressers and many other SME's.

"Touchpoints, such as door handles, light switches or even toilets, are some of the most common ways that coronavirus and other common bacteria and viruses are spread, and with Liquid Guard you are able to eliminate this risk for a year in just one easy application.

"The spray is completely odourless and safe for human use and can be used on any non-porous surface. It's simple to apply, long-

lasting and can withstand everyday cleaning, continuing to protect for 12-months."

Liquid Guard is a German Product Innovation award winner of 2019 and is manufactured by Nano-Care UK.

Piran continued: "What really sets Liquid Guard apart from anything else is the scientifically proven long-term results. The product has been independently tested to illustrate at least three years weathering resistance and high-level abrasion resistance.

"We're really excited about the impact this could have and truly believe it could be a game changer in the fight against the spread of viruses and bacteria, including coronavirus."

To find out more about Liquid Guard, or to purchase the product, visit: <https://protectionzone.co.uk/>

Carol singing for charity

My Shrewsbury magazine has joined forces with Shropshire Festivals this Christmas, with a clear message: **Christmas is not cancelled – it is just diversifying!**

“Instead of carols from the square this year, we are asking everyone to sing ‘Carols on the Doorstep’, joining together on Wednesday, December 16 and again for the ‘real thing’ on Christmas Eve,” says organiser Katy Rink, editor of My Shrewsbury magazine.

“It would be wonderful to see everyone join together in a great show of community spirit – as we did for Clap for Carers – and enjoy sharing some Christmas warmth.

“We’ll need some help getting the word out and are currently looking for sponsors, with DM Recruitment and Morris & Co Ltd currently leading the charge!

“We are also working with Radio Shropshire, to promote the event and broadcast set carols and Christmas songs to help everyone keep in time.

“The Doorstep Carols website www.doorstepcarols.co.uk will have information on raising money for charity, resource packs for making music and lovely artwork by Shrewsbury illustrator Saffron Russell.

“We’re mobilising in Frankwell, Castlefields and Belle Vue in Shrewsbury already, with people coming forward as street co-ordinators to organise musicians in their own neighbourhood.

“Social distancing is obviously a key priority – but a trumpet at the end of the street can make a lot of noise!

“We’re aiming to raise money for Shrewsbury Food Hub here in Shrewsbury but will also encourage street co-ordinators to collect for their own chosen charities, since all charities have been hard hit by a lack of fundraising events.



Katy Rink and family are ready for Doorstep Carols

“With our lights switch-on and carols in the square cancelled this year, along with all other ‘in person’ festive events, we wanted to create something for people to look forward to. We are determined that Covid won’t be the Grinch that steals Christmas.

Everyone has tried so hard to stay positive over the past six months, but it feels like heads are beginning to dip, as we see a long winter ahead.

“We’d love to bring a blast of positivity to Shropshire with Carols on your Doorstep. Music in particular has been very hard hit by the virus – people are missing social connections, wellbeing and shared creativity of regular group playing and singing. We’ve seen all kinds of creative responses to this online. We hope that Carols on your Doorstep will keep music live this Christmas and bring joy to families and neighbours.”

My Shrewsbury is collaborating with the award-winning events company Shropshire Festivals to help promote the event. Beth

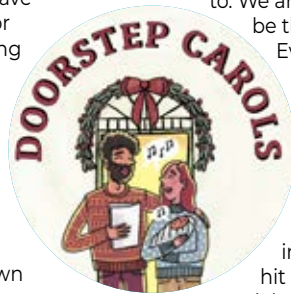
Heath, its aptly named ‘Director of Fun’, said: “Obviously all of our events have been cancelled this year, so it’s brilliant to be able to do something to support our local community and spread a bit of Christmas joy!

“The charity sector has also struggled due to so many fundraising events being cancelled this year. The idea is that streets can choose to collect for their chosen charity, whilst in Shrewsbury, we’ll be collecting for our Shrewsbury Food Hub to help combat the growing problem of food insecurity.

“Our key message is that Christmas is definitely not cancelled. Like everything else this year, it has had to diversify!

“We are asking everyone across the country to get on board and share the idea – and of course join with us on December 16 at 6pm and again at the same time on Christmas Eve.”

If you are interested in sponsoring Doorstep Carols, contact beth@shropshirefestivals.co.uk or Katy via editorial@myshrewsbury.co.uk #DoorstepCarols #HelpSaveChristmas @MyShrewsbury @Shropfest



Recruitment firm gets ready for Christmas

The team at DM Recruitment are spreading some festive cheer in the run up to Christmas. Stuart Danks, director at the firm, has agreed to be the headline sponsor of ‘Carols from your Doorstep.’

The event is a community initiative being organised by the teams at Shropshire Festivals and My Shrewsbury magazine. With the support of BBC Radio Shropshire they will be encouraging locals to take to their doorsteps on Wednesday 16th December at 6pm for an hour of carol singing, with backing music being provided by the radio station.

Stuart Danks said, “I’m so pleased the teams at Shropshire Festivals and My Shrewsbury magazine have come up with this positive idea. We need to step away from the notion that Christmas 2020 is cancelled - and a positive idea like this,



In the spirit – Stuart Danks, DM Recruitment

which will bring people together in spirit, is fantastic.

“Clap for carers was so poignant earlier this year, and I think the doorstep carols idea could take off on a big scale

too, so if DM Recruitment can help make that happen, we will!”

Participants can choose to make a donation to a local charity in support of the event. DM Recruitment will be asking their clients to make a donation to their charity partner, Shropshire Mind. Stuart adds, “2020 has hit everyone’s mental health hard, and the Christmas period might be exceptionally hard for some who have lost loved ones or livelihoods this year. It would be great if crucial, local charities like Shropshire Mind can benefit from this event as well.”

DM Recruitment provide temporary, temporary to permanent, and permanent staff to businesses across the West Midlands and Mid Wales in the industrial and commercial sectors. Visit www.dmr-recruitment.com for more information.

Careers begin

A Shropshire law firm with an award-winning training programme has taken on two new trainee solicitors.

Emma Cousins and Laura Jones started at Lanyon Bowdler in September, continuing the firm's commitment to training with the intention of developing leading lawyers of the future.

Training contracts with the firm usually cover a period of two years with each trainee experiencing four seats, each in different areas of law, one of which must be a litigious seat.

It means the trainees are exposed to many aspects of legal practice to enable them to

decide which area of law they are suited to specialise in.

Laura graduated from the University of Sheffield in July 2016 and completed her LLM Legal Practice Course in July 2020.

Between her studies, Laura spent time travelling around South East Asia and working in law firms in Whitchurch, Shrewsbury, Sheffield and Birmingham. She is currently based in Lanyon Bowdler's family department in Telford.

She said: "I am looking forward to my training contract at a firm with such a great reputation and having the chance to work with so many specialists in a variety of areas of law.

"I'm excited to have started within the family department, giving me the opportunity to experience a wide range of family law matters and to work with Legal 500 recommended solicitors."

Emma graduated from the University of Liverpool in July 2017 and completed her LLM Legal Practice Course at the University of Law, Leeds in July 2018. She is currently based in Lanyon Bowdler's Court of Protection department in Shrewsbury.

Emma said: "I am really excited to be starting my training contract with a recognised firm in the legal profession, and one which has such an excellent training programme.

"I'm looking forward to learning all about the day-to-day running of a well-established law firm after spending time working in-house at a housing association.

"It's a great opportunity for me to experience different aspects of law in a practice and learn from accomplished lawyers." Kay Kelly, Lanyon Bowdler's training partner, said: "We are delighted to welcome Laura and Emma to Lanyon Bowdler.

"They succeeded against tough opposition to achieve their training contracts with us, an opportunity which will provide them with an excellent grounding for what we hope will be successful careers in the legal profession.

"Lanyon Bowdler invests much time in training our future lawyers and providing them with the best start in their chosen career path.

"During their time with us, our trainees work with experienced lawyers to ensure they receive the support, advice and guidance which will stand them in good stead in the future."



Emma Cousins



Laura Jones



Niamh Kelly, Aleesha Skett and Laura Bray who will front The HR Dept Wrexham and Chester

HR firm expands into Chester and Wrexham

An award winning HR consultant has expanded by launching a second HR business and welcoming two new faces.

Niamh Kelly launched The HR Dept Shropshire in May 2018, a company which provides employment law and human resources support to small and medium sized businesses, and won the Start-up Business of the Year Award at last year's Midlands Business Networking Awards.

The success of the company led to the launch of The HR Dept Wrexham and Chester on September 1, which is being fronted by experienced Senior HR Consultant Laura Bray. Ms Kelly has also added Apprentice HR Consultant Aleesha Skett to her team to help meet the increased overall demand for the company's services.

"More and more businesses are understanding the need for professional advice concerning HR and employment law and the importance of getting it right from the start to prevent problems further down the road," said Ms Kelly.

"The HR Dept Shropshire has been very successful and the time is now right to expand the business. I am delighted to welcome Laura and Aleesha to the team and look forward to working with them in helping an ever-increasing client base through the often complex and demanding world of HR and employment law.

"Aleesha is an honours graduate from the University of Wolverhampton and is our newest member of staff having joined the team this month (SEPT).

"She was awarded the Oxford University Press Law Prize for outstanding contributions to the Law School, which included her pro bono work in the University's Legal Advice Centre.

"Aleesha joins us as Apprentice HR consultant, has more than three years experience working in HR, specialises in contracts and handbooks and has a particular interest in employee relations.

"Laura started in early August, has worked in HR for more than 30 years and was the ideal choice to be the face of the new HR Dept Wrexham and Chester business - she lives in the area and knows it very well.

"The decision to expand came after a need was identified for a dedicated, professional HR service to support the small and medium sized businesses in that area."

Aleesha, 24, from Trench, Telford, said: "Both Niamh and The HR Dept could not have been more welcoming and friendly.

"I'm looking forward to getting involved with projects led by Niamh and Laura and assisting them in whatever way I can to build on the knowledge and experience I already have, including the development of contracts and employee handbooks. I will also be studying towards my CIPD Level 5.

"I worked for more than two years as an HR Administrator dealing with mainly handbooks and contracts and taking on low level ER cases with the guidance of consultants. I then took maternity leave before working as a trainee HR Consultant with a very similar job role.

"My hopes are to continue working alongside Niamh and Laura once I have qualified in my CIPD, continuing to expand my knowledge and confidence even further as a qualified HR Consultant whilst helping to grow the client base. I feel this position will bring much more opportunity and progression for me and I look forward to seeing what the future holds."

To contact the team at The HR Dept Shropshire, call 01743 290474 or 07741 640504, email Niamh.Kelly@hrdept.co.uk or visit <https://www.hrdept.co.uk/shropshire/contact>

To get in touch with The HR Dept Wrexham and Chester, call Laura Bray on 07776 956117 or 01978 884328, email Laura.Bray@hrdept.co.uk or visit the website at www.hrdept.co.uk/wrexham-chester

Increasing resources

Shropshire IT Solutions Firm, Bespoke Computing Ltd, has decided to expand to help other businesses grow during this difficult time.

With current events putting a bigger strain than ever on businesses, Bespoke Computing is here to help. Having already extended their office working hours to be from 7am until 7pm, with the view of operating 24/7 soon, they decided to take their commitment to local businesses further and hire more help.

They have taken on three new members of staff during lockdown to include Bethany Mullen as a Marketing Assistant, Rhiannon Copeman as their Help Desk Technician and Laura Watkiss as their Office Administrator. They are now looking for the fourth recruit of the year to meet demand, increase resources for customers and continue to provide quality service throughout their business.

This expansion aims to increase resources for customers by improving and increasing support, customer service, and educational resources. Alongside the expert and dedicated services they offer, this also includes various free resources they regularly provide for business owners, such as weekly videos, podcast episodes, newsletters and relevant webinars.

With so many businesses facing the same struggles of having to adapt to a new way of operating, many local businesses have similar queries that need solving. To provide help and support to everyone, the team at Bespoke Computing decided to answer these queries via these mediums. It's free, easy, and permanently available for any business owner who needs it.

Bespoke Computing have recruited three different staff members across three different departments, allowing for expert support for key areas of local businesses. Expanding and increasing their team and knowledge base has allowed Bespoke Computing to offer more insight and support to local businesses and encourage their growth as well as the continued growth of Bespoke Computing.

Managing Director of Bespoke Computing Ltd, Mr Chris Pallett, said "I am so incredibly proud of my team and their attitude to



Help Desk Technician Rhiannon Copeman, Marketing Assistant Bethany Mullen, Managing Director Chris Pallett and Office Administrator Laura Watkiss from Bespoke Computing

supporting our customers, and thankful to our clients for their loyalty and illimitable support"

"We are grateful to have been able to expand during such a difficult time for businesses which is why we're so passionate about using it to give back. We are using our growth to support local businesses and keep their systems protected and working for them, allowing them to expand with support and protection. We are grateful people are reaching out to us and we will always be here to help however we can."

To access Bespoke Computing's free resources and keep up to date with their release, follow them across social media by searching for 'Bespoke Computing Ltd', or visit their website at www.bespokecomputing.com/ for more information.

A new head of digital services and technology

Shropshire specialist FE college Derwen College, in Gobowen, has appointed Dan Rowley in a new position as Head of Digital Services and Technology.

The college, which teaches vocational and independence skills to young adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), started a new academic year with Dan in his new role.

Dan has a wealth of experience working in IT in educational settings. He has held previous positions as Strategic IT Manager at Thomas Adams Secondary School, in Wem, worked as IT support at Concord College, near Shrewsbury, and Adams Grammar School, in Newport.

Dan was delighted to accept the role which sees him further establish and grow the college's technological expertise – for student support, management information systems, data collection and staff communications.

"We will be building on existing systems and upgrading where necessary. My role encompasses all technology at the college from management information systems to technology that support students in their learning, care and wellbeing.

"I am particularly excited to be looking into technology to assist students' learning," he says.

Dan says he was very interested to



Dan Rowley from Derwen College

work at Derwen College, especially after doing his research on the college which provides work training, work placements and independence skills.

"I was very impressed to see the work the college had already embarked on. The college has already developed some innovative apps for phones and tablets to support students into work, which I'm very interested in. As well as systems to streamline information across college departments."

In addition to his IT and networking knowledge, Dan hope to bring his expertise in education and working with young people to the role. He has previously worked as a boarding tutor, and is interested in getting to know and understand students and staff.

He said: "With current Covid safety

guidelines it has been difficult to interact with students and staff as much as I'd like immediately. However, I believe it is important to all work together to achieve the very best for the college.

"I am keen to move away from the 'IT Crowd' type stigma of the IT team hidden away. It's vital that we are visible, and listen and react to student and staff feedback."

Dan is married – he and his wife-to-be eloped to New York last Christmas. He has two young children, a two-year-old son and a new-born daughter. When he has time (and isn't exhausted) he likes getting out on his bike to relax.

Natalie Bellis, Derwen College Director of Human Resources, said:

"It is a pleasure to welcome Dan to his new role at Derwen College.

"We value his expertise in IT and experience in a wide variety of educational establishments.

Derwen College uses technology to support students and staff in many different ways, and it is vital that we keep abreast of the latest systems and technological advancements.

"We are confident that Dan and our existing IT team, in collaboration with staff and students, can enhance Derwen's position as a leading light in technology in specialist further education."



Assistant Engineer Dylan Purewal



Architect Tom Fenton



Principal Designer Mark Blanchette

Property design team expansion

Berrys has strengthened its planning and design team with the appointment of a new architect and an assistant engineer at the Shrewsbury office and a new principal designer.

Tom Fenton graduated from the Leicester School of Architecture and is a registered architect and chartered member of the RIBA.

Having been involved in a broad spectrum of projects ranging in size and complexity over the past 10 years, he has gained a breadth of design knowledge and experience working in the UK and the United Arab Emirates.

"Tom's broad understanding of architectural styles and his sensitive approach helps to maintain excellent client and design team relationships," said Stuart Thomas, Berrys partner and head of planning.

"We are also pleased to welcome

Dylan Purewal who joined us as assistant engineer from a world-leading engineering consultancy where he worked on the coordination and design of major highway improvement schemes.

"Dylan is working alongside our principal engineer Richard Harman delivering innovative solutions for road schemes to meet planning requirements."

Dylan has also worked in the Highways Development and Control Team, where he checked technical drawings from submissions to Shropshire Council. He is a Technician Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) with five years' experience in various disciplines within the engineering sector.

He has a HND in Civil Engineering and is working towards his BEng under a degree apprenticeship with Berrys.

New principal designer Mark Blanchette is an experienced and passionate construction health and safety consultant with over

18 years' experience in the construction industry. He has worked on a wide variety of new build construction projects in the built environment.

His experience is backed up by holding the NEBOSH Certificate in Construction Health and Safety, NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety, APS CDM Design Risk Management Certificate, and the NVQ Level 4 in Occupational Health and Safety Practice. He also has experience in the corporate health and safety environment.

"As principal designer and CDM adviser his knowledge and approach will be invaluable to the property design teams at all our offices," Stuart added.

Contact: Tom Fenton on 01743 290643 email tom.fenton@berrys.uk.com; Dylan Purewal on 01743 239029 email dylan.purewal@berrys.uk.com; Mark Blanchette on 01865 953193 email mark.blanchette@berrys.uk.com

Two new partners appointed at firm

Leading property, business and planning firm Berrys has appointed two new partners.

Charlotte Rogerson, chartered surveyor and valuer at the Shrewsbury office, and Simon Parsons, chartered surveyor at the Kettering office have both been promoted to fixed profit share partners.

Matthew Anwyl, managing partner at Berrys said: "The partners are delighted to announce the appointment of these two new partners.

"Charlotte and Simon have both made a significant contribution to the business and have been instrumental in developing their areas of work.

"They are excellent role models and ambassadors and demonstrate consistently high professional standards."

Charlotte joined the Shrewsbury office in September 2014 having obtained a first class BSc(Hons) degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management at Harper Adams University College and qualified as a Rural Chartered Surveyor after obtaining relevant experience at Buccleuch Estates, Queensberry, then widening her experience at George F White in Northumberland.



Charlotte Rogerson is now a partner

She specialises in freehold property agency and acquisition, valuations, estate and property management, landlord and tenant matters, Basic Payment Scheme and compensation work.

Simon has over 18 years' experience as a Chartered Surveyor, with a career that started in London with DTZ and took him to Europe working with international clients. He has also worked on the client side of the profession as a commercial developer.

With a diverse knowledge of



Simon Parsons from the Kettering office

commercial property across the UK and overseas Simon specialises in commercial agency, acquisition, valuation and occupier solutions and works for property companies and high profile corporate occupiers alike.

Charlotte Rogerson can be contacted at the Shrewsbury office of Berrys on 01743 290642, email charlotte.rogerson@berrys.uk.com

Simon Parsons is based at the Kettering office on 01536 213169, email simon.parsons@berrys.uk.com

New members to engage with

BIRMINGHAM

Energy & Bioproducts Research Institute (EBRI)

0121 204 3430

Bioenergy Research Institute EBRI
Provides practical support to Shropshire companies to help them develop low carbon products and services - at no cost to the business

Deskside IT

0333 066614

IT support provider for businesses around Shropshire

BISHOPS CASTLE

Sandaig Ltd

07905 710751

Distributor of nail and beauty products in UK and internationally

The Protection Zone Ltd

01588 671112

Distribution of antibacterial coating

BRIDGNORTH

Uvox LTD

01746 769369

Manufacturing - Electronic Sub Contractors

The Bridgnorth Bus & Coach Company

01746 585575

Bus & Coach Hire

LEICESTERSHIRE

Rotherwood Healthcare Limited

01509 416984

Healthcare

LUDLOW

CM Leaders LTD

07702 575439

Business Change Consultants

NEWPORT

Lean Gemba Solutions (LGS)

07412 621967

Lean Kaizen implementation and training & prospect management

OSWESTRY

Luke Black Limited

01691 611715

Furniture finishing and decorative arts

SHREWSBURY

Inspire Bidz Ltd

07724 497390

Supporting businesses in all aspects of bidding and tendering from full on end to end BID Management, bid writing reviews and process consultancy

RDC Safety Limited

01743 360404

Health and safety consultants and training

PCB Solicitors LLP

01743 248148

Solicitors, Commercial litigation, debt recovery, Landlord/Tenant property and company matters

Tanki Ltd

07761 416982

A new approach to toilet tissue, made without glue and from sustainable products

Premier Care Training Limited

01743 361740

Care and training courses - adults and children's sector

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01952 292021

Colour / black and white photocopying, full reprographic service including binding etc

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In 2020, we are celebrating 30 years as the market leader in Fire and Carbon Monoxide protection. Incorporated in 1990 in Oswestry, Shropshire, Aico has rapidly grown from strength to strength over its 30-year history, with the growth being marked by the move to a new, bespoke head office.

With life safety products, quality is paramount. All of our products are manufactured within the Ei group at the world class manufacturing facility in Ireland, where they have been developing and manufacturing alarms for over 50 years. As part of this process, every single alarm produced is rigorously tested multiple times, ensuring that they maintain unrivalled levels of quality and reliability.

Throughout our history, we have led the way in providing innovative solutions and achieved numerous industry firsts in the field of Fire and Carbon Monoxide home life safety products.

As we look towards our future, we will continue to pioneer in the latest technological advancements in sensor technology and advance the connected home, maintaining our position as the leader in home life safety, promoting best practice and engaging with communities to deliver safer homes.



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