

London

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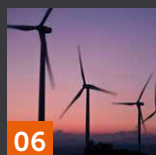
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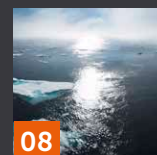
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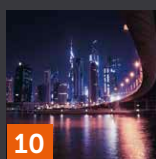
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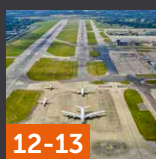
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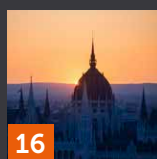
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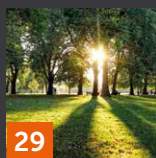
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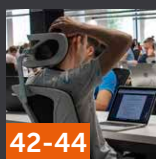
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LONDON CHAMBER
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

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Budget verdict – businesses cautious about ‘age of optimism’



Responding to Chancellor Rishi Sunak's Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, LCCI chief executive Richard Burge said that businesses would welcome initiatives to drive growth by spending on innovation and skills

Moreover, some specific sectors would enjoy much-needed support such as the simplification of alcohol duty, extension of the HGV levy sus-

pension and freezing of vehicle excise duty.

Greener economy

Burge welcomed the provision of grants to encourage international firms to invest in the UK's most critical and innovative industries, particularly those that would fast-track the country's transition to a greener economy, are welcome. "Measures enabling foreign companies to relocate to the UK with much greater ease and investment to attract skilled workers to the UK will be a boost for the economy", he commented. "However, it is disappointing to see costs increasing for long-haul travel, which is at odds with the government's 'Global Britain' ambitions and could inhibit London's role as a leading global city.

Outdated rates system

"Whilst the Chancellor's announcements relating to business rates are welcome, particularly for those in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, businesses will be disappointed that the Budget did not include more extensive reforms to address the outdated system of rates based on the value of property.

"The Budget's overwhelming focus on supporting 'cities outside of London' is also concerning, with the capital set to receive less than two per

"The Chancellor's optimistic outlook is encouraging, however this comes against a backdrop of growing Covid-related uncertainty."

cent of the first round of national funding for levelling-up projects despite having received the lion's share of economic pain from the Covid-19 pandemic. There is of course a need to level-up the rest of the UK but this cannot be done by simply levelling down London, an outcome that would injure the whole of the national economy.

Covid-related uncertainty

"The Chancellor's optimistic outlook is encouraging, however this comes against a backdrop of growing Covid-related uncertainty. With the potential for economic activity to be restricted this winter, Covid-induced inflationary pressures and ongoing supply chain difficulties, businesses are feeling understandably cautious about the extent to which the Chancellor's 'age of optimism' will be realised."

Trade services demand rebounds fastest in London

Demand for plumbers, electricians, building-maintenance firms and other vital trades have bounced back faster in London than any other part of the UK following the initial Covid lockdown last year, according to a new report published by field service management software provider BigChange

Trades businesses operating in the capital saw demand double in the year to July 2021, recording year-on-year increases in workload of exactly 100 per cent. BigChange's State of the Field Service Sector report also reveals that turnovers for trades in London increased by 109 per cent in the same period. Trades business in the capital also led the UK in service price increase (up 70 per cent, on average).

Shortage of skilled staff

Although profitability also increased by 86 per cent year-on-year, on average, this wasn't felt evenly across London's trades sectors. Fewer than half (47 per cent) of firms in the capital turned a profit last year and almost a third (29 per cent reported losses).

One-in-five trade firms in the capital fear they will fail within a year as Covid complications, a shortage of

skilled staff and surging costs continue to hit hard. 86 per cent of trades businesses surveyed said that the pandemic had continued to negatively impact their finances in the last 12 months, with rising costs of labour, fuel and materials cited as ongoing problems by more than 80 per cent of respondents.

New technologies

Many businesses are investing heavily in talent and technology to help meet increased demand. Trades in the capital saw headcounts rise by 63 per cent on average in the last year, and spent 73 per cent more on new technologies to improve areas such as planning, workflow and management oversight in the last 12 months.

Richard Warley, BigChange chief executive commented: "Business is booming for UK trades and London is leading the way. But it's far from plain sailing. Soaring costs, shortages of skilled labour and Covid complications mean fewer than half of trade businesses are turning this extra work into profit."

"Trade businesses are the backbone of the economy. Those that are growing stronger in this environment are using technology to boost planning, productivity and their customer experience."

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Entrepreneurial Greater London

Research from business and financial platform Tide has revealed that Greater London is home to the highest number of entrepreneurs in the UK, as 18 per cent of all workers in the region are self-employed.

The study analysed ONS data to reveal the most entrepreneurial regions in the UK.

Greater London has just under 3.8 million total workers, 864,000 of whom are self-employed.

In second place comes the Swansea Bay City Region which incorporates Swansea, Pembrokeshire and Port Talbot, with a total of 263,000

workers. 50,000 are self-employed which means 16.1 per cent of the area's workforce are self-employed.

The West of England ranks third, where 14.9 per cent of workers are self-employed. This city region which includes Bristol as its biggest city has 74,000 self-employed workers from a total of 422,000.

Unprecedented

Oliver Prill, chief executive at Tide commented: "Taking the step into entrepreneurship is a big one, and I am always impressed by the number of people who are keen to leap into the unknown and give it a go, particularly in the last year, when we

have seen an unprecedented number of new businesses emerge. It's a very difficult step to take though, and as the data shows, not all start-ups make it.

"There are a number of steps that new business owners can take to increase their chances of success.

Pressure

"Before quitting your day job to start a business, try to run your business alongside your job – this can be exhausting, but it gives you the opportunity to see if the business can generate an income without the financial pressure.

"When you're ready to take the

plunge and dedicate all your time to your business, take the time to assess how to use your time most effectively – the admin side of running a business is time-consuming, but there are services, like Tide, out there to lighten the burden

"Fail fast – if something isn't working, don't waste time and energy trying to make it work, be agile and try something new. The beauty of starting your own business is that you have the freedom to take in the direction you want."

www.tide.co
www.tide.co/british-entrepreneurial-index

Top 10 UK regions with the highest percentage of entrepreneurs

Rank	Region	Number of self-employed workers	Total employees	% of self-employed workers
1	Greater London Authority	864,000	3,778,000	18.6
2	Swansea Bay City Region	50,000	263,000	16.1
3	West of England Combined Authority	74,000	422,000	14.9
4	North of Tyne Combined Authority	54,000	326,000	14.1
5	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	183,000	1,146,000	13.8
6	Edinburgh and South East Scotland	91,000	598,000	13.2
7	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority	56,000	373,000	13.0
8	West Midlands Combined Authority	167,000	1,133,000	12.9
9	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	88,000	639,000	12.2
10	Tees Valley Combined Authority	34,000	255,000	11.9

Commercial development

Graeme Craig, Transport for London's (TfL) commercial development director was guest speaker at a recent LCCI property and construction lunch.

Craig is responsible for TfL's land and property across the capital. This includes an estate management function of over 5,500 acres of operational land and over 30 offices buildings.

He also runs TfL's commercial property function, which is delivering an initial programme of 10,000 homes (half of which will be af-

fordable) across more than 50 sites. Craig's team will be developing over two million square feet of commercial offices across seven sites, including at Bank, Paddington and Southwark.

TfL has over 2,000 commercial tenants (of which 86 per cent are small businesses) with a large portfolio of retail units in and around stations, as well as over 750 arches across London. All net revenue raised from the commercial activity is returned to TfL to reinvest in London's transport network.

Among topics covered by one of

TfL's key directors were:

- The organisation's recently announced housing delivery programme (part of TfL's new funding deal with the government), which includes a clear milestone for housing, as well as affordable housing, to be delivered by the end of 2024
- Sustainable property development
- The ongoing skills challenge for the property and construction sector.

The lunch was sponsored by Advanced UK and Menzies.



New Hospitality Council to guide the sector's recovery

A team of industry experts has been assembled to help England's pubs, restaurants and cafes to recover and thrive, Business Minister Paul Scully has announced.

The Hospitality Sector Council is made up of experts who represent a cross-section of the sector, to support the delivery of the government's Hospitality Strategy. The council will identify and oversee actions related to the 22 commitments in the strategy.

The council is co-chaired by Minister Scully and hospitality entrepreneur and chair of Prezzo Karen Jones. Council members include UK Hospitality chief executive Kate Nicholls, Emma McClarkin of the British Beer and Pub Association, Nando's UK & Ireland chief executive Colin Hill, Greene King boss Nick MacKenzie, Starbucks UK general manager Alex Rayner and Mowgli's Nisha Katona.

Zooming in



Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick took time out from a busy schedule early this autumn to address a private, online LCCI roundtable.

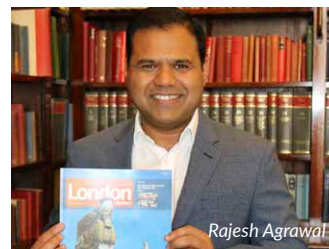
In post since 2017, Dick outlined the Met's future plans and answered members' questions in a Chatham House Rule session.

Resolving banking disputes

A new, not-for-profit, free of charge dispute resolution service, the Business Banking Resolution Service (BBRS), is appealing directly to London-based businesses to see if their unresolved banking disputes can be tackled

It is estimated that nearly 600,000 UK SMEs could qualify for the BBRS' independent, free specialist dispute resolution services - including 129,000 based in London - which covers current and past complaints, dating back to 2001.

The BBRS is urging larger SMEs (£1m - £10m turnover) with outstanding banking disputes to get in touch to see if they can help, at www.thebbbs.org/register or via a quick online tool. If the BBRS upholds a complaint, it can make a financial or non-financial award against a bank, up to £350,000 for historical cases and £600,000 for contemporary cases (and it can recommend more).



Lifeline

Rajesh Agrawal, deputy mayor for business, said: "Businesses in the capital have had a very tough time during the pandemic. Through initiatives such as the London Business Hub, we're doing all we can to provide free support and resources to help businesses thrive in the future. The BBRS' independent dispute resolution service could be a vital lifeline for SMEs and avoid the costs of going to court. I encourage SMEs in this position, including those with business banking complaints going back over the years, to get in touch with the BBRS today."

Transport and infrastructure



Robert Sinclair, chief executive of London City Airport, pictured alongside LCCI chief executive Richard Burge, briefed LCCI members at a recent session at the Chamber HQ in the City.

Topics covered were:

- The future of business travel
- London City Airport's vision for sustainable and responsible growth
- Supporting London's recovery
- Smart infrastructure.

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Companies bidding for major government contracts face green rules



New measures which require businesses bidding for major government contracts to commit to achieving net zero emissions came into force earlier this year.

The implementation of these rules will help deliver government commitments to reach net

zero carbon emissions by 2050. The requirements will apply to any companies bidding for government contracts worth more than £5 million a year, not just those who are successful.

The UK is the first country in the world to put such a measure in place, underlining the government's leadership in the fight to tackle climate change.

Spending power

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Steve Barclay commented: "Government spends £290 billion a year on procurement and it's right that we use this spending power to green the economy."

"Working arm-in-arm with business, we are taking giant strides to ensure this country is building back greener and tackling climate change."

The new requirements come into effect ahead of international climate conference COP26 which the UK, with officials at the event working closely with climate experts and campaigners to encourage other countries to follow the UK's example.

The measures will apply to all central government departments as well as their executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies

Mayor of London prioritises walking, cycling and urban greening

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has set out new plans to ensure future developments in London are greener, more energy efficient and prioritise space for walkers, cyclists and public transport.



As part of his plan to make London a zero-carbon city by 2030, the Mayor's new London Plan sets out targets for new developments.

New guidance gives developers advice as to how these policies can be implemented.

Energy monitoring

- This guidance requires monitoring and reporting of the actual operational energy performance of buildings forming part of major developments for at least five years post-construction

Urban greening factor

- This guidance sets out how new developments should calculate their urban greening score, for example, how much they contribute to London's green space

Sustainable transport, walking and cycling

- The Mayor wants to ensure enough space is dedicated to walking, cycling and public transport when new developments comes forward. That means creating new walking routes and improving the cycle network, as well as ensuring there is enough transport infrastructure, such as bus garages, rail depots, or space for trams.

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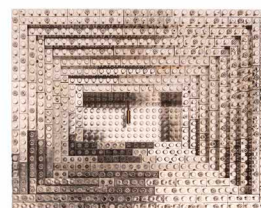
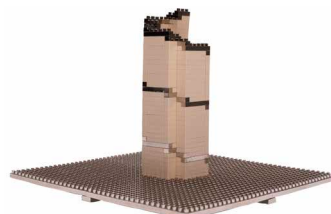
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Small steps: beginning the journey towards net zero



by Duncan Boak

Making any significant change often involves a series of much smaller steps, and getting some help along the way. That's how I think small businesses across London need to approach the challenge of making the transition to net zero.

The UK needs to reduce its carbon emissions by 60 per cent by 2035 and achieve net zero by 2050. Additionally the Mayor of London has set a target for London to be zero-carbon city by 2030. These targets present significant challenges for the SMEs that make up 99.9 per cent of the UK's business population, many of which are grappling with the problems created by the double whammy of Covid-19 and Brexit.

Inadequate

A recent report by the British Business Bank states that 11 per cent of small businesses have accessed external finance to support net zero actions, with 22 per cent prepared to do so over the next five years. Whilst this is positive news, in a separate piece of research carried out by the bank in summer 2021 amongst business finance intermediaries, six in ten respondents felt that the current ecosystem does not assist SMEs in identifying and understanding net zero projects. Significantly, 39 per cent of intermediaries also believed that there is an inadequate supply of finance dedicated to net zero in their region or country.

For many, the biggest challenge can simply be where to start. My experience of working with sustainability-focused businesses suggests that a lot can be achieved with the right support, and doesn't always have to come at extra cost.

Free support

I manage the University of East London's Business Centre, located in Docklands. Part of the Centre's offer to businesses is the opportunity to collaborate with University research expertise, such as the Sustainability Research Institute (SRI), the University's centre of excellence for environmental research and development. The SRI is currently delivering an ERDF-funded project called ARENA, which provides London-based businesses with free support to develop innovative ideas, products and services in the areas of resource efficiency, urban green infrastructure, and nature-based solutions.

There are some great examples of green innovation that are being supported by ARENA. One business is developing smart controllers for irrigation systems used in agriculture, horticulture and on sports fields. Another organisation turns the roofs of urban infrastructure like bicycle shel-

ters, freight containers and bin stores into micro habitats.

Resource-efficient

We are also working with businesses that don't have a specific environmental focus but are keen to take steps to decarbonise. St John's Laboratory supplies universities and biotech labs with research antibodies. They are taking a more resource-efficient approach to their packaging, replacing polystyrene containers with boxes made from renewable feedstock and reducing the size of boxes so that more can be fitted into shipping containers or planes. This is saving the business, its customers and distributors money through reduced shipping costs. The company is now starting to look at other ways of making efficiencies within its supply chain for environmental benefit.

Towards net zero

Here are some further suggestions for businesses looking to start their journey towards net zero:

- Make some time to take a step back and think about how you could make efficiencies within your current practices. There may be cost savings, as in the example I've given above.
- Get information from reputable sources such as the new London Chamber Climate Hub and the government-backed SME Climate Hub.
- Get advice from academic institutions with expertise in this area, and talk to other businesses who are already working towards net zero to get the benefit of their experience.
- Think about any training that you and your employees can take to increase your knowledge on how to reduce carbon emissions. There are some great initiatives that are worth looking at like the Carbon Literacy project.
- Remember to see net zero as an incremental process, not a giant leap. It is better to start with one small initiative and stick with it rather than doing nothing at all.

The government has a crucial role to play in all this and I hope that following COP26 we will start to see both policy change and new initiatives that incentivise businesses to start making the transition to net zero. The Chamber and its members also have a crucial role here in lobbying government to ensure SMEs across the country receive the support they need. It's a challenging journey ahead but we all need to get involved.

Duncan Boak is manager of the University of East London Business Centre
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Business Protection from Current and Former Employees



by Jonathan Mansfield

An important challenge for employers is how to protect the business from former employees. While working for the firm, employees may acquire knowledge of confidential information of a strategic or technical nature. They may also develop close relationships with clients and key colleagues.

Can these valuable assets be protected at all? The starting point for a UK court is that restrictions after the end of employment are an unlawful restraint of trade.

Legitimate Interest and Reasonable

In fact it is possible to protect the business from ex-employees, provided it is a legitimate interest which is protected (things like client connection, confidential information and a stable trained workforce). It also has to be reasonable in time and extent.

Protection during employment

Something we always remind employers is that protection starts during the employment. You can make sure you have a well-drawn up confidentiality clause. The contract clause defining duties of employees should also be carefully considered. Also, you should have in place a "garden leave" clause; this will mean that the employee can be kept away from clients and access to sensitive data during their notice period.

Protection after Employment

Post employment restrictions are also permissible. These often referred to as "restrictive covenants".

Typically, these include non-competition clauses, restrictions on dealing with or soliciting clients or other vital contacts and non-poaching of key employees.

A non-competition clause is a blunt instrument which may be considered to be unreasonable in some cases. The business should ask itself what is the minimum necessary to protect the business?

Non-dealing and non-solicitation covenants are more likely to be enforceable but should be framed in a limited way. For example, if the clause covers all clients rather than just those the employee had contact with it may be too broad.

Clauses of 6-12 months may be enforceable if reasonably necessary but longer than this and there is much less chance that a court would uphold the restriction.

Prevention not Cure

Litigation in this area is expensive. Get it wrong a company will be throwing good money away. Get it right and vital interests will be safe. We strongly recommend a review of your business's protection in this area.

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The next posture is the best posture

By Simon Garcia
Owner of Freedom Wellbeing Inc



A pristine desk. . . All-singing-all-dancing chair ... Big monitor on an adjustable arm ... That one team member that's always first to do the coffee-run ... These are things we all took for granted and just seem like a distant memory for now. All the things that made us that bit more comfortable in the workplace. Now, we're all working from home and a lot of us will probably continue to work at least 50% from home, after we return to the new normal.

Pre-pandemic, I remember hearing a lot during assessments, that people go to too many meetings and don't have enough time at their desk to work. After more than a year of working from home, the pendulum has swung the other way and people are missing the physical interaction with colleagues, missing walking up two flights of stairs to a meeting room that you have to wait outside of, because someone has jumped in there to make a personal call, missing the awful coffee from the machine. . . Okay, maybe not the last one.

I have assessed every possible homeworking scenario and they will fall into 3 broad categories;

The Home Office – You have a private room, with a desk, task chair, maybe a monitor.

The Table – Using the kitchen/dining table, so need to be very light with equipment, as your "desk" also serves as a feeding port for the family, so needs to be cleared of work bits regularly.

The Sofa – Using either the sofa or your bed, as you may be in a house share, or studio flat, so space is very limited.

Three very different scenarios, all with practical equipment solutions that can improve posture, mental wellbeing and productivity, but there is one consistent problem that every worker in all of these scenarios faces. Prolonged static postures!

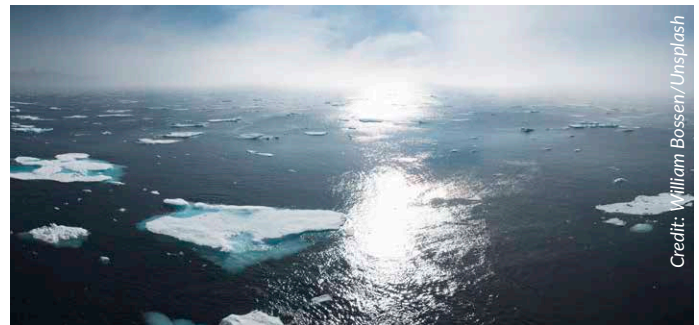
We are all sitting too long, because we have nothing to do, but sit. Not only is our work on that little screen in front, but our meetings are too, even phone calls are making way for "a quick zoom catch-up". We are all guilty of overlooking the need to move regularly.

The human body is not designed to be static. Our muscles are built for us to be Hunter/Gatherers and function better when they are moving. Here are some tips to help you get out of that seat and get the blood pumping.

- Where possible, do video meetings from your mobile, so you can go for a walk, switch to the sofa, stand and stretch. Anything to change posture.
- Propose to your Line Manager that all meetings are shortened from 60-50mins, so you have a window between back-to-back-sessions to go for a quick walk.
- Drink LOTS of water. We all need to drink more water anyway, but the more you drink, the more natural breaks will be required (Yes, I mean running to the loo!).
- Utilise other areas of your home. If you have a high surface, like a tall chest of drawers, you can stand and work for short spells. Moving from the dining table to the sofa for an hour, then back again.
- Schedule breaks in your diary, so you cannot be booked up. Use this time to exercise in any way. No matter how light, it will be better than sitting static.



As the Health & Wellbeing representative for the LCCI Panel of Experts, I am available for advice and guidance whether you are looking for support for yourself, or your entire organisation. Please feel free to contact me through the LCCI app, or direct on 0203 560 7287 simon@free-well.co.uk



Credit: William Bossen/Unsplash

Climate action courses to help City SMEs go net zero

As COP26 got under way, applications opened for a free course aimed at helping small and medium-sized businesses in the City of London play their part in tackling global warming

for the Square Mile by 2040.

Overwhelming

Lord Mayor of the City of London and Co-President of Heart of the City William Russell said: "Achieving net zero can have the benefits of attracting more customers, winning more contracts and benefiting from a happier and more engaged workforce.

"While many large businesses have made commitments to go net zero, SMEs make up 99 per cent of City businesses so it's vital they come together and take action to address what is arguably the most important issue of our times.

"Making this commitment can feel overwhelming for smaller firms that don't have big budgets and dedicated teams at their disposal, but this course will give companies the tools and the expertise they need to reduce their carbon footprint year on year.

Action plan

The course will get businesses ready to be net zero in four modules, introducing them to the principles of sustainability, guiding them through jargon and giving them the chance to meet representatives from other SMEs in a similar position.

Participants will be supported to devise an action plan for their business, to make a commitment to become net zero by 2040 and to disclose their progress every year.

Find more information and apply online at <https://theheartofthecity.com/membership/climate-for-smes-4-steps-to-action>



Credit: Li-an Lim/Unsplash

The road to net zero

The UK economy is legally bound to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and reduce carbon emissions by 60 per cent by 2035 from today's levels. The Mayor of London has also set ambitious aims for London to be a zero-carbon city by 2030.

This means businesses and industry will have to reduce their carbon emissions accordingly.

LCCI is showcasing member company's environmental achievements throughout the

business community to inspire others. So, if you want to share how your business is reducing carbon emissions or is leading in the race to net zero, contact Stuart Pick at spick@londonchamber.co.uk

If you are at the start of your journey to reduce your businesses carbon emissions, visit LCCI's Climate Change Hub for useful resources and tools to help your business on the road to net zero.

www.londonchamber.co.uk



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Overseas business opportunities



Do you want to access a selection of business co-operation offers made by European companies wishing to work with UK firms? Every month Enterprise Europe

Network publishes a Business Opportunities in Europe Bulletin, which contains the latest co-operation offers from companies across the EU and beyond. To find out more about this issue's listed overseas business opportunities or to subscribe to the bulletin contact Enterprise Europe Network London at enterprise.europe@londonchamber.co.uk or 020 7203 1929.

Netherlands

This company distributes and stores building materials in the Netherlands. In order to operate the packaging process more sustainably and efficiently, the company is looking for new ideas, methods and techniques to optimise the packaging of palletised building materials. Cooperation with partners is sought in the frame of a commercial agreement with technical assistance. **REF: TRNL20210523001**

Bulgaria

This award-winning SME has invented and patented innovative ingredients, including liquid fermented plant extracts, which are safe, harmless, hypoallergenic and can be used on the market to improve the quality and taste of food. In order to continue their expansion into new markets, the company is looking for distributors with contacts to food or cosmetics companies needing added flavours and aromas based on organic, quality compounds. **REF: BOBG20210701001**

Cyprus

This SME offers an innovative process to address the problem of strength-weight ratio in material applications. The company is looking for composite material component manufacturers and manufacturers of pre-impregnated textiles for the polymer composites industry that currently uses or needs enhanced dry fabrics and/or prepreps for high performing fibre reinforced polymer composite components. **REF: TOCY20210329002**

Spain

This SME has developed an intelligent dispenser machine for two kind of products, grain food and liquid cleaning products. The company is looking for partners to participate in research and development projects, assuming role of final tester or end-user, and partners for commercial agreements with technical assistance to adapt the machine to specific requirements and/or new products. **REF: TOES20210215001**

Switzerland

This spin-off has developed an electric one seat scooter specifically designed for a mobility sharing system: three-wheel, with a roof, made of sustainable material. In its function, comfort and investment costs it is positioned between the car and the (e-)bike. The company is looking for a partner able to produce a sustainable, 100% recyclable material for the covering elements of the scooter under a manufacturing agreement. **REF: TRCH20210322001**

Poland

The company designs electronic systems, such as modules and microprocessor controllers. The SME specializes in creating PCB (printed circuit board) designs. The main clients are companies from the manufacturing, industrial and medical automation industries as well as manufacturers of rehabilitation equipment. The company is developing dynamically and is looking for new partners

from the EU region to cooperate under subcontracting or outsourcing agreement. **REF: BOPL20200821001**

Italy

A farm in green building offers an eco-friendly location to organise educational itineraries, conferences, workshops, laboratories, reviews and cultural events and trade. The company, currently addressing the national market, is looking for commercial partners in Europe in order to widen its business abroad. The targeted type of cooperation is a commercial agency agreement. **REF: BOIT20201030001**

France

This company is a European leader in bio-processes, industrial biotechnology and synthetic biology. It enables medium and large players in the processing industries (chemicals, pharma, food, and cosmetics) to source and produce their ingredients and chemicals in a cost effective and sustainable way. It helps them to expand their pipeline and renew value proposition. Technical and research cooperation agreements are sought. **REF: TOFR20210205001**

Latvia

This company offers advanced, cost-effective, highly precise and fast event timing circuitry for terrestrial and space applications. These timing electronics can be used as a stand-alone or integrated part in light detection and ranging system, 3D laser scanner, absolute gravimetry, quantum key distribution and Free/Deep Space Optical Communication systems. Company seeks industry partners for co-development of existing technology and/or manufacturing under exclusive licence. **REF: TOLV20210210001**

Denmark

A company which has been supplying and installing green roofs for more than 10 years, is looking for a new supplier for specific plastic trays. The company's product is an extra layer, laid on existing roofs, with grass and other vegetation, which contributes positively to biodiversity and contributes to reduction of climate change. **REF: BRDK20210803001**

Germany

This enterprise belongs to the leading German manufacturers of educational furniture. The innovative and partly patented products are used in a wide range of educational facilities. The sustainable products can be adapted to the requirements of the respective markets. The company is looking for distribution partners, commercial agents, or licensees worldwide. **REF: BODE20210119002**

Slovenia

The company is specialized in manufacturing of polyethylene plastic bags. The company is interested in enlarging its sales and is looking for partners for long-term cooperation. The company is interested in enlarging its sales and is looking for partners for long-term cooperation. They are interested in cooperation with experienced distributors. **REF: BOSI20200421001**



All roads lead to Dubai



Connecting minds, creating the future is the theme of Expo 2020 which, delayed by a year owing to the pandemic, is taking place in Dubai from October this year to 31 March 2022

Gathering of nations

What are Expos? World Expos like Dubai 2020 can be seen to be successors to the Great Exhibition of 1851 (an important factor in the creation of Imperial College London – see page 14). In the modern world they happen every five years and are essentially a gathering of nations to showcase the best of what they can offer. As Dubai's chief experience officer Marjan Faraidooni puts it: "a worldwide sharing of culture and innovation; a forum to discuss topics that matter to humanity ... through engaging, immersive

and thought-provoking exhibitions, events and performances."

Extravaganza

Expo Dubai has three core sub-themes: opportunity, mobility and sustainability with their own innovation galleries, art installations, parks and outdoor garments. Add 92 country pavilions – including a thought-provoking UK offering – and up to 60 live events a day, and you get a sense of just what an extravaganza this world fair is.

Reshaping

Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the host of the 12th World Chambers Congress – running from 22-25 November – all delegates will be given free passes to Expo. The Congress itself – co-sponsored by LCCI – is focussing on how technology is changing the global trading system and reshaping how business is run. *Generation Next: Chambers 4.0* is designed to equip delegates with the knowledge and skills required to turn digital disruption into "opportunity for people and planet". LCCI chief executive Richard Burge will be among a host of specialist speakers at the Congress and will lead a Chamber delegation to Expo to showcase the London Chamber of Arbitration and Mediation and announce the re-launch of the LCCI international trade programme.

www.expo2020dubai.com
www.worldchamberscongress.org
 The next issue of LBM will carry a report on Expo 2020 and the World Chambers Congress



Hotline and online service launched for UK exporters

Businesses exporting to Europe can now one-to-one advice via a new phone and online service launched by the Department for International Trade (DIT).

The Export Support Service will provide a single point of contact for queries around rules of origin, guidance on recognising professional qualifications and entering new markets.

www.gov.uk/ask-export-support-team

EU Trade Hub

Information and advice on staff employment, business travel, exporting, importing, international trade paperwork, costs, logistics, data protection, e-commerce, accounting and auditing, public procurement, intellectual property and taxation. Plus webinars to join to help companies navigate EU exit.

www.londonchamber.co.uk/eu-trade-hub

The EU Trade Hub is supported by re:TRADE



Customs declarations – key information for importers and exporters

LCCI has joined with ChamberCustoms to provide a Customs Declaration service to help exporters and importers to comply with this new requirement for trading with the EU, and indeed with the rest of the world where such declarations will continue to be needed.

LCCI's unit of Customs Declaration specialists – Customs agents – headed by Suvjeet Sibia is in place and ready to help the import and export community deal with this significant change – the number of declarations needed in a typical year is estimated to rise from 50 million to over 250 million so many companies are bound to be affected.

Data

When companies register for the service they will be asked for certain data e.g.

- EORI status and number (economic operator registration and identification)
- Current involvement in import/export
- Goods dealt in; nature and number of consignments; markets served
- Whether a deferment account is currently held
- Ports used – though note that this service covers every UK port for both import and export
- Expected numerical need for Customs Declarations.

Visit www.londonchamber.co.uk/export-documents/customs-declarations or contact

ssibia@londonchamber.co.uk for further information

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Lessons in bidding from a 500BC Chinese General

Mike Raynor, Raynor Bid Consultancy



In approximately 500BC, a Chinese general called Sun Tsu wrote a book entitled 'The Art of War'. I strongly recommend this book to anyone involved in bidding. I can particularly relate to the passage below:

"There are five essentials for victory:

1. He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.
2. He will win who knows how to handle both superior and inferior forces.
3. He will win whose army is animated by the same spirit throughout all its ranks.
4. He will win who, prepared himself, waits to take the enemy unprepared.
5. He will win who has military capacity and is not interfered with by the sovereign."

In bidding, I interpret those five essentials as:

1. Be realistic when selecting which bids you are going to pursue. Pick the battles you can win and stay away from the battles you will lose.
2. Create a competitive strategy for each bid based on competitor strengths and weaknesses. Always undermine competitor strengths and exploit their weaknesses.
3. Maintain the morale of the bid team. An engaged and motivated team is a crucial, though often over-looked, element of a winning bid.
4. Research your competitors.

Understanding the other bidders is vital in creating a competitive strategy which differentiates your bid.

5. Senior company stakeholders should be consulted and informed, however, the bid leadership team need to maintain ownership of the bid process.

Raynor Bid Consultancy (www.raynorbidconsultancy.co.uk) was formed in 2012 by Mike Raynor, a former British Army officer, former Foreign & Commonwealth Office Ceasefire Monitor and experienced bidding professional. He has supported over forty clients to win bids including HS2 Euston Station, Highways England Smart Motorways Alliance, Dounreay Decommissioning Framework, MoD Tactical Hearing Protection Systems and Manchester United Football Club Security and Stewarding. Since 2016, Mike has delivered annual bid training seminars at London Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Mike is also a published author and his book, *Guidebook For Young Carers*, has sold copies in the UK, USA and Japan. The associated website, www.guidebookforyoungcarers.info, has been accessed by tens of thousands of readers worldwide. Mike is married with a young daughter.

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 Email address: mike@raynorbidconsultancy.co.uk
 Mobile phone: 07713275156
 Office phone: 01618501492



Gatwick calls on London's businesses to respond to its runway plans

In September, Gatwick Airport launched a 12-week public consultation into plans to bring its existing Northern Runway into routine use writes Tim Norwood

This is a low-impact plan which is designed to maximise the use of existing infrastructure. It involves moving the centre-line of the current Northern Runway 12m to enable it to be used for departing flights, alongside Gatwick's existing Main Runway - effectively making Gatwick a dual runway operation.

This falls within government policy while meeting all international safety standards. Similar operations are already in place at major global airports, such as LA International and San Francisco.

Connectivity

This public consultation is an important part of the planning process as it provides everyone who has an opinion to give Gatwick their views, ideas and suggestions on the plans. Whether you are supportive of the extra 18,400 new jobs the Northern Runway project will create - developing skills and employability for our children and for future generations - or impressed by the extra £1.5 billion GVA to the region, or

simply the greater connectivity this will provide for people to go on holiday, travel for business or to see family and friends - or whether you have questions or concerns over the proposed mitigations on noise, carbon emissions or traffic congestion - Gatwick wants to hear from you.

The project would also have a huge impact on cargo - with the volume handled per year by Gatwick forecast to increase by more than 130 per cent by 2047. Volumes would increase to over 200,000 tonnes/year as the Northern Runway potentially enters service in 2029, growing steadily to over 320,000 tonnes by 2038, before hitting 350,000 by around 2047.

Growth

The increase is primarily driven by the expected growth in long-haul connectivity offered by the additional runway, with widebody aircraft to destinations in Asia and the Middle East seen as providing significant growth in cargo in the years ahead.

But right now, Gatwick is very much in listening mode and your feedback will help shape the project into something which will maximise the benefits for all across the region.

Hopefully, many initial concerns have been addressed in the detailed

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Tim Norwood

materials available on Gatwick's website, where you can find a summary, an overview document, as well as take the opportunity to visit the virtual exhibition. You can also call the freephone hotline (0800 038 3486), book a call with an expert or join a virtual briefing.

Milestone

Within the available documents, Gatwick sets out how it believes the project is low-impact and how it will be delivered in a sustainable way, which helps to achieve the government's overall goal of net zero emissions by 2050. In fact, in October Gatwick Airport welcomed a milestone moment as the first easyJet flight powered by sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) took off.

The flight to Glasgow, on October 19, marked the first time any airline at Gatwick has used SAF on a departing flight, while the 30 per cent Neste MY Sustainable Aviation Fuel™ blend was also the first usage by any easyJet service from the UK.

SAF is produced from 100 per cent renewable and sustainable waste and residue raw materials, such as used cooking oil and animal fat waste, which in its neat form and over its life cycle, can achieve a reduction of up to 80 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions compared to the use of fossil jet fuel.

Commitment

The incorporation of SAF into Gat-

wick's operations is an important proof of concept for the airport in demonstrating its continued commitment to work with its aviation partners on decarbonisation. Gatwick's own 2019 carbon footprint showed that the airport is already half-way to net zero for its own operations and is committed to achieving net zero direct emissions by 2040.

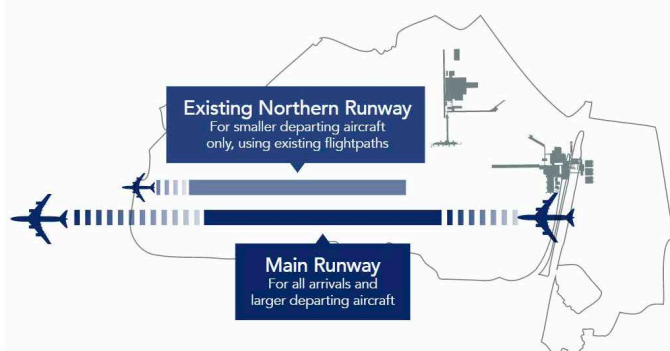
Through its Northern Runway plans, the airport also outlines proposals for new road improvements which would allow local traffic to be separated from airport traffic, alongside other local road improvements. Further, you can read about how Gatwick will manage noise and put in place an extended noise insulation scheme to help address noise impacts.

Tim Norwood is chief planning officer at Gatwick Airport

Anyone interested in responding to the public consultation can do so by 1 December 2021 either by:

- completing the online consultation questionnaire at www.gatwickairport.com/futureplans
- emailing comments to feedback@gatwickfutureplans.com
- Completing a hard copy questionnaire and return it using the FREEPOST address: FREEPOST RTRB-LUJJ-AGBY

Bringing Gatwick's Northern Runway Into Routine Use



HMRC plan to introduce changes for the self-employed from 2023

By Gail Swinburn, Tax Director at Lubbock Fine

HMRC are consulting on changes which will affect the income tax payments of many sole traders and partners. The aim of these changes is to align the filing dates for the Making Tax Digital regime.

What is the current position?

Businesses draw up their accounts each year to the accounting date. They can choose their own date, which is not necessarily the same as the tax year end date.

Currently, sole-traders and partners pay income tax based on the accounting period which ends in the tax year. Special rules operate to ensure that profits are taxed in particular periods, which can cause the same profits to be assessed more than once. Relief for 'overlap profits' is available when a business ceases or the accounting date changes.

What is changing?

HMRC wants to change the current year basis to a tax year basis. An unincorporated business can still choose their own accounting date, but income tax will be charged based on the tax year.

How will it work?

As an example, let's look at a partnership with an accounting year end of 30th April. They make up accounts each year to 30th April and pay income tax accordingly.

In 2022/23, the tax return was prepared as normal, declaring

the profits for the accounting year to 30 April 2022.

2023/24 is expected to be the transitional year. The partnership will have to move to the tax year basis. This means that profits for the accounting year to 30 April 2023 will be included on the tax return, **plus profits for the period 1 May 2023 to 5 April 2024.**

Profits for 23 months will need to be declared with the income tax also payable on those profits by 31 January 2025.

Transitional relief should be available, so the additional profits assessed in 2023/24 can be spread over 5 years.

What can businesses do?

Many will choose to change their accounting date to fit with the tax year, to avoid problems around filing deadlines.

A business which makes up accounts to 31 December will need 2 sets of accounts to file their tax return by 31 January each year, giving one month to prepare the accounts without using estimated figures.

Now is a good time to start checking if any overlap relief is available and to plan ahead for possible higher tax bills.

How can we help?

If you'd like to discuss any potential tax related issues, please get in touch with our Tax Director Gail Swinburn (gailswinburn@lubbockfine.co.uk).

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Advice that adds up



Imperial College London – new ways of thinking and working

The capital's top-ranking university (seventh in the world) had again been in the news the week in October that LCCI's Dean Wade and I were given a tour of Imperial College London's South Kensington Campus. A REACT-1 study involving over a million people led by the University had shown that in addition to the usual Covid-19 symptoms – fever, new continuous cough, loss of or a change to sense of smell – other signs such as chills, loss of appetite, headache and muscle aches were, together, most strongly linked with being infected. If these were included in future testing criteria, the study suggested, case detection would be improved.

Headlines featuring Imperial have not been unusual over the

last 18 months as they have made a huge contribution to the world's understanding of many aspects of the pandemic.

Dean and I were meeting David Brown, Director of Executive Education at Imperial College Business School which is inextricably connected with the University's four faculties – Business, Engineering, Natural Science and Medicine – and has teamed up with LCCI to support the Black Business Association.



We met in the atrium of the Exhibition Road entrance which featured, contrastingly, a statue of Queen Victoria and a Foster+Partners-designed six-storey high drum containing a series of circular lecture theatres. Then on to the Grantham Centre for Climate Change, at the heart of Imperial's environmental work, primed to play a significant role in the hoped-for success of the upcoming COP26.

Within close proximity – no doubt to facilitate team working and cross-fertilisation of ideas – were the Energy Futures Laboratories alongside the Central Library looking on to Queen's Lawn and the dominant Queen's Tower, the only survivor of three – what a sight the full complement must have been!



We lingered at the ABB-supported mini carbon capture plant – part of Imperial's pioneering ImpactLab™ – an award-winning offering designed to take managers and executives out of their comfort zone and into unfamiliar environments in which they can experiment with new ways of thinking and working. Typically, participants are divided into 'On'

and 'Offshore' teams and given a task of managing a miniature (a four-storey installation in the heart of South Kensington!) Carbon Capture Plant with the aim of focusing on decision-making under severe stress.

Joined by Helen Bradley, Executive Education's Client Director, we discussed the possibility of combining to help ensure more Black SMEs were given access to Business School courses – more on this to come. After a Q&A session with David Brown – see opposite page – we exited the campus via Prince Consort Road, emerging opposite the Royal Albert Hall, all traces of its recent hosting of the James Bond premiere gone, but Dean and I suitably stirred by a memorable experience.

Peter Bishop



Timeline – the path to Executive Education



- Imperial's roots lie in the Great Exhibition of 1851 – a visionary project headed by Prince Albert and Henry Cole which could be seen as a forerunner of the regular series of world fairs and expos, the latest of which is currently taking place in Dubai – see page 10.
- Profits from the exhibition – a five-month long event in a crystal

- palace in Hyde Park to showcase developments in industry and science – were used to buy land immediately south of the site on which now stands the Victoria and Albert, Science, and Natural History museums, the Royal Colleges of Art and Music, the Royal Albert Hall, the Royal Geographical Society, and Imperial College London.
- What is now Imperial College London was officially established in 1901 as Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, gaining a Royal Charter in 1907. With the creation of specialist institutes and research centres it has achieved global recognition as a top ranked

university and produced 14 Nobel laureates including Sir Alexander Fleming.

- Imperial College London has nine campuses across West London. The latest addition is Imperial White City, the site of the former BBC Studios now hosting an entrepreneurial ecosystem, home to entrepreneurs, world-leading academics and students, and 70 companies ranging from start-ups to corporates.
- Imperial College Business School can trace its origins from the mid-1950s and after various iterations its Foster + Partners-designed building on the South Kensington campus was opened by HM Queen Elizabeth II in 2004.

- Executive Education is part of the School and combines Imperial's capabilities in science and technology with strong connections with industry to produce the future of business today with virtual, online and on-campus programmes in topics spanning technology, innovation, leadership, health, sustainability and finance. Short executive courses are particularly relevant to LBM readers and LCCI members as they are designed for individuals across all stages of their careers.

www.imperial.ac.uk/executive-education

In the chair – David Brown



The Director of Executive Education at Imperial College Business School since 2018, David Brown has an impressive background. A Morehead Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill he did his MBA at London Business School and went on to become a partner at Accenture. LBM got his expert views on a wide range of issues.

On the challenges facing business in 2021

“This is a unique period with substantial changes in technology, digitisation, business models, and geo-political trends. Covid has both accelerated the performance of those who were better prepared and better navigating the changes. And made more clear those who are struggling. For decades companies have been trotting out ‘people are our most important asset’ but only sporadically acting on the implications of that statement. What we are now seeing is the more successful firms increasing their investment in capability, by which I mean skills, systems, processes, and culture.

On how business should react

Those firms that haven’t invested in capability tend to be relying on outsourcing, consultants and, occasionally, acquisitions. None of these are sustainable business models. Conversely there are fantastic and powerful innovations around capability development that can make learning more accessible and affordable e.g. enormous improvements in online learning that are social, collaborative and delivering measurable improvement. Closely related, and something we are seeing with some of the best firms, is a systemic approach to capability development. In the past, firms have gone to multiple providers and ended up with patchwork of solutions that can result in a Tower of Babel approach to really important change.

Often the more a company starts exploring a topic, the more they disagree on what it means. So the opportunity now exists for a company to have a holistic solution that results in a consistent understanding, linked to real change, from the Board to junior levels, appropriate to need based on role, function and level.

A related development is that most firms are planning to include technology in any learning that takes place. The

learning need could be around understanding future or indeed current technologies. More important – we know that almost all innovation comes from combination of technologies. So firms want to know how technologies fit together and then what that might mean for any function, business, organisation, industry or ecosystem. And then the real magic.

Given these possibilities, firms ask: which direction should I go and how do I execute on the change... personally, in my team, and in my organisation?

The last big change relates to new approaches to measurement. This has long been a Holy Grail within the learning and business communities and the difficulty in measuring the value of learning has impeded investment and sometimes leads to learning being misdirected and therefore misspent. Within Imperial we have an exciting challenge initiative to prove the value of learning for companies.



On the impact of Brexit

From the outset Imperial College Business School was both a UK and global project. Anything that helps us, Britain, be more international and helps collaboration on global challenges is a good thing.

On the uniqueness of Imperial

Imperial has a different founding story from many of the world’s other top universities. We grew out of the vision of Prince Albert and the Great Exhibition which was to bring together the country’s best thinkers, industrialists, craftspeople and the public. That attitude still infuses everything that we do today.

For example, from our origin as a science institute the methodology of experimentation is now widely practised. We think about new ways of learning and have had an Edtech Lab since 2005. Innovation and entrepreneurship are our guiding light. Not only do we teach this but also invest in space, time and money for researchers, staff and students to set up their own businesses. One of these, that came through the Business School, is Insendi – a learning management system developed in house and now used by many of the world’s top universities.

Very few business schools are connected as Imperial is to leading science, technology, engineering and medicine faculties and have the ability to work with them on programmes for students, executives and companies.”

equality in London’s economy. Since its establishment last year BBA highlights include:

- Showcasing of a range of inspiring Black businesses through events, introductions and features in LBM
- Partnering with Executive Education at Imperial College Business School and Fiserv who are offering grants for ethnically diverse businesses
- Promotion of UK Black Business Week
- The appointment of Lord Michael Hastings to the newly-formed All Party Parliamentary Group for London as a Global City.



The LCCI’s Black Business Association (BBA) led by chair Lord Michael Hastings and supported by Menelik Shillingford (pictured) brings together Black

business owners and employees to create a purposeful outlet enabling networking and promoting Black entrepreneurs and business ownership. BBA also provides a forum to collectively address barriers to

www.londonchamber.co.uk/membership/black-business-association

Using effective data analysis to support key decision making

Johnny Winter

Data & Analytics Consultant



“It is a capital mistake to theorise before one has data”. Words spoken by Sherlock Holmes in Arthur Conan Doyle’s novel ‘A Study in Scarlet’ – he makes a good point.

We live in an increasingly data driven world and now more than ever businesses are turning to data analysis to help support their decision making.

So, it’s really important to make sure you have the right tools at your disposal to help drive that analysis. The choice we see a lot of our clients make to analyse their data is Power BI.

For the last 14 years Gartner has recognised Microsoft as a Leader in Business Intelligence and Analytics software, and for the last 3 years they have led the field in both ability to execute and completeness of vision.

Here are the reasons we believe Power BI is a standout tool:

- **It caters to all shapes and sizes** Be it a large enterprise who want a visualisation capability as part of a wider data platform, or a small business who want a full end to end analytics solution, Power BI can effectively fulfil both scenarios and any other scenario in between.
- **It’s great for collaboration** It already had a ton of great collaboration features, such as being able to share content via a mobile app, but Microsoft have put further investment into this area to allow you to share Power BI reports using Microsoft Teams, helping drive conversations around the insights that are important to your business.
- **Automate your insights** Rather than spending days at a time gathering and collating data to prepare that monthly report, Power BI can do it at the touch of a button. Currently it’s able to combine and transform data from over 150 different types of data source. You can now spend more time actually analysing the data as opposed to wasting hours preparing it.

And all of these benefits really are just the tip of the iceberg.

If you’d like to learn more about our data and analytics service or any of our other services, please contact us below.

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Foreign investment powering Hungarian economy



by Robert Esik

Foreign direct investment (FDI) from the UK plays a significant role in the Hungarian economy.

It is the 6th largest foreign investor country representing 4.6 per cent of total FDI stock in 2019 and is the third most important foreign investor country outside the EU after the USA and South Korea. There are 900 British-owned companies in Hungary, which give work to around 55,000 people. Based on the number of employees, the UK ranks 4th in Hungary as an investor country. Of the 89 strategic partners of the Hungarian government, four companies are British.

Incentive offers

The national investment promotion organization of Hungary – HIPA – provides professional management consultancy services, tailor-made incentive offers, and information



Credit: Hungarian Tourist Agency

on location opportunities as well as the labour pool in order to encourage investment decisions within the country.

Despite the adverse circumstances due to Covid-19, HIPA contributed to the implementation of 907 investment projects in 2020, as a result of which investment worth over €4.0 billion was realised, creating 12,914 new jobs. Among these 97 large FDI projects, worth almost €2.5 billion and will create 10,112 new jobs in the next period. Moreover, 810 companies applied for two competitiveness programmes

launched under the Economic Protection Action Plan as a response to the crisis, undertaking to invest over €1.6 billion.

New jobs

One of the aims of the Hungarian economic policy is to attract as many high value-added investments as possible to the country's service industry. Business service centres, ICT investments as well as research and development projects accounted for a large proportion of last year's results with 25 large projects and over 3,000 new jobs.

Hungary's achievements in the field of investment promotion were recognized with several international awards in 2020. HIPA won the title for the region's best investment agency for the second time at the annual congress of the Annual Investment Meeting. Based on the *Best to Invest 2020* report of Site Selection magazine specializing in investment topics, Hungary was listed among the 10 best investment target countries in the world for the third time, and HIPA maintained its first

place as the region's best investment promotion agency.

The key to success is multiple. Hungary's economic and political stability, the competitiveness-enhancing measures taken by the government over recent years laid the foundations for the success of investment promotion. HIPA's clear objectives and structure, high levels of expertise and the attractive incentive system also contribute to the results.

Electromobility

One of the most recent important



Credit: Hungarian Tourist Agency

trends is the growing number of projects related to electromobility. Since 2016, a positive decision has been made in case of 34 investment projects related to electric battery production representing a total investment volume of over € 6.2 billion and more than 10,200 new jobs.

Last December, it was announced that Mercedes-Benz had decided to invest more than €100 million in developing the Kecskemét plant to add the first purely electric vehicle, the new EQB compact SUV model, to the production line.

Since 2018, Audi Hungaria has produced over 250,000 electric motors in Győr. Audi is also a key player in enhancing sustainability, given that it has Europe's largest building-based photovoltaic system installed on the top of its two logistics centres.

At the beginning of 2021, it was announced that one of the world's leading battery manufacturers, the Korean SK Innovation will launch another major project in Hungary. With a greenfield investment of €1.89 billion, the company's largest European factory unit is to be established in Iváncsa, in the centre of the country. The annual capacity of the production base to be launched will be 30 GWh, creating 2,500 new jobs. This project is the largest greenfield investment project ever in Hungary.

Business services

In the last decade Hungary has become one of the leading international hubs for business services within the Central and Eastern European region. The sector has reached a high level of maturity and complexity, while maintaining the ability to engage and retain talent and to con-

tinuously attract new investments.

Since 2014, HIPA has contributed to the creation of over 16,500 new jobs in this sector, around 16 per cent of which are linked to UK com-

"In the last decade Hungary has become one of the leading international hubs for business services within the Central and Eastern European region."

panies. Moreover, British corporates like BP, BT and Vodafone have contributed significantly.

Outside Budapest, there are seven major business service sector locations – Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs, Győr, Kecskemét, Miskolc, and Székesfehérvár. They are concentrated around Hungary's regional university cities taking advantage of the talent available there.

Hungary's business services sector has been able to maintain its competitive edge due to the fact that the country continuously provides a highly skilled workforce, high-standard offices and IT infrastructure, as well as a supportive and stable business environment coupled with excellent quality of life.

Robert Esik is chief executive of the Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency (HIPA)
<https://hipa.hu/main>

Embassy of Hungary in London:
<https://london.mfa.gov.hu/eng>



SPONSORED COLUMN



Fair trade

LCCI teamed up with JustShare to run an event at St Mary-le-Bow church in the City this autumn focussing on trade and sustainability notably ESG – environmental, social and governance

In a session chaired by Mark Jenkinson, founder of Crystal Associates, Alexander R. Malaket, president of OPUS Advisory Services, and John Morrison, chief executive of the Institute for Human Rights Business, discussed how the increasing focus on ESG, and demands for sustainable, ESG-aligned behaviour from investor, consumers and regulators would reshape trade, supply chains and the financing that underpins \$20 trillion in annual merchandise trade alone.

Was this an opportunity to re-think trade, and to make it an important contributor to 'building back better' post-Covid?

Spectrum of views

It was acknowledged that trade was a topic that has attracted a lot of at-

tention – some positive and some much less so. Wherever you are on the spectrum of views, trade will certainly remain a top commercial and policy priority, and will be critical to global economic recovery post-Covid.

Even with its significant imperfections, even injustices related to distribution of wealth and economic benefit, trade has helped improve standards of living and contributed importantly to reducing global poverty. It has, some will argue, directly contributed to a more stable international security situation. Trade does however, contribute significantly to global carbon emissions, depletion of resources and commodities, deforestation and a whole host of adverse environmental, social and sustainability consequences.

JustShare is a coalition of churches and development agencies which seeks to address the widening gap between rich and poor in the global economy.

www.stmarylebow.org.uk/justshare



(l-r) Alexander R. Malaket, Mark Jenkinson, and John Morrison. In picture above they are joined by the Reverend George Bush, Rector of St Mary-le-Bow church

The Quest for Talent – Tips for Recruitment in a Difficult Market

Lianne Lambert, Managing Director, Lighter HR



If you're finding it difficult attracting talent at the moment, you are not alone. According to ONS, there were 1,034,000 vacancies from June to August 2021. This is the first time there are over 1 million job vacancies in the UK, so the market is fierce, and to compete you may need to change your approach to recruiting and be more flexible with your working practices.

A traditional recruitment process looks to the candidate to sell themselves to the employer but, with these many vacancies, it's the other way around. Your recruitment process still needs to assess the candidate for the skills that you need in the role, but you need to balance this with taking every opportunity to sell your organisation to the candidate. Whether you like it or not, candidates really are in the driving seat, so employers need to be able to demonstrate how working for them will support the candidate in achieving their career and life goals.

That brings us to the next point. In a post-Covid world, candidates are likely to be looking for some degree of flexible working to help with work/life balance. You may have taken a firm approach with existing staff and insisted that they return to the office, but it's likely you're going to be restricting your pool of potential talent if you don't allow for any flexibility in a role where location really does not matter.

Candidates have got used to being able to work from home, and many haven't returned to the office at all at this point, so if you're insisting that the role needs to be full-time in the workplace, where it's not physically needed, then you're likely to face a lot of resistance.

Lastly, when it comes to recruiting, at the moment speed is of the essence. Placing an advert and then taking a week to review and respond to candidates means you'll most likely be wasting your time and money – by the time you get to them, the good candidates will have been snapped up by someone else. To maximise your chances of securing the best talent, make sure you set time aside in your diary to really focus on moving candidates through your recruitment process as quickly as possible.

As a business owner or manager, a sense of you needing a candidate more than them needing you is an uncomfortable place for many, however, whilst there are so many vacancies, we recommend that you're better to embrace this current situation and do all you can to attract the best talent, so you can focus on driving your business forward.

For additional support on hiring the best talent and other HR matters, contact Lianne at LSL@LighterHR.co.uk or call 0203 319 1649.

LighterHR

www.LighterHR.co.uk



UK-Azerbaijan partnership driven by energy sector



HE Elin Suleymanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the UK, believes that economic cooperation between his country and the UK is ripe for development

“The relationship between Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom is a long-standing and important one. In this article I look back on the success of our collaboration in conventional energy and forward to how we can be equally successful as partners in diversification; and I suggest why Azerbaijan remains a favourable place for the UK businesses to invest.

Solid foundations

From the early years after the restoration of independence, Azerbaijan has maintained steadfast bilateral relations with the UK with significant cooperation in the field of energy. Today the UK is still the single largest investor in Azerbaijan contributing 51 per cent of total investment with over 500 British companies currently doing business in the country.

It started in early 90s when Azerbaijan, under the leadership of President Heydar Aliyev as National Leader and President, made a strategic decision to open the country's oil industry to foreign investors and signed an \$8 Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli (ACG) production-sharing agreement with a BP-led group of foreign oil companies. This deal led to Azerbaijan's economic, political, and social transformation and helped to put the country on the map of global energy suppliers. Driven by its outstanding success, the ACG was extended in 2017 until the middle of the century.

BP has since become the operator of the Shah Deniz (the largest gas discovery ever made by the company) which is the starting point of Southern Gas Corridor. The recent global energy deficit has shown that the choice of gas as a cleaner transitional fuel was a strategically far-sighted decision both by Azerbaijan and BP and remains a very promising area of cooperation.



Flame Towers at night, Baku



A fundamental reason why Azerbaijan was able to secure these major international investments and continues to be a favourable place for foreign direct investment is that Azerbaijan backs product sharing agreements with the force of national law. Apart from their global significance, these mega-projects have been mutually beneficial for Azerbaijan and BP. They have increased investor confidence and earned Azerbaijan international recognition as an advantageous place to run a successful business as well as bringing huge profits for both.

Strong institutional frameworks

Azerbaijan and the UK have enjoyed the good offices of the strong institutional mechanisms such as Joint Intergovernmental Committee on economic relations established in 2015 and held annually to explore and facilitate the new areas of collaboration. Moreover, since 2016, Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne has been effective as the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Azerbaijan which gives a further



Heydar Aliyev Center, designed by Zaha Hadid

impetus to bilateral economic relations.

We are now also in the process of establishing the UK-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce and Industry aiming to further boost business to business connections and promote inward trade and investment.

Azerbaijan as a transport hub in Eurasia

Located at the intersection of the East-West and North-South transport corridors, Azerbaijan occupies a favourable geostrategic position for international investors. The reconstruction of roads and railways, international airports, as well as the establishment of the Baku International Sea Trade Port are important steps in modernizing these corridors and improve the country's

transport infrastructure and transit potential.

In recent years Azerbaijan has introduced a reform agenda in a bid to reduce its dependence on hydrocarbon revenues and to build a more sustainable and diversified economy resilient to external shocks. At the heart of the reforms lie efforts to create more attractive business and investment opportunities, to develop public-private dialogue and free competition mechanisms and to increase efficiency, accountability and transparency by reducing the role of traditional workforce and increasing electronic services. Finance, agriculture, tourism, transport, logistics and communication have been defined as new areas for diversification. In 2019 edition of the Global Competitiveness Report by the



Baku Bay, looking toward Flame Towers



Alat Free Economic Zone

Today the UK is the single largest investor in Azerbaijan contributing 51 per cent of total investment with over 500 British companies currently doing business in the country.

World Economic Forum Azerbaijan ranked as the 58th most competitive nation out of 140 countries.

We are also establishing a free economic zone adjacent to Baku International Sea Trade Port. This zone will provide a regional investment hub and boost competitiveness in the Europe-Caucasus-Asia and North-South transport corridors to intensify local and foreign investment in the country's non-oil sector. There will be tax-free business based on the concept of foreign ownership with zero restriction among other key benefits for investors.

Azerbaijan's commitment to a greener future

As President Aliyev reiterated during his address to the UN General Assembly in September 2021, our country is committed to achieve a 35 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to the base year 1990. In addition, Azerbaijan aims to increase the share of renewables to 30 per cent in the total energy capacity of the country within two decades.

BP is an important player in contributing to Azerbaijan's renewable energy transition. In February 2021, the first step was taken to that end when the company signed an MoU with Azerbaijan's Energy Ministry to cooperate in assessing the potential and conditions required for large-scale decarbonized and integrated energy and transport systems, including renewable energy projects in Azerbaijan. Such projects – and others throughout the country – which are reconstructed in smart and green city concepts represent a huge opportunity for investment from British companies.

To sum up, I believe the time has come for Azerbaijan and the UK to speed up the efforts to diversify their long and reliable partnership into the new areas of collaboration and they have all the necessary grounds to do so. As the newly-appointed Ambassador of Azerbaijan in the UK, I am ready to work with all the stakeholders in the UK to stimulate and facilitate this process in line with the aspirations of our countries.”

Azerbaijan Export and Investment Promotion Foundation
<https://azpromo.az/en>
Ministry of Economy of Azerbaijan:
www.economy.gov.az/en

Baku International Sea Trade Port: <https://portofbaku.com>

If you are considering trading with Azerbaijan or entering the market, contact the DIT team at the British Embassy in Baku for advice
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exporting-to-azerbaijan/exporting-to-azerbaijan>

SPONSORED COLUMN

Branding in times of uncertainty - International Trademarks

By Apostolos Dakanalis,
Trademark Director at HGF



Business faces unprecedented and extraordinary challenges on the face of Brexit and COVID-19. These events catalysed change; Brexit changed the way business trades with the EU and will bring about opportunities for UK business to enter new markets. At the same time, COVID-19 underpinned dramatic change in consumer behaviours.

International trademarks can provide the means for business to expand, adjust or revise its trademark protection, during these turbulent times. They can also be an important tool for businesses seeking to expand internationally.

1. INTERNATIONAL TRADEMARKS SYSTEM

The International Trademarks System is a convenient, cost-effective, and global solution for registering and managing trademarks worldwide.

Applicants file a single application, pay one set of fees, and can cover up to 125 Member countries, representing over 80% of world trade – it includes the US, China, India, the EU and many more. Applicants do not need to instruct local lawyers at the point of filing and the national Offices of the selected countries must process the application within 18 months from notification.

International trademarks can be modified, expanded, or renewed through one centralised system. Holders can add countries to their international registration, allowing for flexibility when business plans and needs change.

2. WHO CAN FILE AN INTERNATIONAL TRADEMARK?

Applicants must have a personal or business connection to one

of the System's 125 Member countries and must hold one (or more) existing applications or registrations for the trademark to be protected, in one of the Member countries. This existing right is known as the 'base right'.

3. HOW IT WORKS

The International Trademarks System is a 3-stage system.

Stage 1: The application is filed with the Intellectual Property Office of the base right which will certify the application and forward it to International Bureau for further examination.

Stage 2: The Bureau examines the application; once approved, the mark is entered on the International Register and the Bureau notifies the national Offices of the countries selected in the application.

Stage 3: The national Offices will decide within 12-18 months on whether to register the mark in their country. If there are objections, it would be necessary to appoint local attorneys to pursue the application at the national level or delete the impacted country(ies) from the international trademark.

4. COSTS

Costs will depend on where protection is needed and the goods and services to be covered under the international application.

Official fees are payable at the International Bureau and the Bureau's fee will include the individual fees of the national Offices in the countries where protection has been requested.



For further information, please contact
HGF's Trademark Director Apostolos
Dakanalis – adakanalis@hgf.com

Victoria leads the way

The unveiling earlier this year of the Princess Diana Statue in Kensington Gardens prompted Fulton Umbrellas, to look into the most popular icons of London's art

The royal umbrella manufacturer discovered that Queen Victoria was the most celebrated figure in the city with 16 art installations.

Honoured

Other figures honoured with more than one statue or memorial include Elizabeth I, William Shakespeare, Winston Churchill, Prince Albert, the Queen Mother, and Nelson Mandela. *LBM* tracked down a number of the statues in central London namely Queen Victoria (Blackfriars Bridge and Kensington Gardens), Elizabeth I (St Dunstan's in the West, Fleet Street), Shakespeare (Leicester Square), Churchill and Mandela (Parliament Square), Prince Albert (Victoria and Albert Museum entrance), and the Queen Mother (The Mall).

There is much speculation that, in time, a depiction of Queen Elizabeth II will permanently grace the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square which is currently used to display works of art for a limited period of time.

www.fultonumbrellas.com





Kingston University Town House. Credit: Peter Langdown

Britain's best new building

Kingston University's Town House has been named the winner of the 2021 Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stirling Prize – confirming it as Britain's best new building

Designed by RIBA Gold Medal-winning Grafton Architects, the landmark building on the University's Penrhyn Road campus received the highest accolade in UK architecture at a prestigious ceremony at Coventry Cathedral.

The building, opened in January 2020, was named winner by a jury of eminent architects and industry experts, made up of Lord Norman Foster, RIBA President Simon Alford, Dame Phyllida Barlow, sustainability expert Mina Hasman and previous RIBA Stirling Prize recipient Annaliese Riches.



Progressive model

Announcing Town House as this year's winner, jury chair Lord Foster said "Kingston University's Town House



is a theatre for life – a warehouse of ideas. It seamlessly brings together student and town communities, creating a progressive new model for higher education, well deserving of international acclaim and attention," he said. "In this highly original work of architecture, quiet reading, loud performance, research and learning, can delightfully co-exist. That is no mean feat. Education must be our future – and this must be the future of education."

Conceived as part of a bold vision to create an inspirational new learning space that also acts as a gateway to the Penrhyn Road campus for the wider community, the project to deliver Town House began with a RIBA design competition won by Grafton Architects in 2013. Built by three-time Education Constructor of the Year Willmott Dixon Construction, the Stirling Prize-winning building comprises a three-floor academic library, archive, dance studios and a studio theatre, a covered courtyard and cafes on the ground and fifth floors.

SPONSORED COLUMN

Upskilling Quality Management experts in the Age of AI

by Maria Dimitrova, MBA, AfCIIS
Head of Business Development, IMSM



As a result of the pandemic, organisations worldwide embraced technology and AI spread beyond the tech sector, changing the way companies work. It has transformed traditional functions such as supply-chain management, customer service, and recruitment. AI has also had a considerable impact on how routine daily tasks are performed.

Large companies and industries such as finance tend to be ahead in building their AI-enhanced systems, whilst other organisations choose to work with the growing array of independent AI vendors, including cloud providers, consultants, and start-ups.

This exponential industry growth and diversification is more like a revolution rather than an evolution and causes some concerns. Nevertheless, most of these concerns could be eliminated should the sector count on solid and internationally recognised best practices to implement and integrate into the organisations' management systems.

Covid-19 sped up the process of digitalisation. For many companies, it meant going paperless and abandoning face to face interactions in favour of using already known and universally used technologies. As a result, we grew increasingly aware of information and data security as well as regulatory compliance.

The pandemic also accelerated the operational technology digitalisation and transition into

connectivity. This increasing demand to integrate the operational technology systems into the management systems to increase the control on what happens on the factory floor, presents a challenge to security management.

Although essential, this integration might present itself as challenging. It is excellent from an ERP, maintenance or computational point of view; however, it also expands the attack surface onto an organisation. Most cyberattacks do not target information and cyber assets but operational technology devices, and currently organisations have virtually no visibility into their operational technology risks.

Organisations should approach security not as a technical but management solution. The challenge organisations face is the shortage of experts in information, cyber, and operational security. A viable and cost-effective approach might be upskilling quality management experts. ISO compliant management systems are currently at a historically prominent level of implementation and now include an interest in systems compliant to standards that require particular technical knowledge and competencies in areas such as information, cyber and operational technologies. Management systems are not new to the business and organisations have experienced quality managers, which offers a real opportunity to upskill quality managers and thus help improve internal processes and communication.



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Webinars and events

What's been on...

SEPTEMBER

● An Unfair Advantage: Using Pricing Psychology to Win More Sales

Mark Peacock, PriceMaker Ltd

● Black Business Association - Diversity in the Boardroom

Lord Hastings, Kenny Imafidon, Co-founder & Managing Director of ClearView Research Ltd; Darren Miller, Chief Marketing Officer & Co Founder of Black Business Institute and Romeo Effs, Founder and CEO of Lumorus

Supported by Fiserv and Imperial College Business School

● Capital Conversation

With Peter Murray OBE, Chairman, New London Architecture (NLA)

● Go Connect! Lunchtime Networking

Sponsored by Fiserv

● Transport & Infrastructure Briefing

With Robert Sinclair, CEO, London City Airport

Sponsored by Blake Morgan

● The artificial intelligence revolution: Understanding AI, and How to Incorporate it into your Business

Emmanuel Olatunji, Director, Digital Transformation & Innovation Principal, Bluechess Technology

● Property & Construction Private Roundtable Lunch

Graeme Craig, Commercial Development Director, TfL

Sponsored by Advanced UK and Menzies

● JustShare Event - Going Ballistic: The UK's Decision to Increase the Cap on Nuclear Warheads

Sponsored by LCCI

● Online Roundtable - Gatwick's Northern Runway Project: An Economic Boost and Increased Resilience Through Incremental Growth

Stewart Wingate, CEO, Gatwick Airport

● Patron Private Online Roundtable

Cressida Dick, Commissioner, Metropolitan Police

● Doing Business in the USA - Streamlining Your US Expansion – Masterclass 1

Dr Frank Levene, Principal Partner, BLW; Aaron Bowman, SVP Business Development, Jax Partnership, Florida, USA; Richard Kilner, Managing Director, Pennsylvania European Investment Office; Stephen Bridges, Director, UK & Ireland, Indiana EDC; Nora Rothrock, Group Managing Director, US Tax & Financial Services and Steve Lanier, President, American World Services Corp

● Business Owners Club - How much is your business worth and is this enough?

With Henry Campbell-Jones, Managing Director, Hornblower Business Brokers and Nathan Smith, Wealth Management Consultant, Mattioli Woods

Supported by OnBoard

● Team Leadership: Building an engaged, motivated and high-performing team

Dom Weldon, Founder and Director of Albany York

● Maximise your Membership at LCCI

OCTOBER

● Capital 500

Vicky Pryce, Chief Economic Advisor and Board Member, Cebr, James Rentoul, Director at Savanta ComRes and Ian Daniels, Property Partner, Haysmactintyre

Sponsored by Haysmactintyre

● Capital Conversation with Nick Pearson, CEO, parkrun Global Ltd

● Doing Business in the USA - Streamlining Your US Expansion – Masterclass 2

Dr Frank Levene, Principal Partner, BLW; Chrissy Woskobochnik, Tax Manager & Business Development Specialist, Dyke Yaxley LLC; Simon Bradley, Senior Partner, Appleyard Lees; Joanne Farquharson, President, Foothold America and Arvinder Ubi, Director, Ellis Porter

● Black Business Association - A Celebration of Black Businesses

Nathaniel Wade and Albert Larter, Co-founders, Wakuda; Nate Macabuag, Founder, Koalaa

Supported by Fiserv and Imperial College Business School

● Developing Rapport and Understanding Behaviours

Tony Morris, Tony Morris International

● JustShare Event: Reshaping the Story of Trade with ESG

Alexander R. Malaket, President, OPUS Advisory Services International Inc, John Morrison, Chief Executive Officer, Institute for Human Rights Business and Mark Jenkinson, Founder, Crystal Associates

Sponsored by LCCI

● Go Connect! Lunchtime Networking

Supported by Fiserv

● Business Owners Club Reception

Will King, Founder, King of Shaves; Francesca James, Founder, Great British Entrepreneur Awards and Wynne Evans, Opera Singer

Supported by OnBoard

● Supporting the Exporter - Everything you Need to Know about Exporting in the New Trade Landscape

Walter Van der Meiren, Director of Customs Regulation & Compliance, UPS and Claire De Lepeleire, VAT Director, PwC Belgium

● Mobile app building for beginners: How to build apps for your business

Emmanuel Olatunji, Director, Digital Transformation & Innovation Principal, Bluechess Technology

...Coming up

NOVEMBER

● Tuesday 2 November at 10.30am – 11.15am

Helping you Create Confidence in your Financial Future: Passing on your Wealth with Katie Dicken and Alex Melville, Personal Wealth Advisers at Shroders

● Tuesday 2 November at 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Black Business Association Reception at LCCI with Lord Hastings
Supported by Fiserv and Imperial College Business School

● Thursday 4 November at 11.00am – 12.15pm

London Business 1000 with Rt Hon Justine Greening, Founder, Social Mobility Pledge and former Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities, Mark Jenkinson, Founder, Crystal Associates and Cllr Elizabeth Campbell, Leader RB Kensington and Chelsea and Executive Member for Business, Economy and Culture, London Councils

● Tuesday 9 November at 10.45am – 11.45am

Quarterly Skills Survey

● Tuesday 9 November at 6.30pm – 9.00pm

Property and Construction Reception at The Londoner with Simon Nevill Commercial Director, Buildings UK, Arup

Sponsored by Advanced UK and Menzies

● Wednesday 10 November at 10.45am – 11.30am

Business Owners Club - Essential tips for effective board meetings with Paul Stark, Director, OnBoard

Supported by OnBoard

● Tuesday 16 November at 10.30am – 11.15am

My Mindful Worklife with Martin Zetter, Founder and CEO, Mindful WorkLife

● Wednesday 17 November at 12.00pm – 2.00pm

Go Connect! Lunchtime Networking at LCCI

Supported by Fiserv

● Tuesday 23 November at 10.45am – 11.30am

Asian Business Association webinar with Rajesh Suri, Managing Director / Restaurant Consultant, Grand Trunk Road

Supported by Fiserv and Trinity College

DECEMBER

● Wednesday 1 December at 6.00pm – 7.30pm

JustShare Event – Title TBC

Sponsored by LCCI

● Thursday 2 December at 10.45am – 11.30am

Black Business Association webinar - How Thriving UK Black Led Businesses are Building Wealth and Value in Africa with Jude Addo, Founder & Managing Principal, JA Group & Co, Sadiq Edu, Co-Founder, DoGood.Africa and Trevor Masrden, Director, ImpiThings

Supported by Fiserv and Imperial College Business School

● Thursday 2 December at 3.00pm – 5.00pm

Maximise your Membership at LCCI

● Thursday 9 December at 11.00am – 12.30pm

Capital Conversation with Helen Wylde, Managing Director, Lumo at LCCI

● Wednesday 15 December at 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Asian Business Association Winter Reception at Bombay Brasserie
Supported by Fiserv and Trinity College

JANUARY 2022

● Wednesday 12 January at 2.00pm – 3.00pm

Capital 500 with Vicky Pryce, Chief Economic Advisor and Board Member, Cebr and James Rentoul, Director at Savanta ComRes
Sponsored by Haysmacintyre

● Thursday 13 January at 10.45am – 11.30am

Continual Improvement in Public Procurement with Maria Dimitrova, Head of Business Development, IMSM

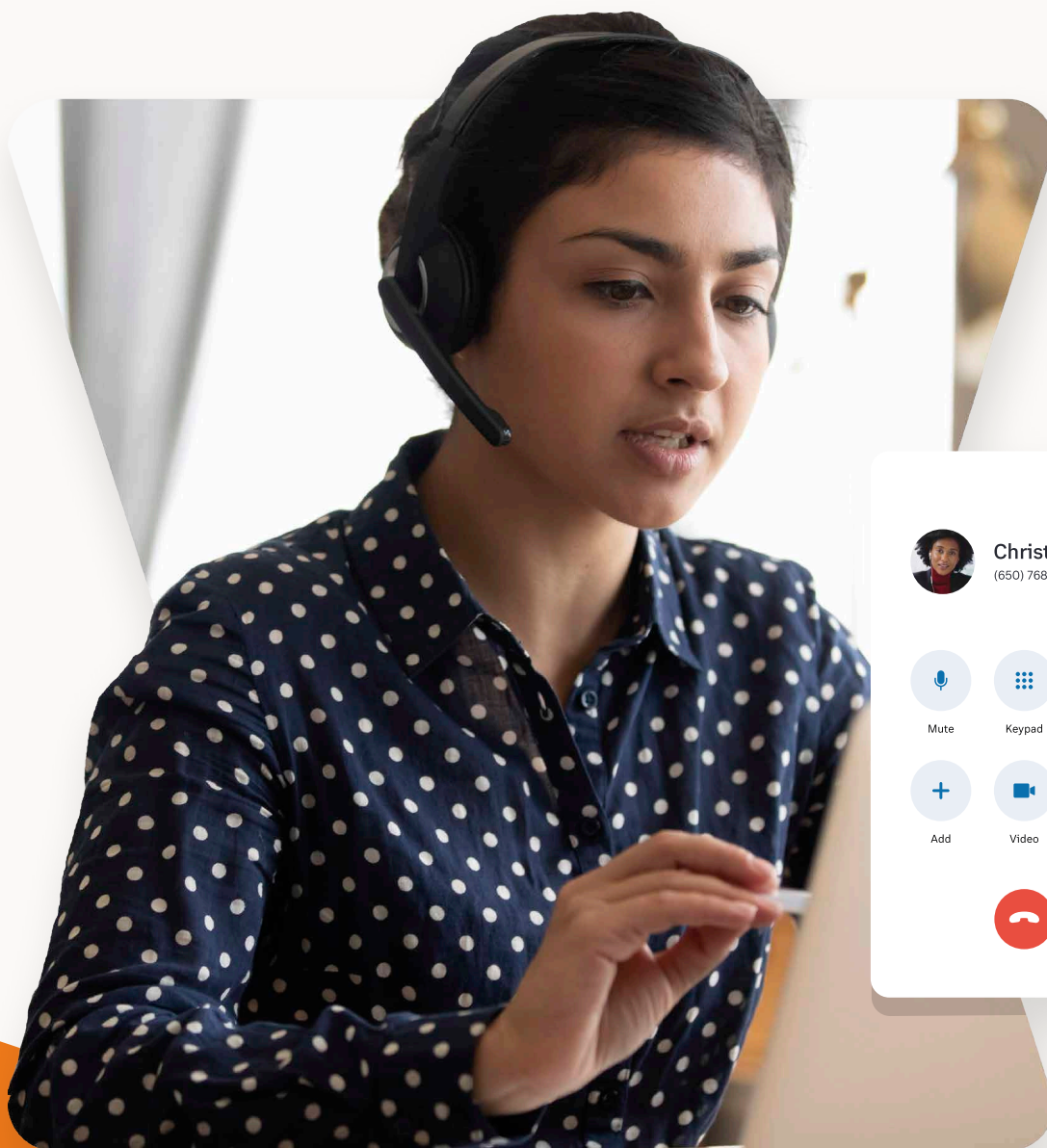
● Tuesday 18 January at 2.30pm – 3.15pm

Capital Conversation with Nicola Horlick, Chief Executive Officer, Money&Co

● Wednesday 19 January at 12.00pm – 2.00pm

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Capturing the landscape



by Stephen Reilly-Hill

As parliament returned from recess, and political party conferences soon followed, autumn's media focus centred firmly on labour shortages, supply chain disruption, panic buying of fuel, and the implications for business.

As you would expect, the results of LCCI's quarterly business survey, the Capital 500, captured this landscape.

The highest proportion of businesses since the survey began in 2014 reported that they may have to raise their prices in the next quarter – as concerns about the costs of goods and energy, and the spectre of rising inflation, increased.

On the good news front, the results told that the number of businesses reporting a quarterly sales increase in inner London had risen, and, to a lesser extent, in outer London. Whilst there's also an increased amount of businesses looking to employ staff in the final quarter of 2021.

Mounting costs

City AM reported on the findings, with LCCI's chief executive Richard Burge welcoming the sales increase, but warning that the mounting costs of doing business are threatening London's Covid-19 recovery.

The City AM article was LCCI's first inclusion in the print edition since it made its September return, after a Covid-19-induced hiatus of well over a year.

Further on the good news front, LCCI was involved in London and national media coverage about commuting footfall beginning to increase into central London, and an easing of international travel restrictions allowing for more visitors to return. LCCI's reactions were reported by BBC London TV and radio, the Sunday Times, and the Telegraph, amongst others.

As we head into winter, the above issues are all likely to remain central to both London's economic recovery and LCCI's media presence. As, of course, will Covid-19.

This is Stephen Reilly-Hill's valedictory LCCI in the news column for London Business Matters as the Chamber's senior media relations manager is moving on

Round the clock coverage at home and abroad

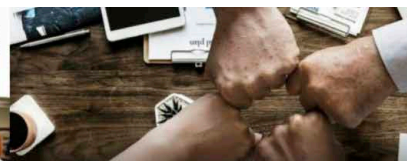
by Steve Reilly-Hill

Since this column last appeared London has been through a lockdown and been variously designated as being in Tier 2, 3 or 4. Now we are back in another lockdown – which Tier 4 largely was already. This one presents a different exit strategy however as vaccinations have begun and finally we are presented with an opportunity to get ahead of transmission, whilst hopefully moving beyond this virus for good.

Unsurprisingly, Covid-19 is still dominating LCCI's media relations work. So much so that December saw the Chamber featuring in more monthly media



London leads the way in fighting climate change



LCCI members step up for the NHS and London

London: Remote working

Source: London Chamber of Commerce

1/2 businesses will continue remote working

CITYA.M.

London businesses show signs of recovery post-lockdown



Spectre of rising costs threaten London rebound

JACK BARNETT

BUSINESSES across London are under threat from the spectre of soaring costs.

Almost half of firms in the capital are suffering from a sharp rise in energy, raw material and fuel costs, which is squeezing their margins "on several fronts", the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has warned.

Richard Burge, chief executive of the LCCI, said: "Firms are reporting rising costs of energy, fuel and raw materials. Their margins are under threat; they're also mindful of rising inflation."

According to research carried out by the LCCI and shared exclusively with City A.M., 46 per cent of London businesses are experiencing a sharp rise in energy costs.

47 per cent are having to deal with an uptick in fuel prices, while 42 per cent are paying more for raw materials.

The findings reinforce fears the UK economy is headed for a period of "stagflation" in which economic

Back to school... back to the office?

LCCI welcome international travel rule changes

City giants fire starting gun on back to office push

If you are an LCCI member and interested in speaking to the media about your business on current issues such as Covid recovery contact press@londonchamber.co.uk

Bird control team grows naturally with latest hatching



For feathered friends Luna and Reg it was love at first flight. Their relationship has flourished and now they are proud parents to little Jimmy.

Since mum Luna joined Cleankill Pest Control in

2018, the falconry service has grown significantly in response to demand for environmentally friendly ways of dealing with nuisance birds such as pigeons, gulls and parakeets. Cleankill's first



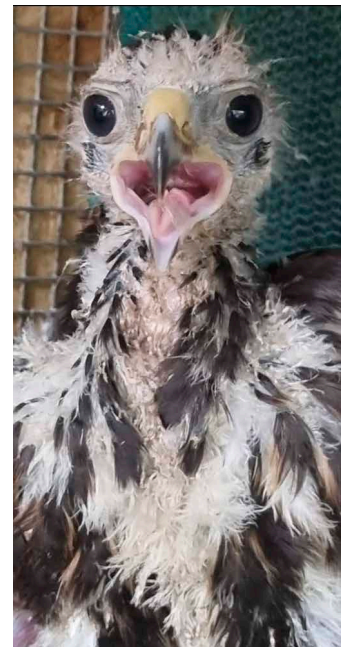
full-time, trained bird handler Alan Day has now been joined by Richard Quartley and between them they look after six adult Harris hawks – Luna, Reg, Rooster, Heidi, Elvis and H.

Alongside flying birds of prey as a deterrent, the bird control team is busy checking properties for damaged netting and making sure any netting is as secure as possible to cope with the blustery Autumn and winter weather. October and November are the months when you should call a professional pest control company like Cleankill to check your netting and repair any damage.

Commenting on the birth of little Jimmy, Managing Director Paul Bates said: "We welcome baby Jimmy to the family. When Alan started with Luna, we knew there was a gap in the market for a green pest control solution that could deal with pigeons and gulls in and around London. What we couldn't have imagined is how much demand there would be.

"What has really impressed us is their effectiveness. Once the hawks are

regularly flown at a site, pigeons and gulls soon learn that it's not a safe place to roost and choose to go elsewhere. The hawks don't attack the birds, their presence is all that is needed."



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Two minute interview

John McKeown, director of Accelerate Funding



Who are you?

The founder of Accelerate Funding Limited.

What is your connection with the London Chamber of Commerce?

We have been a Premier Plus member since 2019.

What was your first job in London?

Independent financial advisor.

Which one business achievement over the last 12 months are you most proud of, and why?

We successfully embedded a new commercial asset finance and property finance brokerage into Accelerate Funding. Despite the pandemic, we're proud to have established a vehicle for providing SMEs with all forms of funding — equity, debt, Innovate UK grants and R&D tax credits. Crucially, we've managed to help several businesses despite working remotely and at a time when many funders have been forced to say no.

"If there is one thing I hate about my job it's ..."

... having to say 'No'. It doesn't matter which area we are working in, too many SMEs wanting to raise equity or debt financing have poor records, or are non-compliant, and typically haven't planned or prepared for this eventuality. We hate seeing good businesses struggle because they can't get the funding they need, especially if it's simply down to the fact that they don't take the process for doing so seriously. There's funding out there for everyone and I wish businesses would take time to understand the requirements."

If you were advising a young entrepreneur which business person would you suggest as a model?

My mentors over the years have been people I met whilst working, not 'names'. I get inspired by someone who adds value to conversations; someone you can see is really interested in you and what you are doing. You don't always need a Richard Branson to knock on your door. You need someone who shares the same vision and has been in your shoes. They'll help you to grow faster and it doesn't matter whether it's a mentor from an accelerator or business angel, or your business partner. What matters is the value they can add to your business.

SMEs can access, where from, and how to get it, across all sectors. We have effectively elaborated on the 'all under one roof' approach for SMEs. It's about saving them time and opening them up to different types of finance.

How is your business reacting to Brexit?

It's not really affecting us. Quite the reverse, in fact, as European SMEs are still looking at coming to the UK and London to move ahead. Our legal system, financial hub, common language and communications are massively attractive, whether you are UK based or want to expand here.

How do you think the transport system in London

caught up in the rush hour, although strangely it is something I'm missing. I also missed the crowded rooms of entrepreneurs at networking events, finding out how they are getting on, what their plans are, laughing a lot and (sometimes) commiserating. It's this spirit and sense of moving forward that's now returning to London. For example we're relaunching the Business Funding Club in November.
www.bizfundingclub.com

"I love the atmosphere, vibe and opportunity that London brings."



How is the current pandemic affecting your business?

It caused a major evolution in Accelerate Funding. Almost overnight, as the first lockdown hit, new and start-up SMEs found the equity markets tougher or closed. Business in the tech sector needed to find alternative finance — quickly. We had providers joining us to talk about the debt sector. We were quick to recognise that the solutions lay with a combination of funding areas. SMEs needed to have access to funding and to think through all the different options — hence our own pivot to add the commercial finance arm to Accelerate Funding.

What measures have you taken?

We got regulated to be able to add a full commercial asset and property finance business to our portfolio. We now talk 'in the round' — a full 360° vision of what type of money

can be improved?

I would like to see the Queen Elizabeth Line opened, from east to west. It will strengthen communications, enable recruitment and raise the visibility of business opportunities by making it easier and quicker to get around.

Which piece of red tape causes most problems for your company and why?

Being regulated obviously brings its issues in terms of compliance and reporting. Yet equally I'm in favour of the certainty that FCA regulation can bring to SMEs. So yes, there is red tape, but knowing that we have taken these steps gives SMEs confidence in us.

What is your favourite and least favourite thing about London?

I love the atmosphere, vibe and opportunity that London brings. My least favourite thing is getting

If you were Mayor of London for the day which one thing would you change?

I went to London three or four times between lockdowns and walked everywhere — from Waterloo to the City mostly, but also across the West End. I noticed others doing the same, or running, cycling, ambling, or just sitting in a park ready for an outdoor meet. When we are all back and buzzing again, Mr Mayor, please find a way to get everyone to avoid using the tube for travel (if they can) once they've got to a mainline station — for just one day a week.

What do you think the future holds?

We are a nation of innovators, traders and businesspeople, welcoming those from overseas who are drawn to this country by a sense of hope, opportunity, ambition and drive. There is a reason why so many come, stay and build lives. There is something about the UK and London in particular that makes it unique, successful, and fun. Despite the many obstacles everyone has encountered since the start of the pandemic, we can pivot to embrace new opportunities. That's what Accelerate Funding has done, and that's what I think the future holds for London and the UK.

www.acceleratefunding.com

London scores a perfect 10 for its parks

They have been the saving grace of global lockdowns, a place of respite where we could walk, run and cycle to get out of the house, if only for an hour.

Parks bring joy to so many. Not only do they serve as green spaces and hosts to wildlife amongst the hustle and bustle of big cities, but they're a blessing for those living in high-rise flats or small, confined spaces without a garden.

But if you value your time outdoors, where is the best place to live for parks in the UK?

Data analysts at abcFlora gathered data relating to the parks in a range of UK cities, allowing them to discover how busy each city's parks are, as well as how highly rated they are on Google. This in turn gave them the means to generate a comprehensive ranking based on general park quality.

Taking the top spot with a perfect score is the nation's capital, London earning itself the full 10.00, this stunning city is home to beautiful green spaces.

With only 56,781 people per park, you can bet there will be space for you. If you're not spending the day shopping or enjoying a night at the theatre, you can waste the day in London's beautiful parks.

Whether you're seeing your favourite band in Central's Hyde Park or cycling leisurely on your Santander bike through Regent's Park in North-West, there's always something to do.

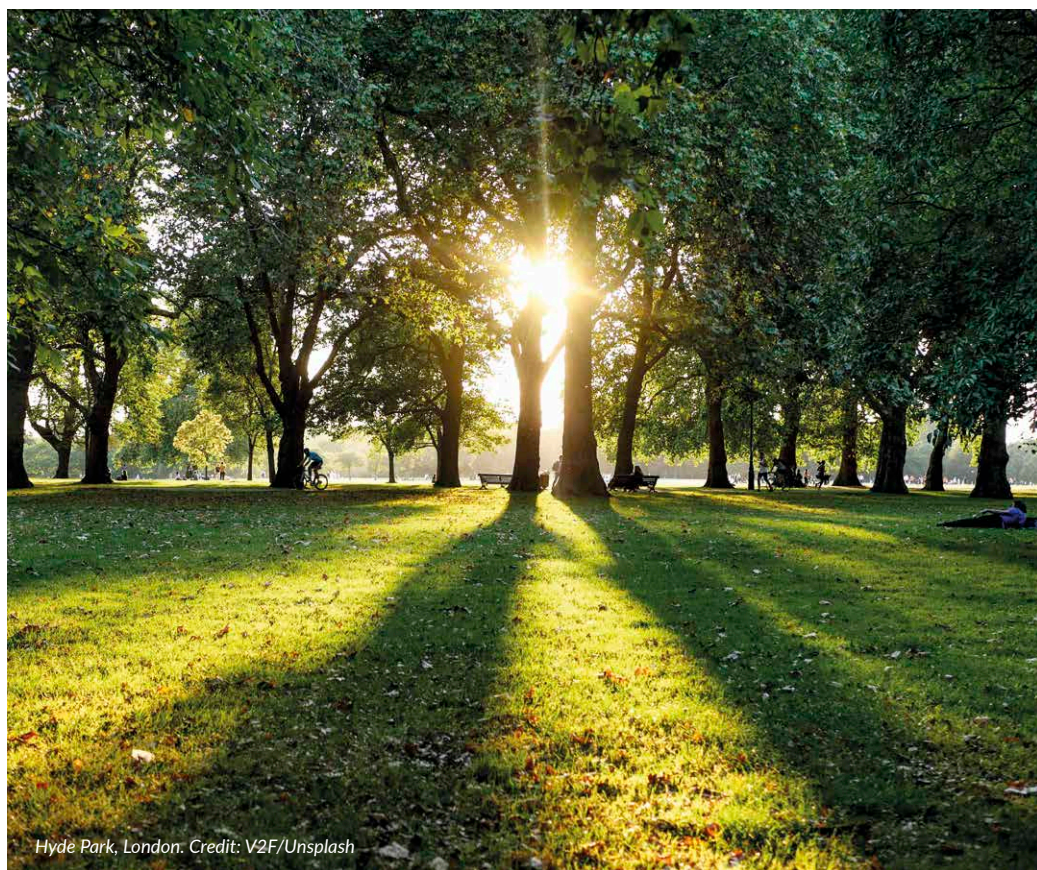
Following in second place is Belfast, the capital city of Northern Ireland, with an impressive score of 8.94. The city is the largest in the region and houses a population of more than 634,000 people.

Florally adorned

There is something for everyone in Belfast's green scene, from admiring the tropic species at the Botanic Gardens to roaming around the florally adorned walking trails that can be found in Musgrave Park. The city's low population of 42,306 people per park may have something to do with it stealing the silver spot.

Rounding off the podium is the most populous city in the South-West, Bristol, with a high score of 7.92. With 57,792 people per park, the high concentration of residents may be responsible for knocking the city down into 3rd place.

If you're not spending the day shopping or taking in the views from the famous Clifton Suspension



Hyde Park, London. Credit: V2F/Unsplash

"No matter how busy and bustling a city, you can always find peace and serenity when there are enough green spaces on offer."

bridge, you can waste the day in Bristol's beautiful parks.

Completing the top five were the Welsh capital, Cardiff and Liverpool, with a score of 7.44 and 7.27, respectively.

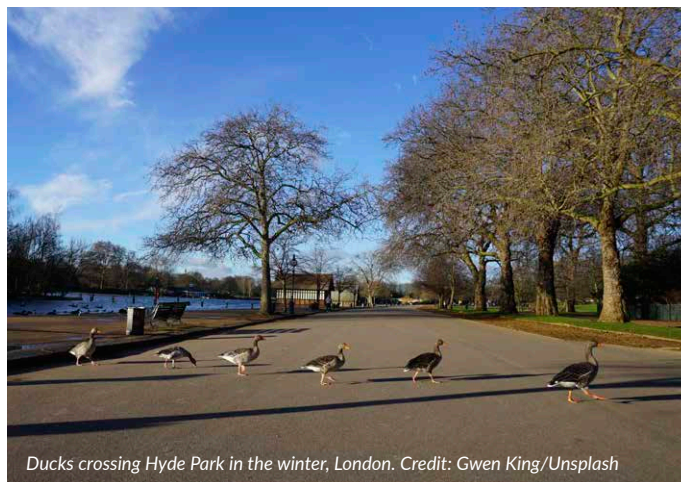
On the other end of the spectrum, some cities failed to score for their park quality.

Manchester was the lowest ranking, with a grand total of 0.00. Despite its respectable park rating of 4.25, there were just too many people, with a whopping 183,341 residents per park. Manchester's population is just shy of 553,230 and the city is very densely populated.

By all means, visit the stunning Heaton or Fletcher Moss park, just bear in mind – it may be busy.

Mass of people

Scoring slightly higher than Manchester is Birmingham, scoring 3.95 overall. Like the bottom city of the table, the parks aren't low-scoring



Ducks crossing Hyde Park in the winter, London. Credit: Gwen King/Unsplash

however, the mass of people per park means the green spaces are not likely to be the calm, spacious locations that visitors desire, with nearly 100,000 residents per park.

Cannon Hill is one of the most famous and highest-scoring parks in Birmingham with a score of 4.5 out of 5 stars, so if you're visiting and need your green fix, head to the south of the city.

Third from the bottom is Scotland's Glasgow, situated in the heart of the country. With the lowest park rating overall, but still an impressive 4.23, this combined with the higher population density may be responsible for the low overall score of 4.08.

Nicolas Rodriguez, director of ab-

cFlora commented: "It's fascinating to see where in the UK has the best parks, with some surprising results. It goes to show no matter how busy and bustling a city, you can always find peace and serenity when there are enough green spaces on offer.

'All cities should be taking steps towards park expansion where they can, to improve the quality of life of the residents, wildlife and most importantly, restore to worlds natural balance."

www.abcflora.com
www.abcflora.com/blogs/flower-blog/which-cities-have-the-best-parks



Two minute interview

Dr Alka Patel, chief executive, Lifestyle First



Who are you?

I'm Dr Alka Patel, lifestyle medicine doctor, workplace wellbeing strategist and founder of Lifestyle First which amplifies health as a skill and an asset so that inspired individuals and bold businesses can create compassionate lifestyle changes for happy, healthy living and connected workplace wellness. I'm a GP and also host of The Lifestyle First Podcast, blending the science of medicine with the art of self-care.

What is your connection with the London Chamber of Commerce?

I joined the LCCI during lockdown, triggered by a core human instinct to belong and connect – it's been an invaluable place to build relationships, network, learn and grow.

What was your first job in London?

A doctor! I grew up in northwest London and on my very first day on the wards walked past a man in a bed just as he flatlined and went into a cardiac arrest. My chest compressions and CPR did not result in the outcome I desperately wanted – and in that moment the harsh reality of life as a doctor struck hard.

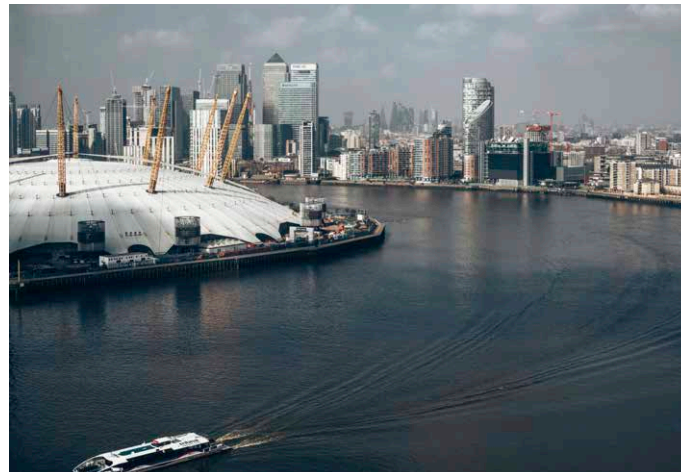
Which one business achievement over the last 12 months are you most proud of, and why?

I became a TEDx speaker this year with my talk *Health is a verb, not a noun*. Whilst at first glance this might not seem a business achievement, it actually is. Being a TEDx speaker has opened up opportunities, conversations and collaborations that I would not have other-

wise had and helped me spread my messages of health aligned strongly to my mission to sow the seeds of lifestyle medicine into everyday conversations, to embed the roots of health into everyday living, to create a canopy of self-care across the globe and to share the fruits of connectivity.

"If there is one thing I hate about my job it's ..."

... nothing! It's taken a strong dose of courage and humility, but my passion and purpose are now aligned!"



If you were advising a young entrepreneur which business person would you suggest as a model?

I wouldn't highlight one specific role model, but would encourage young entrepreneurs to look at the values and qualities of those around them who own their message and purpose, who learn from their highs and lows, who combine grit and grace, fear and focus, curiosity and courage to step up to being an entrepreneur.

How is the current pandemic affecting your business?

The pandemic has positively affected my business. Covid19-created a global connection through the impact of a unifying health issue for us all at the same time and this has been a pivotal trigger for people to value their health more than ever before. More people now want to take charge of their own health

and to focus on their lifestyles, and wellbeing has become increasingly embedded in businesses not just out of necessity but simply because wellbeing is everyone's business.

What measures have you taken?

The biggest 'aha' moment for me has been witnessing the impact of stress on people's lives – I've seen it through my entire career but it just became so much more stark through the pandemic. So many people have told me in various ways that fundamentally all they want

ence to stress and burnout at both leadership and employee level has risen exponentially through online platforms.

"The biggest 'aha' moment for me has been witnessing the impact of stress on people's lives – I've seen it through my entire career but it just became so much more stark through the pandemic."

How do you think the transport system in London can be improved?

- Cars - fewer, greener
- Cycles - safer lanes
- Tubes- better ventilated, more frequent
- Waterways – more efficient
- Walking – more pedestrianised areas and well-marked walking routes.

Which piece of red tape causes most problems for your company and why?

I don't have red tape! Blue tape only, for blue sky thinking!

What is your favourite and least favourite thing about London?

I love the vibrance of London. There's an energy you absorb from all the bustle. I recently did a 'bridge walk' through London with some friends and there was something quite magical about traversing 10 busy bridges and marvelling at the iconic sights. Behind this however is also the sadness that this dynamic and diverse city is also the epicentre of poverty and crime.

If you were Mayor of London for the day which one thing would you change?

Hotels for the homeless. That's the kind thing to do.



www.dralkapatel.com

Growing your business network with the LCCI Community App



LCCI Member Manni Pearce, UK channel manager at Ringover joined the LCCI Community App this summer. Pearce recruits companies across the UK and Ireland to add Ringover to their existing suite of services and helps to train and support these partners to provide solutions into their SME and corporate clients.

Ringover is a cloud-communication provider with offices in France, UK, Spain and the USA. The platform consists of unlimited VoIP calls to 110 global destinations, video conferencing and screen sharing, instant messaging, interactive voice response (IVR), custom on-hold music, call recording and call statistics, and integration to 15+ CRM platforms.

What have you found you like the most about the LCCI Community App?

Having the Groups section available is very useful, this allows me to view certain topics of interest in a chosen group. I actively keep looking at the IT Business Transformation Group for updates in technology.

Do you have a favourite feature on the app and why?

The events calendar. I really would like to grow the amount of channel partners in the London area, so identifying the appropriate networking event to attend will be key to this. Getting out to meet people face to face now is great as I've always been a keen networker.

Have you been able to connect with Members and the Community Network on the app?

Very much so. Especially following online LCCI networking meetings. I can follow up on conversations I have had with individuals.

Share with us how the app has benefitted you so far.

I have benefitted by having some great business contacts, understanding their businesses and having discussions with members. Also, LCCI staff have

been helpful. They have been available for me to ask questions about the App and provided valuable advice.

What has made the new Community App stand out for you?

Ease of use, daily notifications like new members, group posts and updates on forthcoming events.

Would you recommend using the app to others and why?

Yes I would. It's easy to use and the layout is clear so it is easy to find contacts and information. It's a great place to find valuable information about what's going on in London and beyond.



Any tips?

Consider adding a monthly 'Member spotlight', to learn more about that member and their business.

How to join

LCCI Members can download the app on Android and iOS by scanning the QR code:



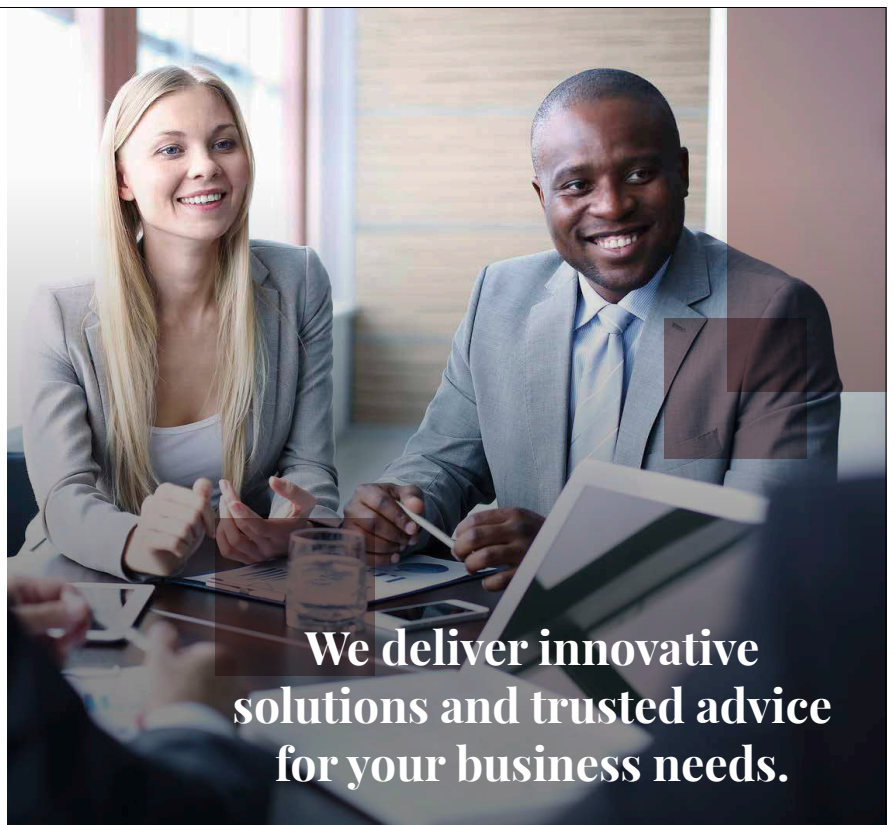
Not a member? Join the free London Chamber Community Network where London's businesses can access a number of benefits including the LCCI Community App.

Sign up at:
www.londonchamber.co.uk/membership/lcci-community-app

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Ransomware: 2021 and beyond



by Greg Inge

As a team at CyberCX confronting ransomware attacks on a daily basis we can confirm they are surging. However, we would take it a step further. Not only are instances of ransomware on the rise, but ransomware attacks are evolving to become even more pernicious.

Here are two examples:

Over the past 12 months, there's been a clear trend towards 'extortionware'. This modus operandi sees attackers not only demanding payment in exchange for unlocking an organisation's data and systems. They also threaten to make public all the organisation's data. This novel approach may be in response to more organisations understanding the need to back-up critical data, and thus being less inclined to pay a ransom if their data is encrypted by criminals.

Another worrying evolution in ransomware strategies sees payment demands being made to an organisation's customers, in addition to the organisation itself. In September 2020, one of Finland's largest psychiatric clinics discovered that hackers had stolen potentially tens of thousands of patients' medical records. It is believed the breach may have started as far back as November 2018. Not only did the attackers seek a ransom from the psychiatric clinic. They also began demanding ransoms from individual patients, threatening to make public their confidential medical details if payments were not forthcoming.

Having closely analysed ransomware attack methodologies, it is possible to identify ways in which any organisation can strengthen its resilience in the face of ransomware attacks.

Why is ransomware such an issue?

Let's face it – ransomware is an incredibly effective business model.

Most organisations, from SMEs to large, complex enterprises, can be breached by a reasonably sophisticated attacker. As with most cyber incidents, an attacker can make as many mistakes as they want, but a defender only needs to make one

mistake for a breach to succeed.

As discussed above, ransomware attacks are on the rise. Whilst many organisations have strengthened their defences and now regularly backup their critical data, attackers have adapted by threatening to release the data online if the ransom isn't paid.

This poses a very different kind of risk. Even if you are able to recover your data and systems without paying the ransom, the financial, reputational and operational risks from having your data made public could be catastrophic.

That's why the battle against ransomware must involve your entire organisation. It is wrong to see ransomware as simply an "IT problem." Stopping ransomware requires much more than having your IT team backup your data. It requires a whole-of-organisation approach to reduce your exposure to attacks succeeding in the first place. The focus needs to shift towards prevention

rather than response.

The 7-step cyber kill-chain

When it comes to preventing ransomware attacks, it's essential that you have an understanding of the "cyber kill-chain", or the sequence of steps attackers usually follow.

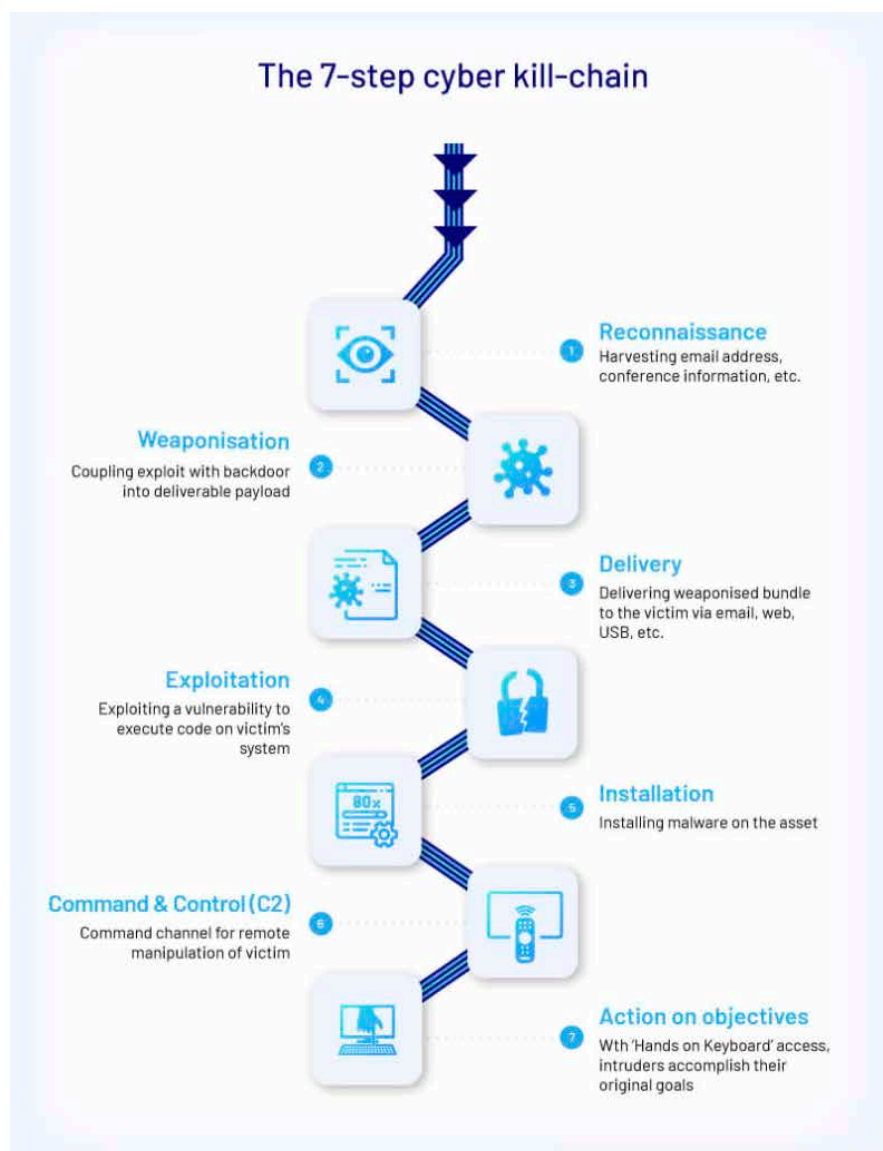
1. Reconnaissance – an attacker scopes out targets to identify a potential victim
2. Weaponisation – the attacker identifies a way to breach the victim's network
3. Delivery – an initial attack gives the attacker a foothold into the victim's environment
4. Exploitation – the attacker may move laterally across the network, steal privileged credentials or install backdoors
5. Installation – the attacker installs malware on the asset
6. Command and control – the attacker ensures they can remotely control the malware

7. Actions on objectives – the attack plan is put into action.

This series of steps may be carried out in different ways, with different levels of sophistication. A less-sophisticated attacker may carry out these steps within hours. Such haste may result in mistakes, such as deleting backups, that provide opportunities for forensic investigators to identify them.

However, a more sophisticated attack will usually involve significant 'dwell time' between the perimeter breach and when the ransomware attack is launched. Dwell time may extend to days, weeks or even months.

This extended dwell time assists attackers who are engaged in 'big game hunting'. This is an approach whereby attackers seek lucrative targets that are likely to be badly affected by ransomware, and thus more likely to pay-up. Such organisations may include those that run critical



infrastructure or OT systems.

Sophisticated attacks tend to be multi-phased. The initial perimeter breach may be followed by extensive mapping activities of the network in order to gain a detailed understanding of the business operations. They may map out network users, virtual machines, host systems, connections to other networks, backup infrastructure, as well as cloud-based and on-premises platforms. These mapping activities allow them to plan their attack in a way that is designed to have the greatest operational impact, cause as much damage as possible and increase the likelihood that the victim will be forced to pay.

We recently investigated a sophisticated attack in which the attackers conducted extensive monitoring of the victim's operations over several months from within the network perimeter. The attackers realised that the organisation was backing-up data to an external drive at a regular time each week. Knowing this information allowed them to remotely delete the backed-up data on the external drive right after the data was saved to it, but before the external drive was disconnected from the server. Following the launch of the ransomware attack, the company discovered that all the data they thought had been backed-up had actually been erased, forcing them to pay the ransom in order to recover their critical information.

What this case highlights is that ransomware attacks may be executed over a protracted period of time. Whilst an extended cyber kill-chain sequence may allow attackers to launch more sophisticated attacks, they also provide organisations more opportunities to thwart the attack. However, this will only be possible if your organisation has the appropriate prevention, detection and response systems in place.

Prevent, detect, respond

Attackers always look to exploit poor security hygiene, so it's essential you get your cyber security basics right. When it comes to mitigating the risks of ransomware, there are three broad categories of security measures you should be considering:

1. Prevent

Preventing an attack is always preferable. The security of your environment requires the involvement of your entire organisation. At a minimum you should ensure you have Multi Factor Authentication set up, particularly if members of your team have remote access. Other important considerations include:

1. Patch external systems includ-

ing Citrix gateways and MS remote desktop systems

2. Penetration test your external perimeter
3. Secure all ingress points
4. Disable office macros
5. 'Patch your people' – train your teams to detect and block phishing emails
6. Ensure anti-virus is set-up and configured correctly
7. Manage privileged accounts
8. Ensure business continuity planning is effective
9. Prepare a response plan.

2. Detect

As highlighted previously, sophisticated ransomware attacks often involve a protracted dwell time. Whilst attackers may be mapping your network in order to launch a more devastating attack, if you're effectively monitoring your environment you should be able to detect and intercept them. Consider the following:

1. Monitor all remote access
2. Monitor key security logs
3. Monitor anti-virus
4. Monitor for phishing emails
5. Monitor other security systems
6. Properly investigate all suspicious events.

3. Respond

A prompt and effective response to a ransomware attack is crucial. With a well-tested, well-executed Business Continuity Plan in place, the impact of a ransomware attack will be significantly reduced and the consequences easier to manage. It's essential to:

1. Ensure response is properly coordinated
2. Convene response team
3. Enact response plans
4. Enact business continuity plan
5. Engage experts to assist.

Until recently, the focus for both regulators and cyber security professionals has been on ensuring organisations adopt an appropriate response in the event of a breach. However, increasingly stakeholders expect organisations to have appropriate systems and policies in place to thwart attacks before they occur. That's why 'prevent' and 'detect' are as critical as 'respond' when it comes to mitigating the risks of ransomware attacks. Stopping ransomware attacks before they can be executed will help you avoid potentially disastrous financial and reputational damage.

Greg Inge is UK chief executive of CyberCX
www.cybercx.com

SPONSORED COLUMN

'Right to Work Checks' by a UK Employer under UK Immigration Rules

All employers in the UK who employ staff under a contract of employment, service or apprenticeship, must make Right to Work Checks before employing a new employee and at regular intervals.

It is the responsibility of employers to make sure that employees have the right immigration status that allows them to work.

How to conduct a right to work check?

Employers can conduct a manual check or an online check in the following manner:

1. Obtain original documents to confirm the identity and immigration status.
2. Check the document's validity in the presence of the holder.
3. Make and retain a clear copy and record the date the check was made.

All copies of documents taken should be kept securely for the duration of the worker's employment and for two years afterwards. The copy must then be securely destroyed.

Conducting either the manual check or the online check as set out as per Home Office guidance and the Code of Practice will provide the employer with a statutory excuse.

What is a Statutory Excuse?

If you conduct the right checks as set out in the law, you will have a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty. This means that if you have correctly conducted right to work checks as required,

"The Right to Work check must be carried out by the employer as the check cannot be performed by a third party"

you will not receive a civil penalty for an illegal worker.

The Right to Work check must be carried out by the employer as the check cannot be performed by a third party, such as a recruitment agency or your professional adviser so you must be very careful.

What are the sanctions against illegal working?

If you are found to be employing someone illegally and you have not carried out the prescribed checks, you may face a civil penalty of up to £20,000 per illegal worker and in serious cases, a criminal conviction carrying a prison sentence of up to 5 years and an unlimited fine along with other measures like cancellation of sponsor licence.

Penalties for the employee for illegal working

Working illegally is a criminal offence. Illegal workers face having their wages seized. They may also be prosecuted and can be imprisoned for up to six months.

Temporary Concessions due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) have been announced, however once the things return to normal you will be required to complete the Right to Work Checks.

HSMP Services Ltd., as an OISC registered Immigration Adviser, can help you comply with UK Immigration Rules. Please contact today.

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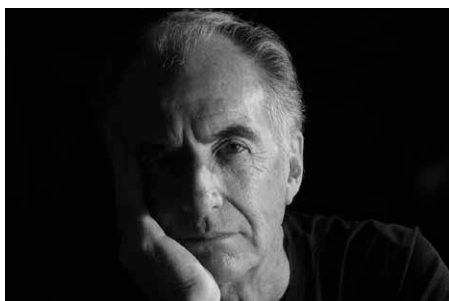
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Yintong talks with...

Michael Freeman, world-renowned photographer and author



In a career spanning almost 50 years, Michael Freeman has published 155 books, including the bestselling *The Photographer's Eye* that has sold a million copies in 28 languages around the world. His work has been commissioned and published in many major magazines, including *Life* and the *Smithsonian* and those that accompany *The Sunday Times*, *The Telegraph*, and *The Observer*. He is unequivocally one of the most widely published authorities on photography in the world.

This year I am delighted to say that Michael has come on board for the second Global SinoPhoto Awards. What especially qualifies him to judge our Chinese themed photography competition is his authority on Asian countries, especially through his books *The Tea Horse Road* and *The Life of Tea*. Having the opportunity to work with Michael on the Awards has, enabled me to interview him to satisfy my curiosity about his career path and to uncover the secrets to his longevity in photography and writing as well as learn of his current and future plans.

After reading geography at Oxford, Michael started his career with an advertising agency. Six years later, he got itchy feet and took a three-month sabbatical in the Amazon. On his return, his photographs were exhibited at the Brazilian Embassy and were seen and admired by the editor of *Time Life*. His first commission soon followed.

"When I began writing about photography, it



Plaza de los Coches, Cartagena, Colombia

was well before I knew enough to do so, but that's the over-confidence of youth for you!" Michael shares frankly. "My advertising career taught me how to market myself, how to conceptualise pictures and how to combine words and pictures in a package. Back in the 1970s, there were a lot of specialist consumer magazines out there that needed a regular stream of conceptual images, and I found a profitable niche supplying these."

Perspective

The situation these days is completely different, driven by the sheer volume of shots being taken, and with so many makers of equipment and software. How does Michael maintain his fresh perspective and commercial appeal to get commissions?

"Once again, my advertising background helped me to understand how to take and sell commercially appealing pictures, and I was lucky enough to work with some fantastic art directors and picture editors. People like Lou Klein at *Time Life* were a big influence on me – as much as, say, Cartier Bresson, Irving Penn or Joel Meyerowitz. There is a lot of hype about the importance of your equipment, but visual imagination, composition and timing are much more important. It is about what we think about when we take the shot. I'd say it's the creative side that's the hard part, and this is what governs your success as a professional photographer."

Asking him how he spent lockdown I am not surprised to learn that he has missed travelling ("I can't wait to return to China") or that he is well advanced in a new project, a series of books, the first of which, *Michael Freeman on Composition*, to be published in spring of next year. This will be followed by four more on light and shadow, colour and tone, black and white, and capture "if we make it that far. I'm not even completely sure what that last volume will be about, but I'm hoping I will do by the time I get to start it!"



Yi funeral, Yunnan, China

Ultimate goal

There is clearly still a huge appetite to create and consume this art form, I wonder why this is so. "The reasons are that the world of photography has not stayed still, and neither have I," Michael explains. "Photography has been taken seriously by many more people, and there is new interest in how images can look. I have shot more, and thought more, and have new ideas. The audience for books on photography is much, much broader, and more democratic."

"Nowadays, most writing on photography tends to be about equipment and how stuff works and what settings to use. But I'm not particularly interested in these. As I see it, there are three sets of skills in photography, and they all need to be mastered. They are technical, visual and conceptual. It's the second and third that interest me, and they're the ones that contribute the most to a successful, intriguing or thought-provoking image, which is surely the ultimate goal."

www.michaelfreemanphoto.com

Yintong Betser is managing director of ACTIVE Anglo Chinese Communications (activeukchina.com), connecting business through culture and PR events, including The Global SinoPhoto Awards www.sinophoto-awards.com



Dali East Gate, Yunnan, China

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Anglo-Irish Treaty signed in Downing Street

On 6 December 1921, British and Irish negotiators signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 10 Downing Street, London

The Treaty established the Irish Free State and ended the three-year Irish War of Independence between the armed forces of the Irish Republic, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and British Crown Forces.

Signatories to the treaty included the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, who headed the British delegation, and Irish Republic representatives Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith.

Landslide

The Irish War of Independence had been a guerrilla war fought between 1919 and 1921 between the IRA and various British forces, including the British Army and the Royal Irish Constabulary. Its origins lay in the Easter Rising of April 1916, when Irish Republicans overthrew British rule and declared an Irish Republic. The Easter Rising was put down after one week but support for Irish independence grew. In December 1918, the republican socialist party Sinn Féin won a landslide victory in the Irish elections. On 21 January 1919, Sinn Féin set up the Dáil Éireann and declared Irish independence from British rule.

Conflict grew slowly over the next 18 months. About 300 people had been killed on both sides by the end of 1920. In the middle of the year, the Republicans won control of most Irish county councils, leading to British rule disintegrating in much of Ireland. The British declared martial law in December 1920. Despite this, violence soared over the next seven months, with over 1,000 people killed and 4,500 Republicans jailed.

Sectarianism was strong in Ulster, with the Catholic minority supporting independence but most Protestants, who formed the majority of the population, backed the British. In May 1921, the British divided Ireland into two parts under the Government of Ireland Act, which created Northern Ireland.

Ratified

A ceasefire began on 11 July 1921 and the resulting talks led to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in London on 6 December. The Treaty was ratified by the British Parlia-

ment ten days later.

The main points of the Treaty were:

- Crown Forces, principally the British Army, would withdraw from most of Ireland
- Ireland would become a self-governing dominion of the British Empire i.e. given the same status as Canada, Australia and New Zealand
- The King would become Head of the Irish Free State represented by a Governor General
- Members of the Irish Free State Parliament would have to take an Oath of Allegiance to the Irish Free State. However, they would also have to swear to "be faithful to His Majesty" and his successors
- Northern Ireland could choose to withdraw from the Irish Free State within one month of its coming into effect
- If Northern Ireland opted to withdraw, a Boundary Commission would be set up to establish the boundary between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland.

The Irish Free State came into being on 6 December 1922 and lasted until 29 December 1937. It covered 26 out of the 32 counties of Ireland, with Northern Ireland exercising its Treaty right to withdraw from the Irish Free State and come under British rule.

The executive arm of the Free State Government included the Governor General and the Executive Council (Cabinet). The legislature was made up of the Dáil Éireann (the lower house) and Seanad Éireann (the Senate), with the Revolutionary Dáil abolished.

Majority

Opponents of the Treaty, including Sinn Féin, refused to take the Oath of Allegiance to the King and subsequently did not take their seats. Members who supported the Treaty formed Cumann na nGaedheal in 1923 and held an effective majority in the Dáil from 1922 to 1927.

In 1926, Sinn Féin President Éamon de Valera tried to reverse the Oath of Allegiance but failed. He resigned from Sinn Féin and founded Fianna Fáil as an Irish republican party. Fianna Fáil representatives were elected to the Dáil at the 1927 general election.

When the Statute of Westminster was passed in 1931, the British Parliament gave up nearly all its remaining authority to legislate for



The Irish delegation (from left) Arthur Griffith, Eamonn Duggan, Erskine Childers, Michael Collins, George Gavan Duffy, Robert Barton and John Chartres



Crowds holding a prayer vigil outside Whitehall, while negotiations were underway

the Irish Free State and the other dominions. In effect, the Irish Free State became an internationally recognised, fully sovereign state.

Once in power, De Valera abolished the Oath of Allegiance. In 1937, he drafted a new constitution, which was put to a referendum and

approved. The Irish Free State ended when the new constitution came into force on 29 December 1937 and the State became known as Ireland.

100 years ago in London is written and researched by Alexa Michael

Michael Collins in Hammersmith

For the best known of the Irish signatories, Michael Collins, the mission was a triumphant return to a city he knew well. He first arrived in London from Ireland as a sixteen-year-old, to take up a job working as a boy clerk in the headquarters of the Post Office Savings Bank in Blythe Road, Hammersmith. The massive brick and stone pile later became a depository for the Victoria and Albert, Science and British museums and its grandiose façade made it a favourite of film directors, appearing as the MI6 HQ in the 2011 film *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*.

Masterminding

In London the teenage Collins joined the Gaelic Athletic Association, a hotbed of Irish republicanism and returned to Dublin in 1916 in time to take

part in the Easter Uprising that year. He rose rapidly through the ranks of the Irish Republican Army becoming director of intelligence and masterminding the struggle against the British.

Schism

During the treaty ceremony a member of the British team quipped that he was probably signing his political death warrant. Collins replied: "I have signed my actual death warrant." The controversial terms and above all the oath of allegiance clause created a schism in the movement. Collins argued that the treaty was a first step establishing "the freedom to achieve freedom." It was no good. The country tumbled into civil war. On 22 August 1922 Collins's prophecy was realised when he was shot dead in an ambush by anti-treaty forces.



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Mentoring can drive small business growth



Caribbean cuisine entrepreneur Levi Roots and beauty and wellness megabrand founder Liz Earle are stepping in as small business mentors after new research has revealed that almost half of all UK small firms worried their business won't survive without external support

The *Dragons' Den* star and well-being entrepreneur are leading a partnership between BT and Google to offer more mentoring to UK small firms and encourage them to unlock the benefits of digital skills training to drive post-pandemic growth and prosperity.

The research found that as well as concerns about their business future without more support, more than six in 10 of small firms said they would be more likely to adopt new technologies if the IT and telecoms industry provided training.

The *Get mentored, Get growing* campaign offers free one-to-one mentoring sessions for UK small businesses and charities covering a range of topics including digital marketing, e-commerce and business strategy.

Game-changing

Commenting on his involvement in the BT and Google campaign, Levi Roots said: "Running your own business can sometimes be over-

whelming and lonely, so I know from my own *Dragons Den* experience how game-changing it was, both professionally and personally, to work with someone who could understand and appreciate my challenges and ambitions, and give me personalised, meaningful and actionable advice, as well as practical tools and training to help me build and grow my business.

"I'm really delighted to get the chance to pay it forward and share my journey and insights with today's small business community and help them unlock the power of digital to accelerate their growth."

Responsive

Liz Earle added: "When my beauty brand was launched more than twenty years ago, our mail order business was based around paper forms and payments by cheque. Today everything moves at a completely different pace. You have to act like a publisher on your social media channels and be super responsive to customers who want a real-time answer, not a letter in the post!

"With my later publishing brand, we had to learn a mass of digital skills super-fast and I encourage small businesses to grab all the available resources and training they can to help successfully navigate their way in the online world."

www.bt.com/skillsfortomorrow/with-google



Taking the temperature of London business



Stephen Jones rounds up three recent LCCI research reports

A quickening recovery for domestic sales for London businesses, particularly those based in inner London, while labour market expectations across the capital continued to improve – these were key messages from the *Capital 500* survey for Q3 2021. Nevertheless, there was a significant jump in the proportion of firms noting cost pressures from fuel, energy and raw materials, with ramifications for their own pricing of goods and services.

Enlightening

The fifth annual *London Business 1000* survey, which LCCI runs in partnership with London Councils is an annual affair which asks more than 1,000 London businesses their views on topics such as skills, recruitment, devolution, and attitudes towards local councils. Since 2020, questions have been added on how businesses are navigating the journey towards net zero, and the 2021 survey probes deeper into the issues facing businesses in their sustainability plans.

The results for 2021 were enlightening, with awareness of key net zero targets rising compared to 2020. More than two-thirds of firms were taking some form of action to reduce their environmental impacts. There was still a sizeable proportion who were not doing anything to reduce their impact, with these businesses saying that the main barrier was that it was inappropriate for their firm to do so. Higher costs were the chief tangible barrier to firms reducing their environmental impact.

Roughly a third of businesses said they had the skills to reduce their carbon emissions, although there were variations based on company size.

Downward trend

London companies overwhelmingly felt that they – along with national government – were responsible for reducing their carbon emissions. There was also a desire for more assistance from their local borough, particularly around enhanced recycling services and green grants for energy efficiency works. Worryingly for London boroughs, only a quarter of firms feel that their council acts on local businesses' concerns – this has been on a downward trend throughout the five years of the *London Business 1000*.

Away from sustainability and local government, London businesses were more active in their recruitment compared to the 2020 survey, while business confidence around hiring was markedly improved. However, as has been well documented in the media, more firms were facing skills shortages in the 2021 survey – particularly in the motor and retail trade sectors. Brexit cited as the chief skills challenge over the next 12 months for businesses, with firms citing a lack of qualified candidates in the local labour force.

Skills and training

LCCI's most recent policy report was the *Quarterly Skills Survey* for Q3 2021. The QSS was launched with the aim of regularly identifying skills shortages and issues for London's businesses and residents, with a view to helping policymakers at both local and national level in skills and training provision. For Q3 2021, there was a focus on how the rise of remote working as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic has affected London's businesses and workers. Nearly three-fifths of businesses said their employees' work/life balances had improved as a result of more remote working since March 2020, with 14 per cent noting a negative impact. Despite the fears, just one in five firms said that productivity had worsened as a result of more remote working, compared to a third who noted an improvement.

Businesses were however much more split on the impact remote working has had on employee mental health and the ability to work collaboratively. For 29 per cent of businesses, more remote working had negatively impacted their ability to onboard new staff too.

Remote working

Turning to changing skills needs as a result of the pandemic, sales or business development was the most cited skill by businesses in terms of what they need now. This was true for both micro and larger companies. In the full report, you can see how the rise of remote working has impacted the types of skills businesses need: for example, half of those companies that have used remote working more since March 2020 said they needed sales or business development skills. Firms who have used remote working more were generally much more likely to note skills gaps.

This divergence is also seen when considering digital skills gaps. London businesses who have turned to remote working more since March 2020 were more likely to say they had a digital skills shortage. For all businesses, the main digital skills gap was in digital marketing, followed by social media management and website design, perhaps reflecting a need by businesses to become more able to trade online following the various Covid-19 restrictions imposed since the pandemic began.

Workload

Take-up of schemes like apprenticeships or traineeships, particularly by London's smallest companies, remains concerning low. When asked what the main barriers were to using these types of schemes, micro businesses felt that they do not meet the needs of their company. The workload and administration associated with schemes like apprenticeships and traineeships were also highly cited, demonstrating the need for policymakers to reform training schemes to boost take-up and get businesses engaged.

Stephen Jones is policy research manager at LCCI
www.londonchamber.co.uk



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Pop-up power: the rise of pop-up shops and events

As the world evolves and becomes more digitally focused, and everything can be ordered and delivered within the blink of an eye, it becomes more difficult for brands to stand out against their competitors

Younger consumers are increasingly craving novel and interesting experiences, and combined with the changing landscape of the traditional high street having to battle the online giants, you have the perfect scenario for the pop-up economy to prosper.

So, what exactly is a pop-up?

In short, pop-up shops are stores that 'pop up' for a limited time to achieve a particular goal. They are short-term outlets that allow businesses to test out their brand and product delivery before establishing a long-term physical retail store. This type of retail is becoming more common as brands look for unique and engaging ways to increase awareness while giving them the opportunity to experiment with less risk.



The benefits of establishing short-term physical locations

Retailers most commonly opt to open a pop-up in order to generate buzz and awareness of their services, offerings, or even just their brand. However, pop-ups can also increase sales and social media engagement, as well as boosting online visibility, as a result of positive customer engagement and expansion of reach.

With a pop-up being temporary by nature, customers are a lot less likely to delay their purchasing, just in case they miss out! Setting up for a limited time in a temporary location in an area that generally has high footfall can give your consumers a sense of urgency and drive sales quickly.

Taking that 'FOMO' one step further, a pop-up event is a great opportunity to show off a new product or range launch. Not only do you generate excitement, but consumers are also more likely to attend and purchase to ensure they're able to get their hands on a product before it sells out!

From clicks to bricks – how e-commerce can benefit

Pop-ups can be especially beneficial for e-commerce businesses because they offer brand exposure in a new space with the intention of attracting an audience that wasn't being captured in previous marketing efforts. It can also be a great tester project for e-tailers looking to experiment with brick-and-mortar spaces, providing an understanding as to how their brand might perform in this type of market.



Although the digital evolution has catapulted the number of consumers purchasing through online platforms, a large number of retail sales are still occurring in store, and as Covid-19 restrictions started to lift in the UK, shopping centres saw footfall dramatically increase. Physical retail opportunities, even if temporary, should be considered by online stores as part of their strategy to build awareness of their brand and to incorporate a new sales channel.

Pop-ups allow e-commerce businesses to translate their offering easily to a physical store while experimenting with their desired shopping experience. This can be done without having to commit to a long-term design and expense.

Transitioning from an online-only space to a pop-up retail location can also drive more online traffic through the building of strong customer experiences, new audiences, and retention and loyalty with existing valued customers.

Big players in the pop-up game

Anyone can open and create noise through a pop-up, from a small independent greeting card supplier to a luxury fashion giant. Some of the best pop-up events are those that go one step further than simply displaying products and bring a fresh idea to a brand's expected offering. Chanel famously opened Coco Cafés in numerous locations around the world. The luxury fashion brand invited consumers to experience mini-makeovers and sample newly launched fragrances, all while enjoying a drink. The perfect shopping-day treat!

A two-day pop-up store in Barcelona saw sports giant Adidas reveal an EQT gaming room. Visitors were able to experience the latest in Adidas' innovation and new designs while being able to take advantage of exclusive features and a range of games machines. Great fun for any e-sports fan!

It isn't only fashion retailers that have created memorable pop-up experiences. Mexican pale lager brand Corona – who are well-known for its relaxed, good-time vibe – constructed two pop-up social escapes in Barcelona and Sitges, featuring a restaurant, yoga sessions, and live music, all in a paradise-like, luscious environment.

Functional and aesthetic displays are essential for creating an effective pop-up shop, says Gabriella Peace, communications manager of UK Greetings, a greetings card publisher that offers strategic display planning to its customers. Gabriella said: "Pop-up shops and displays aren't just about selling products; it's about creating an experience that reflects your brand and its values. Pop-up shops and displays should always be tailored, allowing customers to recognise value not only in your products or services, but also in your presence in the world."

"Pop-up retailers and brands must acknowledge factors including sales data, demographic information, caption balance, price points, and

Pop-up shops and displays aren't just about selling products; it's about creating an experience that reflects your brand and its values.

design when curating their store space. By doing this, you can further boost your brand recognition and value, achieving maximum revenue and results."

Developing an omnichannel presence that incorporates experiential pop-up locations is an intelligent strategy for any retail business. However, the landscape of physical retail is very different to the digital sphere, and as a result, a lot of direct-to-consumer e-commerce businesses are hesitant to commit to physical locations without testing the waters first. But with copious amounts of retail space now available as a result of the pandemic closures, it's no wonder that pop-up shops and events are on the rise for businesses attempting to offer something interesting. Agile thinking will continue to prompt new initiatives as retailers re-build.



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Meditation Rooms: a benefit of the new way of working



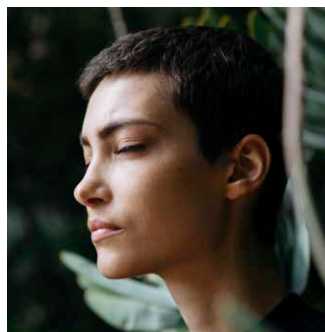
Online Meditation Rooms are a new feature of the home/office workplace blend that enable an organisation to support their workers' wellness, writes Martin Zetter

Mindfulness and meditation are proven methods for managing stress. Importantly, they improve our focus and creativity and help us to maintain a positive outlook. Mindfulness develops an ongoing, non-judgemental awareness of what is happening in our mind. We become aware that our mind tells us all sorts of stories as it processes the myriad of inputs from our senses. And it does not take a rest unless we tell it to. With mindfulness, we can spot the false stories – the tendency to see dangers in many situations, even when they are not a real threat: catastrophizing

or what psychologists call “negative bias”. It helps us to survive, but when it intrudes on the working day it can slow us down, make us anxious, and cloud our judgement. Left unchecked, it can lead to chronic anxiety, stress, and depression. We become less creative and productive. We react to situations rather than responding with reason and composure.

Meditation and mindfulness

Meditation is the foundation on which we build our mindfulness. In theory, we could be mindful without meditating but that's very difficult. Meditation is the game-changer that trains our mind to be aware of our thoughts and feelings throughout the day. The neural pathways in our brain are trained by repetition. Having built that stability we tune in periodically to check that our minds are on track for what we want to do. We can be aware when unhelpful



thoughts arise. Either we let them be and go on their way, or we move our attention to helpful thoughts instead.

How to do it in practice

How can people start meditating when faced with a busy working day? One solution that organisations are increasingly using is to offer an online Meditation Room once or twice a week. It's usually half an hour during a work day. Staff can take time out for a live session where they practice a mindfulness tool and are guided through a brief meditation to calm and reset the mind. Sessions are led by a qualified meditation teacher experienced in corporate life, so they are sensitive to the realities of our modern business culture. With more people working from home, it's something everyone can do without leaving their desk.

Practical support

Making a Meditation Room available shows that a firm really cares about their employees' wellness and resilience in the face of stress. It's a practical solution people can use from their desk without taking much time out of their day. People see that their organisation has gone beyond mere box-ticking to provide a wellness tool they can easily use. Some businesses extend it to their customers too. It helps build a connection to the brand.

The more stressful the business, the greater the benefit. For example, an organisation of independent special needs teachers uses two Meditation Rooms per week: one to prime the working week and one to give a mid-week booster.

Wellbeing, not treatment

It's important to emphasise that this is a wellbeing practice, not a treatment. Not only is this important

in bypassing the stigma of mental health – sadly still prevalent in our culture – it also creates a sense of community within the organisation. Colleagues share a wellness activity with their work community. ‘You support each other, not just yourself, by showing up’ – since Meditation Rooms are specific to an organisation rather than public spaces.

Meditation is the game-changer that trains our mind to be aware of our thoughts and feelings throughout the day.

Backed by science

Extensive research, including studies from Harvard University and the Oxford Mindfulness Centre at Oxford University, has demonstrated the benefits of mindfulness and meditation for both mental and physical health. In the past, scepticism about its spiritual or religious associations held some people back from trying meditation. This is no longer the case. A good Meditation Room should only include content that is supported by reputable scientific research, and this scientific approach will support inclusion, suiting the workplace. The value of using properly qualified meditation teachers comes not only from their proven competence in delivering the content, but also from their expertise in selecting recognized content that is backed by the science and appropriate for a particular group.

Meditation Rooms are increasingly a part of the new workplace. They can be tailored to suit the needs of an organisation. They are affordable and flexible, and they show that the management are serious about supporting their staff.

Martin Zetter is founder and chief executive of Mindful WorkLife which enables people to take control of stress using science-backed mindfulness and meditation skills.
www.mindful-worklife.com

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How to support the physical wellbeing of staff

Work and physical wellbeing might not obviously go hand in hand. However, if employees are involved in some physical activity every week, they're more likely to feel energised and motivated at work.

Studies show that sitting for long periods of time decreases mental wellbeing and has a knock-on effect on productivity at work.

Prioritising physical wellbeing at work has proven to show results. For example, 81 per cent report feeling more motivated even after just taking a walk at lunch. It's a no-brainer that HR needs to start prioritising physical activity.

With many jobs involving prolonged periods stooped over laptop screens and many employees wishing to be more active, employers have a duty of care to ensure staff don't neglect their health. With this in mind, employee benefits provider, Sodexo Engage has put together a short checklist of ways employers can support the physical wellbeing of staff, and not all come at a cost.

1. Make it social

For many, sport is a bit of a chore, but making it social can add some pleasure to activities that are otherwise hard work. Employers might want to consider motivating the team by introducing an online channel for wellbeing and fitness, where everyone can share hints and tips and articles on the topic.

Introducing a fitness club including a programme of activities can do a lot to get people moving throughout the day. Employers can set up, or encourage employees to start up, team sports clubs, like work football or netball teams.

It could also be fun to incentivise physical activity, tapping into everyone's competitive streak. Managers could create friendly competition that encourages employees to get active for a prize, which could be cash, a voucher towards new fitness equipment or a fitness tracker.

2. Cycle to Work

Data from Sodexo Engage has revealed the pandemic led to a cycle to work boom. This surge was likely generated by a number of factors - an aversion to the cramped confined spaces often found on public transport and a new-found love for

the great outdoors created by lockdowns and the many walks we all endured. With many staff now back to commuting and working from the office, managers will need to prepare for cycling staff members.

Equipping the workplace with facilities, such as bike racks and showers will ensure staff feel comfortable. But managers can also encourage team members to get on their bikes by offering tailored benefits. Cycle to Work schemes allow employees to pay for bikes and biking equipment through salary sacrifice. Making physical activity accessible for employees will be a motivating factor for many staff members to get fit.

3. Take advantage of lunch breaks

Shockingly, only 49 per cent take a lunch break if they have lots on. It's a familiar situation for many of us - the workload piles up and lunch is the first thing to be sacrificed, but this time is precious and without breaks, staff risk getting burned out.

It's important managers make it clear that lunch is critical, through talking to staff or ensuring meetings don't occur during this period. Employees can use this time to relax and reset, but they might also want

Employers might want to consider motivating the team by introducing an online channel for wellbeing and fitness, where everyone can share hints and tips and articles on the topic.

to get sporty during their break. In the winter, when it's pitch black after work, it's particularly important that staff have time during daylight hours to engage in physical activity.

4. Offer flexible working

It may sound strange but finding the time to exercise is often the hardest part. Trying to squeeze a gym class in with a 9-5 and various personal commitments is no easy feat. What's more, when working long hours, many people just want to make the most of their leisure time and relax.

However, being flexible with employees about when they start could give them time to exercise before coming to work, or if they can take a longer lunch to fit in a gym class in the middle of the day.

www.sodexoengage.com

Re-shaping accounting in business

As the world evolves and more business open, so does the accountancy profession. Every year there are over 600 thousand new companies being opened in the UK, and many directors find themselves in need of professional accounting advice. From simple bookkeeping to budgeting, forecasting, and navigating government schemes, accountants across the country help establish and run successful businesses benefiting the society in the process.

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Returning to the office – not just where you work, but how you work

The start of the pandemic saw many businesses congratulating themselves on the pivotal achievement of relocating the majority of their office-based staff to home working. Now, the realities of getting employees back into the office are proving to be more challenging than locking down. *Matero Consulting* introduces *LBM* readers to a working methodology which leverages military experience of purpose, empowerment, and agile decision-making for the benefit of business change and turnaround agendas

Divergent camps have materialised between bosses. Some see working from home as being an aberration, conspiring against the benefits of in-person collaboration and the innovative energy of physical interaction. While advocating for a full return, other business leaders favour a more flexible hybrid model, which balances working between the home and the office. In contrast, according to the Office of National Statistics, 36 per cent of employees want to stay at home permanently and in a BBC commissioned YouGov survey earlier this year, 70 per cent polled predicted they would 'never return to offices at the same rate'. No doubt many are propelled by a belief in the greater productivity of working from the kitchen table or spare bedroom, a better work-life balance, and the spectre of returning to expensive, lengthy, and possibly risky, commutes.

Hard gig

But other workers will be desperate to get back to the office; not least those of a younger generation. Working in a cramped flat-share environment for over a year and a half is a hard gig. A situation that has been exacerbated by the deprivation of office based soft-skills learning, mentoring, social interaction, and a reduced ability to catch the selector's



Credit: Alex Kotliarskiy/Unsplash

eye when it comes to promotion. These factors are compounded, if a new employee has never set foot in the office or physically met their colleagues and management of the company they have joined.

The complexity of the issue is aggravated by ethical and legal factors. Variation in vaccine compliance between global jurisdictions, health and safety, mental health, and discrimination considerations, all herald risk. As do meeting employee expectations and retaining them if competitors offer more appealing workforce policies. And, of course Coronavirus, as the continuum of uncertainty in all of this, gets a vote too.

As a business leader, whichever position you take, whether it's allowing your employees to stay remotely, insisting on a hard return to work, or something in the middle, the debate is missing a critical element. If optimal working was challenging before this Covid-19, it's got a lot more complex and one of the enduring lessons of this perennial crisis is that actual way we work, rather than just where we work is key.

Empowered

Productivity, team performance, resilience, and well-being are not just factors of same space physical working. A critical aspect is also whether

employees have a sense of purpose, clarity regarding their role, and feel that they are empowered to deliver against it in a manner that aligns with a company mission they have faith in.

Regardless of location policy, developing new ways in which employees are expected and equipped to work, whether they are back in the office, staying at home or split between the two throughout the working week, is essential. Achieving this requires a real shift in the ethos of how firms work. Extending beyond lofty word statements, culture change has to be grounded in creating a structured discipline of better working behaviours, which requires the following six things:

1. A mission purpose with a clarity of unifying intent running as a single narrative throughout the organisation, where everyone understanding their part in the plan.
2. Empowered colleagues, where authority is devolved to allow teams to innovate and act within the intent.
3. Effective communications, which are formatted for teams to extrapolate their own specific tasks that align with the mission.
4. Collaborative mechanisms, which synchronise activity and cut across silos to embrace diversity of thought, while generating

accountability between dependencies.

5. An agile decision-making methodology, which is embedded, scalable and adaptive to pivot with pace and precision, while resilient and auditable to scrutiny.
6. The right behaviours of codified leadership and culture, through process, tools, and skills.

Regardless of whether colleagues are facing each other across a table or a Zoom screen, firms with these six principles in place will generate the mutual trust required between bosses and their people. Teams will be more motivated, industrious, and creative, while their leaders will be less focused on where their people work. Whether in the kitchen or office, or moving between them, their people will enjoy a greater well-being that comes with having a sense of purpose. Additionally, their companies will be more resilient for whatever Covid-19, or another black swan, throws at us next.

Matero Consulting has designed a new way of working methodology called *MECCAR: Mission Purpose, Empowerment, Communication, Collaboration, Agility and Right Behaviours*

www.matero.co.uk

MALCOLM HUGHES

Malcolm Hughes is one of the largest and fastest-growing survey companies in England, with offices also in Scotland and Wales. We offer a full range of innovative 3D modelling and BIM, measured building surveys, area referencing and modelling of right to light across a range of sectors, delivering projects on time and on budget for all varieties of customers.

Measured Building Surveys

Detailed surveys of buildings can include floor plans, sections, elevations, 3D models, roof surveys, right of light surveys and area measurement to international property measurement standards to include both NIA and GIA. We can provide these surveys for single dwellings, developments, retail units and larger complex buildings and sites.

We use state of the art technology to collect the data including total stations, laser scanners and UAVs (drones). These devices enable us to collect and measure data and produce accurate information of buildings. Bespoke monitoring solutions can be provided for structural movement or deformation.



Laser Scanning

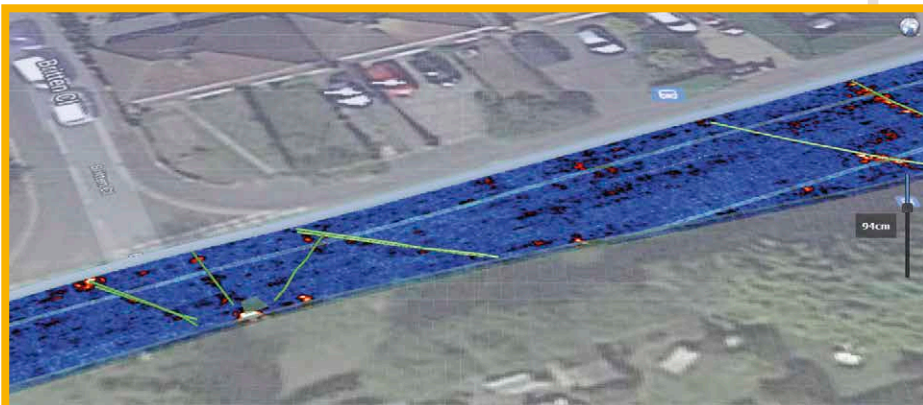
Laser scanning is now widely used in the survey profession for rapid data capture of all types of infrastructure. Malcolm Hughes can help advise you on the most appropriate survey methods to reduce risk and increase productivity.

Scan data can be delivered in a multitude of formats, whether you want to manipulate point cloud data in house or have us provide CAD drawings and models to suit your requirements, we can guide you and support you in this process. The image on the left shows point cloud data captured from UAV within central London.



Utility Surveys

Risk management is central to our approach. Our specialist utility survey teams can locate and trace most buried services assisting with design and minimising disruption on site. Our non-invasive techniques utilise the most recent advances in technology to capture hidden data whilst removing risk to our employees and the public and saving you, our client, significant cost.



News from the EU



Compiled by
Angelina Markousi



2022 Commission Work Programme

■ The Commission has adopted its 2022 Work Programme, setting out the next steps in its agenda towards a post-Covid-19 Europe that is greener, fairer, more digital, and more resilient. This Commission Work Programme contains 42 new policy initiatives across all six headline ambitions of President von der Leyen's Political Guidelines, building on her 2021 State of the Union speech. It also reflects the lessons learnt from the unprecedented crisis caused by the pandemic, while paying particular attention to the young generation thanks to the proposed European Year of Youth 2022.



Energy prices: Commission presents a toolbox of new measures

■ The Commission has adopted a Communication on Energy Prices, to tackle the exceptional rise in global energy prices, which is projected to last through the winter, and help Europe's people and businesses. The communication includes a 'toolbox' that the EU and its Member States can use to address the immediate impact of current prices increases, and further strengthen resilience against future shocks. Short-term national measures include emergency income support to households, state aid for companies, and targeted tax reductions. The Commission will also support investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency; examine possible measures on energy storage and purchasing of gas reserves; and assess the current electricity market design.



Review of EU economic governance launched

■ The European Commission has adopted a communication that takes stock of the changed circumstances for economic governance in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis and relaunches the public debate on the review of the EU's economic governance framework. The Communication follows President von der Leyen's commitment in the State of the Union address to build a consensus on the future of the EU's economic governance framework. The Commission had previously suspended this public debate, which was first launched in February 2020, to focus on responding to the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.



UK further boost for people applying for EU Settlement Scheme

■ The Home Office has announced a further £3 million to help vulnerable and at-risk EU citizens apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). The money will go to the network of grant funded organisations, which supports people across the UK in applying to the EUSS who have vulnerabilities such as language barriers or limited access to IT. This funding boost means the Home Office has now made £25 million in funding available for the network since 2019, which includes charities, local authorities, and community groups.



A stronger EU engagement for a greener, peaceful and prosperous Arctic

■ The High Representative and the Commission put forward their approach for a stronger EU engagement for a peaceful, sustainable, and prosperous Arctic. The Arctic region is of key strategic importance for the European Union, in view of climate change, raw materials as well as geostrategic influence. The Communication responds to these geopolitical, environmental, economic, security and social challenges and opportunities. It seeks to foster cooperation with partners on sustainable approaches to overcome them.



Green light given to new synthetic securitisation product

■ The European Commission approved, under EU State aid rules, the introduction of a new product in the form of guarantees on synthetic securitisation tranches under the European Guarantee Fund managed by the European Investment Bank Group to support companies affected by the coronavirus outbreak in the 22 participating Member States. With an envisaged dedicated budget of €1.4 billion, the new product is expected to mobilise at least €13 billion of new lending to small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) affected by the outbreak. This is a significant contribution to the overall target for the European Guarantee Fund to mobilise up to €200 billion of additional financing in the 22 participating Member States.



Healthy lifestyles for all

■ The Commission launched the HealthyLifestyle4All campaign to promote a healthy lifestyle for all, across generations and social groups, with the objective to improve the health and well-being of Europeans. Linking sport and active lifestyles with health, food and other policies, this two-year campaign involves civil society, non-governmental organisations, national, local, and regional authorities, and international bodies. All involved will implement several actions for Europeans to be more active and more mindful of their health.



EU Civil Protection celebrates 20th anniversary

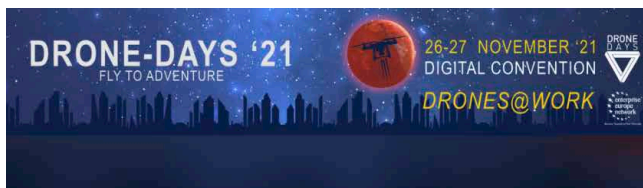
■ The European Union is marking the 20th anniversary of its EU Civil Protection Mechanism which has been activated more than 500 times to coordinate assistance people affected by natural disasters and other crises in Europe and worldwide. This has included millions of supplies of medical material during the COVID-19 pandemic, to dispatching emergency items following earthquakes and floods.



Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps become more inclusive

■ The Commission has adopted a framework to increase the inclusiveness and diversity of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes for the period 2021-2027. The measures deliver on the commitment by President von der Leyen's Commission to substantially reinforce both programmes, not only by allowing many more people to learn or volunteer in another country, but in specific, by reaching out to increasing numbers of people with fewer opportunities.

EVENTS



Registration Deadline: Friday 26 November 2021
Location: Online

This event is especially designed to provide European SMEs with pre-arranged meetings during which they can investigate new markets' opportunities to diversify their current portfolios of clients and domains. Anchored in DroneDays21 Convention, the B2B will bring EU participants new opportunities to further develop their business in a competitive way, via the civil and commercial application & use of drones.



Registration Deadline: Thursday 2 December 2021
Location: Online

This is a networking event dedicated to creating contacts to potential investors, customers, suppliers, developers, and cooperative partners within the emerging ocean plastic industry. It is an alternative to traditional conferences where the right people can often be difficult to find. At the event participants will have the opportunity to prebook online meetings with participating companies, thus maximizing efficiency. Participants include companies and institutions spanning all levels of the supply chain.



Registration Deadline: Tuesday 30 November 2021
Location: Online

In the framework of this international event the latest news, trends, and technologies in the field of sustainability and circular economy will meet, enabling the networking between companies and entities from different countries. Bilateral meetings will be organized with the main aim of favouring partnership and strategic alliances in the field of Circular Economy between companies from the European Union and Latin America through the formalization of technology and knowledge transfer agreements and the promotion of collaborative R&D projects.



Registration Deadline: Friday 10 December 2021
Location: Hybrid event, Vienna, Austria

This is a matchmaking event linking designers, tech companies, traditional enterprises, clusters, R&D institutions, and other entities representing or involved in creative industries. Apart from virtual bilateral business meetings giving the opportunity to generate new business contacts and boost innovation, the event will cover thematic presentations incl. IPR, current challenges in CCIs and technical aspects of co-operation between designers and industrial manufacturers.



Registrations for all events are now open

For further information contact the Enterprise Europe Network London office at enterprise.europe@londonchamber.co.uk

TW.WORKS

In Tunbridge Wells, corporates are in good company

Royal Tunbridge Wells has long been home to large corporates, but in recent times more than ever are committing to more space in the town, for the long-term.

The strong and diverse business

community is supported by a vibrant restaurant, retail and hotel offer, quick links to London and a pipeline of talent from the stellar local grammar schools.

With many Global and local

businesses now considering new, flexible space in the area to help their employees who live here commute less, we are seeing a post-Covid change towards greater flexibility and wellbeing.

“

Ross Feeney, CEO of Tunbridge Wells Together said:

“As a group, we believe the time is right to attract more corporates to Tunbridge Wells, whether this is for a large regional office ‘spokes’ or to sponsor and support employees’ flexible working requirements post-Covid by paying for local office space for them. Either way, Tunbridge Wells has all the elements to support businesses growing in the town. We believe

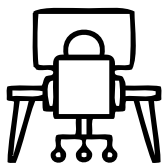
strongly that there is ample opportunity for investors to develop new grade A office space in the area, due to the growing demand for both small office operations and for larger corporates looking to escape London-priced floorplates. Given the year we have all experienced, it has also never been more important to consider better wellbeing and ways to better ‘support local’.”

”



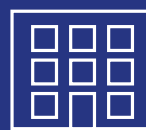
£496,619

Average house price
in TW compared to
£256,000 UK

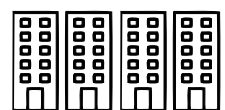


3,000

More commuters now
working from home



London corporates
shedding
1/3 to 50%
of space should
open a TW office



17%

Of retail space is
empty & could be
made into offices



5,000

New companies set
up in the last
5 years in TW



10,000

jobs in

10 years

Predicted pre-Covid
for TW



24

Days annually
saved by not
commuting



**LEGAL &
CREATIVE**

Fastest growing
sectors in TW

DEVELOPERS:

Why now is the time to Make Space in TW

There is a rapidly growing demand for office space in and around Tunbridge Wells as the business heart of Kent.

In the last two years, 200,000 sq ft of commercial space has been altered to residential under Permitted Development Rights.

We are hoping that now corporates, developers and investors alike see that now is the opportunity for commercial space to be retained or created, responding to the current real demand here.

The Local Plan is being drafted at the moment and there will be a bias towards the conversion of empty retail space (currently 15.9% of all retail units in the Borough) to office space or business centres. This is not without its challenges and we would like to see developers and landlords coming together to provide expertise to help us achieve this most effectively. We want the Government to consider business rates relief for retail premises that will be converted to offices to attract

more investment and to make lettings of empty retail space easier.

There are also many new housing developments under construction or planned over the next 5-10 years in and around the Borough. We would like to see some of these giving provision to flexible offices, which will attract buyers who need home office space in this new world.

Get in touch to find out more.

Follow us for more information and announcements via the hashtag #TWWorks on social channels.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US VIA OUR DEDICATED WEBSITE

WWW.TUNBRIDGEWELLS.WORKS



JOIN THE LIKES OF THESE CORPORATES IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS



Health



LOGISTICS UK



Thomson
Snell &
Passmore



Ten tips to protect data and devices

When making an online purchase, or creating an account online, it is tempting to save banking details and passwords for the sake of convenience. But a data leak from even one of these sources could cost you. With the multitude of devices, and the rapid shift to cloud storage, all our data is interconnected. Our accounts are synced, and financial data and password information is saved online knowingly and unknowingly. Data breaches are common and increasing, even on seemingly secure platforms. **Vanashree Chowdhury and Eleanor Barlow of SecurityHQ** provide these tips to help safeguard data and devices.

Securing your wi-fi network

Securing your wi-fi network and access points/routers is crucial to keep your data secure. If your network is not secure, it is easy for people to access it and steal data from your devices. It is equally as easy for bad actors to hijack your connection to conduct crime.

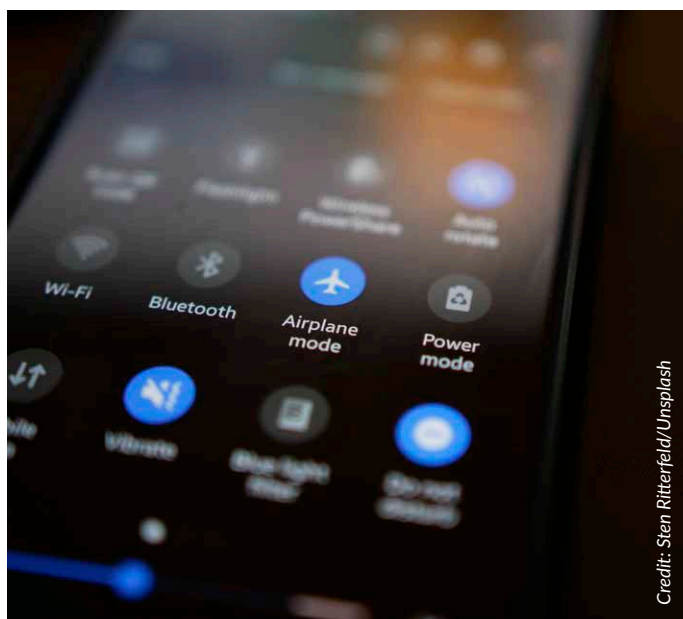
To ensure preliminary security, change the default password (it might be publicly known) for the administrator account that allows access to device configuration, to a strong password that follows security protocols. Similarly, change the default password and username for wi-fi network. Remember that your wi-fi username is often publicly visible, so avoid using personal details.

Disable Bluetooth and wi-fi in public

Bluetooth and Wi-Fi settings can be exploited if not disabled when not in use. Even with access restrictions and password protection in place, cybercriminals can hack into your device via Bluetooth to gain access to data such as emails, text messages, pictures, and videos. Do not perform online shopping, banking, or other tasks that involve sensitive data when on public wi-fi or in a public place.

Configure privacy settings

Often, default device privacy and browser settings are not configured to the user's advantage. To make devices more secure, customize advanced device privacy and browser settings. Block auto cookie and lo-



cation tracking. Disable auto-download and auto-run of Flash.

Use random passphrases

According to the FBI, 'Instead of using a short, complex password that is hard to remember, consider using a longer passphrase. A random set of letters, numbers and characters can be daunting to remember, and lead to users storing their passwords unencrypted or even writing them down. Instead, use random words and phrases in combination with standard password protocols. Words are easily remembered by the human brain, as opposed to a meaningless string of letters. For example: tH3sky1scle@rT0day (the sky is clear today). It is important that the words/phrases are random, at least 15 characters long, and not related to your personal information in any way. Use unique passphrases for every account and device.

Despite this trick, remembering multiple passphrases can be difficult. So safely store them in a password manager.

Keep social media private

One place that we often flaunt our information is on social media. We share our birth dates, photos, interests, and hobbies, and even holiday locations. Social engineers may carry out targeted attacks by extracting such information about an individual from their digital footprint.

Identifying spam profiles is relatively easy due to their questionable usernames but keep a check on every profile you add as a connection on social media platforms. Cybercriminals may impersonate the profile of someone you know,

to gain direct access to your information. Ensure that your online interactions do not reveal sensitive information about you. In addition to following standard password protocols for all your online accounts, enable two-factor authentication for added security. And regularly check if unknown devices are logged into your accounts.

Protect your personal identifiable information

Personally identifiable information (PII) such as phone number, birth date, and bank account details can be used to identify, locate, or contact an individual. Refrain from posting such information on publicly visible platforms, storing it unencrypted, or physically noting it down. Although unadvisable, at times we store PII such as passport details on our devices. Password-protect your devices and lock them when not in use. Be cautious of emails or phone calls that ask for sensitive information, even if they appear from a legitimate source.

Don't save information

Websites and browsers allow you to save sensitive data such as passwords and credit card information for future use, but do not save it. Store your passwords in a password manager, and sensitive information in encrypted files. For additional security of your finances, closely monitor your financial transactions to flag payments that have not been made by you and to react quickly.

Avoid unknown sites

According to Forbes, 'Google has registered 2,145,013 phishing sites

as of Jan 17, 2021.' Cyber criminals create thousands of fake sites, often spoofs of a legitimate site, to spread malware, carry out spam campaigns and phishing attacks. Check security protocols, certifications, and a secure payment gateway on websites.

Unknown websites might be a gateway to drive-by download attacks that aim to install malicious

Do not perform online shopping, banking, or other tasks that involve sensitive data when on public wi-fi or in a public place.

code on a victim's computer, via unintentional or auto-downloads. While configuring privacy settings, disable the auto-download function to avoid such attacks. Even while downloading trusted files or software, look out for unwanted add-ons or extensions being installed in the background.

Verify before you click

Links, pop-ups, and downloads can contain viruses and malware. Phishing emails are known to use fear-inducing or enticing tactics to manipulate the victim into submitting sensitive information. Make sure to verify the source before clicking on any links.

Carefully back-up data

Having a data back-up is advisable in case your files are damaged or inaccessible due to a cyber-attack. However, make sure you control where your data is uploaded and stored, and who has access to it. Devices such as smartphones might back-up your data on remote servers by default. To avoid sensitive data such as photos being accessible to people with the wrong intent, disable auto back-ups.

Report any suspicious activity

If you notice anything suspicious, report to your cyber security team instantly, so that immediate action can be taken to mitigate the cyber threat.

Vanashree Chowdhury is marketing and communications designer and Eleanor Barlow is content manager at SecurityHQ www.securityhq.com

Building better relationships

Dobuild's guide for residential projects

The principle underlying the success of a project is collaborative work. This comes with an integrated and cooperative team that includes the architect, the client, the contractor, and subcontractors.

We love working with architects who consider the client's dreams, needs, and well-being. A key part of this process is understanding the 'client-architect-contractor' relationship.

The relationship between all parties involves the client's requirements, expectations, and objectives achievable with their budget. The architect designs are based on the client's requirements, which can be optimised by working with the contractor for an efficient and cost-effective construction method. The architect will also prepare the construction tender that will become the employer's contract with the main contractor.

Solutions

Once the final design is approved and construction drawings are is-

sued, the main contractor and the architect must work together during the construction phase for the best outcome. During the construction stage, there may be a few items that require design and technical input, and that is where the architect and main contractor have to come up with the best solutions that work, given the site constraints.

We have concluded that communication is the answer to the client-architect-contractor relationship. We believe that a successful building project doesn't just start with construction. It requires work using a collaborative process to go above and beyond at every stage. It really makes a difference.

Dobuild is a London building contractor specialised in high-end house renovations, extensions, conversions and new builds. The company would like to thank architect Marie-Pierre Avgeri from Yellow Kite Architects and the Ryan family for their collaboration on this article.

www.dobuild.co.uk



Project: Victorian house renovation and rear extension

The works comprise the construction of a new wrap around rear extension to house, a new kitchen and living area including the renovation of the existing bedrooms and bathrooms as well as conversion of cellar space into a basement utility room.

Main Contractor: Dobuild Ltd
Architect: Yellow Kite Architects
Client: Mrs Emily and Mr James Ryan

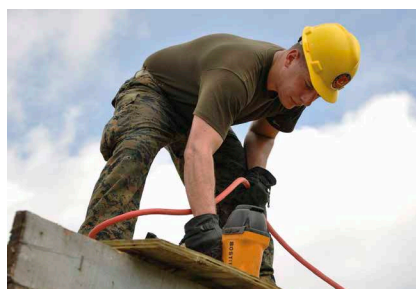
Advertising feature

Creating a Healthy, Safe and Prepared Working Environment

Accidents, emergencies, and disasters can strike anyone, anytime and anywhere. Nobody expects these incidents to occur, especially one that affects us personally, our colleagues, visitors, and the workplace as a whole. We all need to work together in creating a healthy, safe, and prepared work environment.

The successful implementation and management of an Occupational Health and Safety system requires a team approach. To succeed, the team needs to be prepared to work together to mould and develop the system and its structure in order to suit their unique work environment, structural layout, and requirements.

In addition to ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act, the provisions in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981, organisations must prepare, develop and practice a well thought out Evacuation Plan. Emergency response planning enables us to develop, implement and practice the most appropriate evacuation planning procedures for employees and the Health and Safety Team to follow in the event of an incident. The team usually



consists of trained First Aiders, Fire Wardens, Evacuation Marshals and Health and Safety Supervisors (Evacuation Controllers).

By conducting regular and at least annual evacuation drills, the organisation can expect a well-disciplined, informed, and organised reaction and response from all employees who are required to evacuate. The evacuation drill also facilitates the testing of the alarm system, evacuation chairs and any other special considerations that need to be made for vulnerable people.

Occupational Health and Safety should always be a priority for all workplaces requiring management's support through the allocation of human, financial and infrastructural resources as well as

encouraging a positive, no-blame, interactive and effective health and safety culture. Together with the support of an accredited and professional health and safety training and management system service provider, an organisation can ensure continual improvement and compliance.

OHS Compliance Ltd assists clients in creating healthy, safe, and prepared working environments, through health and safety, first aid, fire safety training and utilising logical and successful health and safety management systems. We are owner operated, focused on our clients, passionate about the quality of our products, services, and our company.

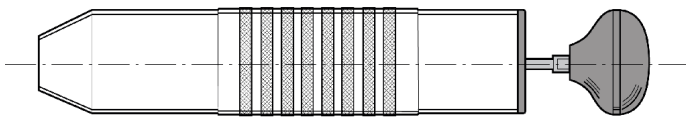
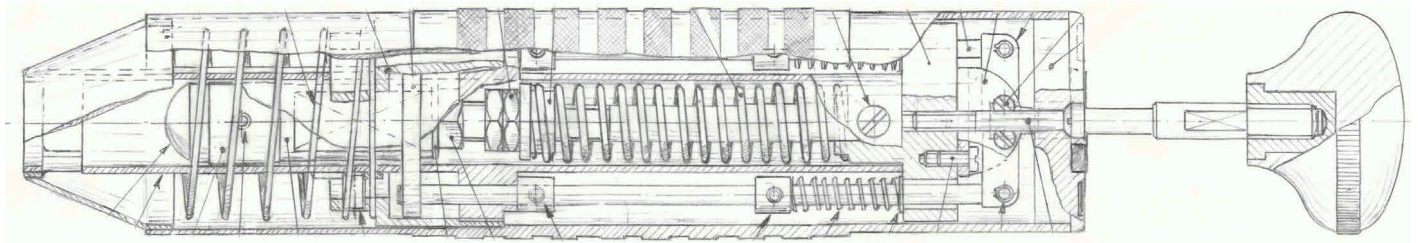
For further information, see our insert inside the magazine or contact:

helen@ohscompliance.co.uk
Tel: 0208 241 6495
www.ohscompliance.co.uk



Spring Impact Test Hammers

Making an Impact Worldwide!



History

Back in the 1960's, a BSi Technical Committee was seeking a solution to a requirement for repeatable impact testing of commercial products to ensure that plastic housings didn't expose live wiring when damaged.



Manufacture

An engineering company near Woking took on the British Standards Institution challenge.

"Made in England"

The company already produced electrical switches for domestic appliances including washing machines and hair-care products.

They also had a requirement for product testing and had the resources to design and manufacture spring impact hammers, meeting the BSi specification. Spring Hammers were produced in-house until 1980 when the sales, assembly and calibration operation was continued by Lansbury International and the component production was by a series of local engineering companies from Knaphill, Old Woking and West Byfleet, so all produced locally.



0328

Calibration

To calibrate a spring hammer and provide traceability of results, a compound pendulum is

used which is calibrated by a falling weight. The Impact energy of a falling mass is known from first principles: $\text{Energy} = \text{mass} \times \text{gravity} \times \text{height}$. Traceability was initially provided by Local trading standards, however, customers soon required better traceability, so the internationally recognised NAMAS accreditation was achieved in 1990. During the accreditation application, it was necessary to determine the precise local value of gravity at the calibration bench and "g" was established to 5 decimal places. The quality systems, equivalent to ISO9001, have now morphed into an ISO17025 UKAS accreditation for impact energy calibration.

Customers from A to Z...

Following BSi as the first customer, thousands of spring hammers have now been sold around the world... to national standards institutions and product test houses, including:

AMP, BSi, Canadian Standards, Dimplex, ERA, Fluke, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard, Indian Standards, JVC, Kingfisher, LEC, Mitsubishi, National Panasonic, Osram (GEC), Philips, QA Testing, RS Components, Sri Lanka Institute, Testing Certification Australia, Underwriters Laboratories, Valor Heating, W.H. Smith, Xerox, York EMC, Zannussi.



Lansbury International

The Spring Hammer manufacturer
www.SpringHammer.co.uk
 Knaphill, Woking, GU21 2EP



What is it? Spring Impact Test Hammer
What does it do? Delivers a repeatable impact energy
Who uses it? Manufacturers of commercial electrical products
Why does it need calibrating? To deliver a consistent impact

LANSBURY
INTERNATIONAL



LANSBURY BUSINESS ESTATE

Looking for a

Regional Office Hub

near **WOKING?**

Look at Lansbury!

Flexible Leases, Free Car parking

Good Local Facilities and Transport Links
Site Cafe, Security, Meeting Rooms & WiFi
from Desk Rental to 10,000 sq ft Office
(and everything in between)

Estate management & maintenance on site

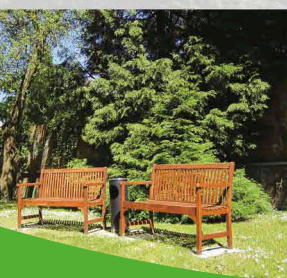
Are your Staff living near Woking?

Why not let them work from a flexible office nearer Home,
on an attractive estate with landscaped trees and flowers
rather than commute to London, saving them time and cost!
and maybe improving their wellbeing with a walk or cycle...
Why not give us a bell!



OnSite

*We've been
growing business
since 1980...*



**Contact us on
01483 387 302
for details of your new Regional Hub!**



Back on the streets

October saw the capital's streets thronged with runners as the London Marathon was back in all its glory after an 18-month gap

Last year it was limited to the elite runners who competed on a special course 'behind closed doors' in St James's Park. This year in the Virgin Money-sponsored event they were pursued – 'followed' may be more accurate – along the traditional course by nearly 40,000 other athletes of various levels of ability as well as a similar number of virtual runners, making it the largest marathon staged anywhere in the world.

Serenaded

LBM was in position to see the last-minute preparations in Tooley Street, Bermondsey before the elite men and women powered over Tower Bridge. A Santander bike ride up to Parliament Square was not quick enough to see the leading groups come through but was in ample time to see the massed runners cheered on and even serenad-

ed by a choir to get them through the last couple of miles. Millions of pounds were raised for a wide range of charities as the event continues to capture the public's imagination 40 years after it was established.

Satisfaction

Ethiopian Sissy Lemma and Kenyan Joyciline Jepkosgei won the men's and women's elite races in fast times on a sunny but crisp day, ideal for both running and spectating. Witnessing their athletic prowess was a privilege as was seeing the personal satisfaction gained by the amateur runners in their individual struggles.

Virgin Money have chosen not to extend its sponsorship deal with London Marathon Events beyond this race. Next year Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) will become the title sponsor in a six-year partnership. TCS has been the technology partner of the event since 2016 and developed an app to support participants in the first virtual London Marathon during the Covid19 pandemic last year.



Christmas at Buckingham Palace

Buckingham Palace serves as both the office and London residence of HM The Queen, and is one of the few working royal palaces remaining in the world today. With their gilded ceilings and glittering chandeliers, the State Rooms provide a magnificent setting for ceremonial occasions and are furnished with many of the greatest treasures from the Royal Collection.

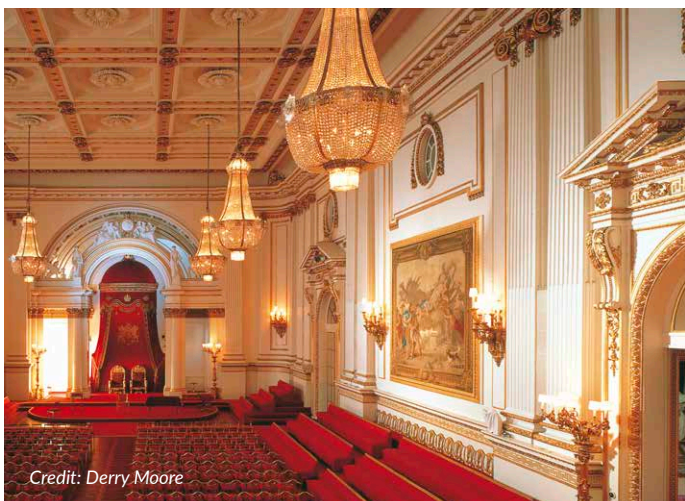
Explore

A Buckingham Palace Guided Tour (available on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays until 30 January 2022) gives visitors the opportunity to explore rooms used by members of the Royal Family for official entertaining. These include the Throne

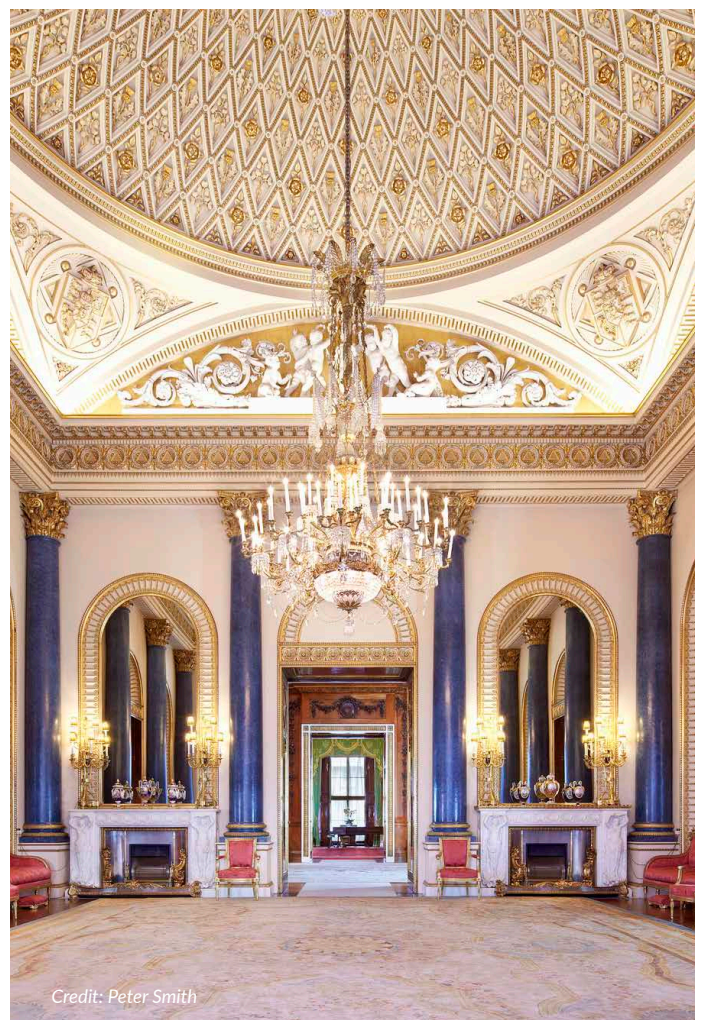
Room, used for the wedding photographs of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge; the Ballroom, created during Queen Victoria's reign and still used today for Investitures and State Banquets; the Music Room, often used as the setting for royal christenings; and the White Drawing Room, with its concealed door that allows members of the Royal Family to enter and leave the State Rooms discreetly.

Led by an expert guide, visitors will have the opportunity to experience these world-famous rooms in groups of up to 30 people, and will receive a complimentary copy of the Palace's official souvenir guidebook to take home.

www.rct.uk



Credit: Derry Moore



Credit: Peter Smith



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Some ways legacy systems are similar to New York's Subway... and some ways they aren't

Whenever I visit New York, writes Artur Skowroński,

I use the subway system. It's the fastest way to travel through the city, also the cost-effective one. However, it is also one crying "I'm old and underfunded" even though New York is officially the world's wealthiest city for real estate

I couldn't shift that paradox from my mind. It was so captivating that I decided to dig a little deeper. What I found taught me a lot about the internal dynamics of complex systems – with some lessons easily transferable to mature IT systems as well.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, New York City experienced an unprecedented infrastructure boom. Its metro system grew from a single line in 1904 to a network hundreds of miles long by the 1920s. What the city did with public transportation was referenced as a miracle of engineering, which was replicated by cities worldwide, especially while rebuilding destroyed cities in Europe after the Second World War.

Then something happened: since 1940, New York has not opened another new subway line, aside from a handful of small extensions and connections.

Political champion

This is because New York's subway system is so big and old that nearly all available funds are spent on maintenance every year. As a result, few resources are left to invest in the infrastructure. What's more, to start such a significant initiative, you have to have widespread support and a political champion who will fight for it. Thus, preserving the status quo is more straightforward – even if it's well known that improving public transportation is better for people living in the city and the environment.

Through the years, the subway has been shaping the city of New York. Currently, it is (while important) just a relict of the glorious past.

Right moment

The similarities should be striking if you are working in a seasoned, successful company with a mature infrastructure. If you are still on the market, that means you invested in

The similarities should be striking if you are working in a seasoned, successful company with a mature infrastructure.

the technology at the right moment. However, there is a big chance that the right moment was twenty years ago. Since then, your technology stack has suited you well. Now many places are not extensible anymore – just like New York's Subway.

There is nothing inherently wrong with that comparison. Subway is an essential part of New York's infrastructure, helping more than four million people daily get from one place to the other. It got old but is still an actual bloodstream of the wealthiest cities in the world – as mainframes or convoluted ETLs are a bloodstream of a lot of companies.

However, with all these already mentioned similarities, there is one crucial difference – New York's Subway doesn't have more flexible, agile competition. One with an ability to react to the market changes in a far quicker manner.

New players

Earlier this year the Bank of England published an analysis, *The Future of Finance* – our response, exploring possible changes of the financial system that might happen in the next decade. The share amount of its content covers challenges that come with incumbents. While unnamed in the analysis market, mentioned incumbents can be easily recognized as companies like Revolut or NuBank – representatives of the swiftly growing FinTech space. The publication draws the picture of the soon-to-be clash happening between seasoned market participants and new players.

Digital transformation

One of the crucial battlefields will be technology. Digital transformation is often perceived as a high investment. However, due to competition, current giants risk falling into obsolescence, especially without a modern IT landscape, adaptable to the market realities and customer demands. That is coming from Silicon Valley or other startup hubs and China and other emerging markets, which were able to start from scratch on the later stage, without the baggage of the past initiatives – successful, but created in the previ-

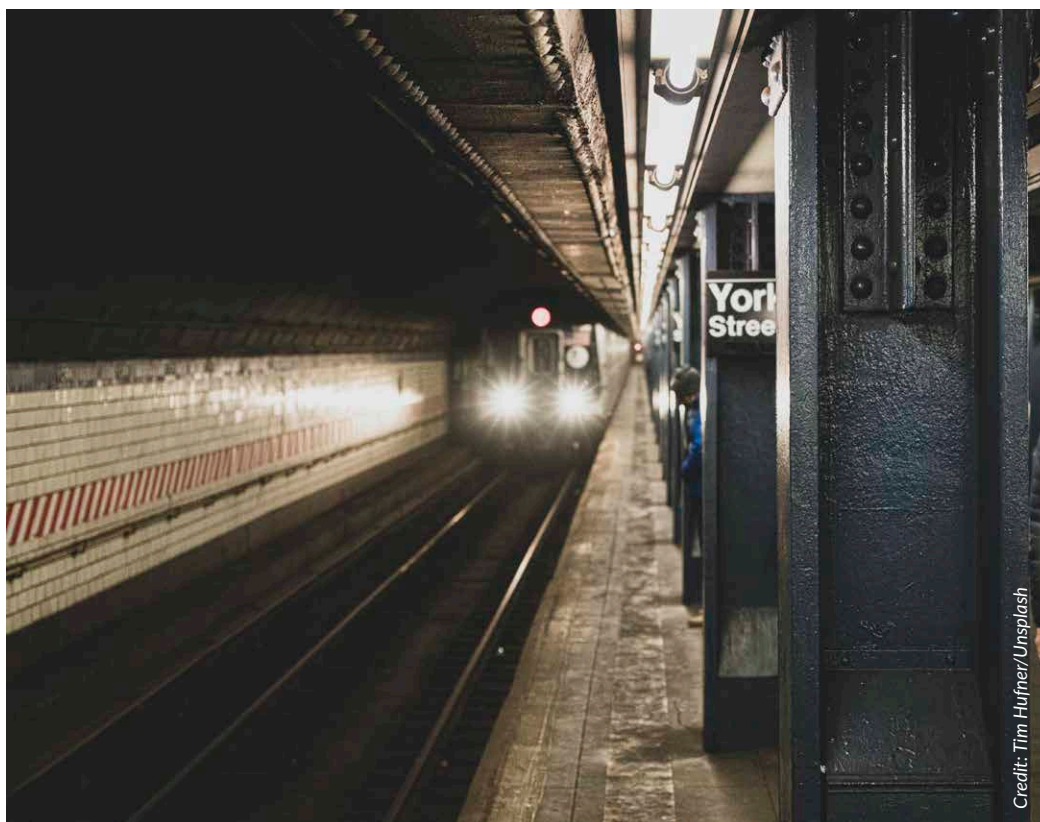
ous paradigm in mind.

There is an industry-spread joke that the Covid-19 pandemic was a major 'stakeholder' of digital transformation initiatives globally. But, interestingly, it had an impact on the subway systems. Recent data from Metropolitan Transit Authority show subway ridership remains down about 50 per cent during the weekdays compared to 2019. That change is partially due to fear of new virus variants but a broad shift of remote work enabled by the embrace of modern technologies by many companies is reducing the role of public transport.

Powerful

That is why I consider New York Subway's metaphor so powerful. It presents the scale of a challenge coming with modernization and various possible stakeholders that need to be taken into account. However, it also highlights the fact that technology can find solutions that were previously unavailable. Sometimes, it is worth thinking outside of the box, with a fresh mind – effects can be surprising.

Artur Skowronski is tech lead at VirtusLab
www.virtuslab.com





Rethinking business growth strategies

The Business Show - Europe's largest - returns on 24-25 November at London. Book your free ticket via the website below. The show is vital if you are looking to rethink your business growth strategy by introducing you to marketing consultancy businesses. Or if you are a marketing firm that would like to exhibit at our show then register your interest via the website

Ahead of the show's organisers have outlined four typical types of growth strategy that may apply to your business.

Product development strategy

Businesses can grow their market share by developing new products or modifying existing products for their consumers in that market to help create new business.

For example, Netflix started out as a DVD rental platform. Now, it is one of the most popular platforms on the market. Netflix's shift towards streaming media is a great example of evolving alongside market trends. After gaining a license for existing media, they started looking for new products to offer consumers and decided on producing original content shows.

A key point to take away here is that Netflix identified a need in the market and developed a product to address it.

Market development strategy

Businesses can develop new segments of the market, expand their user base, or expand their current users' usage of their product to help grow their market share. Essentially, this means targeting audiences that have not yet been reached or are not yet being served.

For example, leading footwear brands like Adidas and Nike have entered international markets for expansion. These brands are perfect examples of market development because they continue to expand their brands across new global markets.

For SMEs, this strategy would mean expanding from a current market to another where its product does not



currently compete.

Product penetration strategy

Market Penetration strategy allows a brand to take an existing product or service to an already thriving market with high demand. A business then begins drawing in a larger share of the entire market, eventually draining competitors of opportunity and money.

For example, Coca-Cola has been consistently ranked as the top soft drink brand worldwide, with a global brand value of over \$71 billion. Other soft drink brands manufactured and sold by Coca-Cola include Diet Coke, Sprite, and Fanta. Due to the incredible strength of Coca-Cola's brand, the company has been able to utilise market penetration on an annual basis by creating an association between Coca-Cola and Christmas, such as through their Christmas advert, which helps to boost their sales during the festive period.

Theoretically, a brand wants to eliminate all competition, completely owning all the market share for a given product or service.

Diversification strategy

Diversification strategy is when a product or service is completely new and is being introduced into an entirely new market.

Disney was once known just for Disney movies and theme parks like Disneyland and Disney World. The company diversified by purchasing other companies such as ESPN, ABC, Disney cruise lines, and Pixar. Today, only 32 per cent of Disney's profits come from movies and parks. Its most profitable growth comes from new products in new markets.

Note however that diversification is very risky and there is no guaranteed way to confirm the success of this strategy.

Tickets are free and available at www.greatbritishbusinessshow.co.uk

SPONSORED COLUMN

Fake News, Misinformation and the Thought Leader



By Yogesh Shah, CEO, iResearch Services

Are fake news and misinformation the same?

Fake news is a pervasive problem in today's increasingly connected world, costing the global economy \$78 billion each year. Its definition is in the name - deliberately misleading information disguised as news. We often use 'fake news' to refer to inaccurate information - but is it really the same as misinformation?

In a society engaging in divisive discourse, where the abundance of content outstrips moderation, we are exposed to (and must constantly evaluate) the veracity of the information we receive. To equate fake news with misinformation, however, would be to discount the complexity of the latter.

Fake news is the poster child of misinformation; uninformed misrepresentation of facts is its overlooked sibling.

The misinformation network is always evolving and there are different approaches to uncover its structure. It can involve an intent or lack of intent to deceive.

Fake news is only one facet of disinformation: a form of misinformation. Misinformation is an umbrella term, regardless of intention, while disinformation involves specific intent to deceive.

Types of disinformation

Disinformation - which maintains the underlying intent to deceive - is prominent due to the havoc it can cause.

An interim report on "Disinformation and Fake News" by the UK House of Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport, categorises disinformation as:

- Fabricated content
- Manipulated content

- Imposter content
- Misleading content
- False context of connection

Satire and parody

iResearch Services surveyed 1000 consumers and 600 business leaders globally about misinformation. Fake news categories dominated, with both groups surveyed agreeing that, of all types of disinformation, manipulated content has the biggest impact on society. Fake news is a pressing problem, but respondents acknowledged it is not the only misinformation issue businesses have to worry about.

Both business leaders and consumers acknowledged the prevalence of inaccurate information, without the intention to deceive. This is a stark reminder to businesses: when it comes to misinformation, fake news is a significant challenge, but not the only one.

What does this mean for businesses?

94% of business leaders said misinformation poses a problem. It's not just fake news, but the whole misinformation network. Organisations need to understand the evolving nature of its infrastructure to defend themselves and their customers. This is where Thought Leadership is a valuable tool. Through creating research-based, factual, educational content, backed up by evidence and informed opinion; and by disseminating this consistently across all communications channels, businesses can communicate truth, trends, challenges and opportunities on the issues that matter for consumers and industry, cementing their position as an authority and trusted source of knowledge and insights.



Find out more about the risks of misinformation to businesses and suggested solutions in the iResearch Services Misinformation report. www.iresearchservices.com



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Pre-Nuptial Agreements – your questions answered



by **Monika Gill and Sharan Bhinder-Dhonsi**

Why should you consider a Pre-nuptial Agreement?

According to the Office for National Statistics, 42 per cent of marriages in England Wales end in divorce.

What is Pre-nuptial Agreement?

A Pre-nuptial Agreement is a legal document that is drawn up between two parties, prior to a marriage. It sets out how assets and income will be divided in the event of a marital breakdown. Pre-nuptial Agreements must be drafted and executed prior to the marriage.

When is a Pre-nuptial Agreement appropriate?

A Pre-nuptial Agreement is appropriate when there is a disparity between the parties' assets and/or income, for example where one

party is a high earner, where there is family wealth or where parties wish to protect assets for children from previous relationships or marriages.

Are Pre-nuptial Agreements legally binding in England and Wales?

Pre-nuptial agreements are not legally binding in England and Wales, despite being valid in many European countries as well as Canada, Australia, and the USA.

However importantly, Pre-nuptial Agreements are persuasive to the Court and in the case of *Radmacher v Granatino* [2010] UKSC 42, the Supreme Court said:

"The court should give effect to a nuptial agreement that is freely entered into by each party with a full appreciation of its implications unless in the circumstances prevailing it would not be fair to hold the parties to their agreement"

In this case the Court upheld the Pre-nuptial Agreement to protect the wife's pre-marital wealth, but

it was varied to meet the financial needs of the children.

How to ensure that a Pre-nuptial Agreement will be upheld

The Court has clarified that both parties to a Pre-nuptial Agreement should take independent legal advice. In *Radmacher v Granatino* [2010] UKSC 42, the Court clarified that

"In most cases it is necessary and in every case it is desirable that the party against whose claim a Prenuptial contract is raised should have received independent legal advice prior to entry into it. Why so? Because proof of receipt of independent legal advice is often the only, and always the simplest way of demonstrating that party entered into it knowingly..."

Further, any Pre-nuptial Agreement must be in a form of a Deed, which means that the document must be in writing, the parties to the Deed must sign it before witnesses and it must be intended to be a Deed, be delivered and be dated.

Both parties to a Pre-nuptial Agreement should provide full financial disclosure. This is generally interpreted as both parties having sufficient information to make an informed decision as to the other's financial circumstances and to enter into a Pre-nuptial Agreement with a full understanding of its implications.

The terms of the Pre-nuptial Agreement should be substantially fair, for example the agreement should provide for each party's basic needs to be met and those of the children of the family in the event of a divorce. If any assets are to be ring fenced from any division upon divorce, these should be clearly defined within the Pre-nuptial Agreement.

If there are international assets, advice must be sought from the relevant country and any jurisdictional issues should be determined.

Neither party felt pressurised by the other party to enter into the agreement i.e., there should be no undue influence, duress or fraud, otherwise the agreement will be void. The Pre-nuptial Agreement must be signed no later than 21 days before the wedding and ideally several months prior.

And finally, the Pre-nuptial

Agreement should be reviewed every 3-5 years or when a significant event occurs to ensure it remains fair and relevant for the parties and their circumstances.

What to include in a Pre-Nuptial Agreements?

It is important to establish what would happen to the parties' properties and how they would be divided, also inherited assets or trust interests, cash savings, Investments, joint assets and properties before marriage such as personal belongings, pensions, debts, spousal main-

The Court will not uphold any clause within a Pre-nuptial Agreement which is deemed to be unreasonable or unfair.

tenance provisions, arrangements for children and pets.

When will a Pre-nuptial Agreement or terms within it, be disregarded?

The Court will not uphold any clause within a Pre-nuptial Agreement which is deemed to be unreasonable or unfair.

The Court will always have jurisdiction in the event of a divorce. If one party no longer wishes to adhere to the terms of the Pre-nuptial Agreement, finances may still have to be determined by the Court.

Circumstances can change, and in the event of a dispute, the Court will look at your circumstances as they are at the time of divorce, not when the agreement was made. What may have been fair at the time of the agreement might not be considered fair if the parties' circumstances have changed significantly.

Monika Gill and Sharan Bhinder-Dhonsi are solicitors at PCM Solicitors LLP. Call 020 3096 7500 for a free initial consultation regarding Pre-nuptial Agreements or any other family law matters. www.pcm-law.net

PCM
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First Intuition – Where people count

At FI we put our learners first – our students and apprentices have not missed a day of their courses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our expertise in both online and classroom teaching meant that we immediately switched our courses to a virtual classroom delivery when the country went into lockdown in March 2020, ensuring that all of our learners continued to progress with their training and development.

We were also the first professional education provider in the London region to reintroduce classroom teaching. Many learners value the interaction, energy and focus a classroom course offers, and this summer we began to transition our courses back into the classroom at our teaching centre in Fitzrovia.

We firmly believe that education is about experiences:

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- watching how others are learning and relating to their experience
- a tutor who sees which students are struggling and offers support



- peer pressure and social competition
- time management when it means more to get to class than simply getting out of bed

First Intuition supports 100s of businesses in London each year in the training and development of teams in accountancy and finance, via both apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship routes, classroom and virtual classroom courses. Our AAT, ACCA, CIMA and ICAEW programmes are fully accredited, with students achieving high pass rates.

If you would like to speak to a member of our team to discuss your finance training needs, contact us at ClientSupport@fi.co.uk to arrange a call – we'd be happy to help.

first intuition
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How London rates in wellbeing at work

A new Safety & Wellbeing Index by Phoenix Health & Safety amalgamates mental health, sickness, injury, crime and death rates in each city to find the best places to live and work

When deciding on where to live, many factors come into consideration, but something we rarely consider is whether it offers safe working environments and a better work-life balance.

Mental health issues in the last year alone have increased by five per cent in the UK1, and with it, absence rates have increased. Mental health issues can take over 7.5 times longer to recover from than physical illnesses and it is vital that we take care of ourselves and choose wisely where to live and work.

Phoenix Health & Safety, UK health & safety training experts, have amalgamated and analysed five data sources from official national statistics to reveal the best and worst cities for your safety and wellbeing.

The Safety & Wellbeing Index analyses each city, rating them on five essential factors for safety and wellbeing and scores them on points out of 100. The chart weighs each factor, calculates a weighted total

out of 100 (the lower the score, the safer the city).

The five contributing factors are:

- Non-fatal injuries in the workplace
- Sickness absence rates
- Mental health rates
- Local crime rates
- Death rates

The best cities for your safety & wellbeing

In a three-way tie, Swindon, Luton and London share the title of the safest cities to live and work in the UK.

Each city averages out as great places to live and work, with low crime rates - Swindon boasts the third-lowest crime rate in England, risks of injury - Luton sets a standard with zero workplace injuries per capita of 1,000, and sickness - London's rate of sickness is equally low - indicating an extremely low-level metric compared to other cities.

Swindon and Luton are both cities that have moved towards service and retail-based economies, away from the riskier industries of construction and manufacturing. London is known as the economic heart of the UK for a good reason. While it has a wide variety of industries, many international headquarters

are located here, resulting in a glut of blue-collar jobs for the people working and living in the capital.

Reading comes in fourth, with a workplace death rate on one alongside a physical and mental health rating in the single digits, it's clear

that it is a city that takes both its employee safety seriously.

www.phoenixhsc.co.uk/blog/best-cities-for-safety-and-wellbeing

How to improve workplace wellbeing and safety

Nick Higgison, managing director at Phoenix Health & Safety offers three key tips

- Take mental health as seriously as physical health - By creating a culture in which employees know, for example, they can take a sick day for mental health-related issues equally as they could if they had a physical illness, you are creating a safer environment for people to work in. Employees will feel more comfortable sharing information which can lead to much better mental health in the workplace, and in turn, increase productivity.
- Reward employees for safe behaviour - When businesses offer a reward system for following safe behaviour, such as ensuring the correct processes are undertaken throughout their day-to-day role, it not only

reinforces this to the workforce but would likely lead to less workplace injury. Others tend to follow suit as they understand the best way to be recognised for their hard work is to do things in the correct manner rather than the fastest way.

- Provide regular meetings on workplace safety - In many cases, health & safety training is taught when onboarding staff, although a one-off approach will not suffice when keeping your workplace safe continuously over the years. Regular health & safety training allows the business to refresh and remind employees of their duty to follow protocols and how this can impact their safety. It also allows staff an opportunity to ask any questions and offer an open flow of communication in the business.



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Six in-demand skills for the next decade

The 'double disruption' of the pandemic and the 'automation boom' has transformed the working world. In fact, the World Economic Forum estimates that by 2025, 85 million jobs may fade into obscurity due to technological advancements. However, 97 million more may emerge to meet the demands of future tech. **Alex Hattingh**, chief people officer at Employment Hero, predicts six skills that will continue to grow in demand as we get to grips with a remote-first, digital future of work

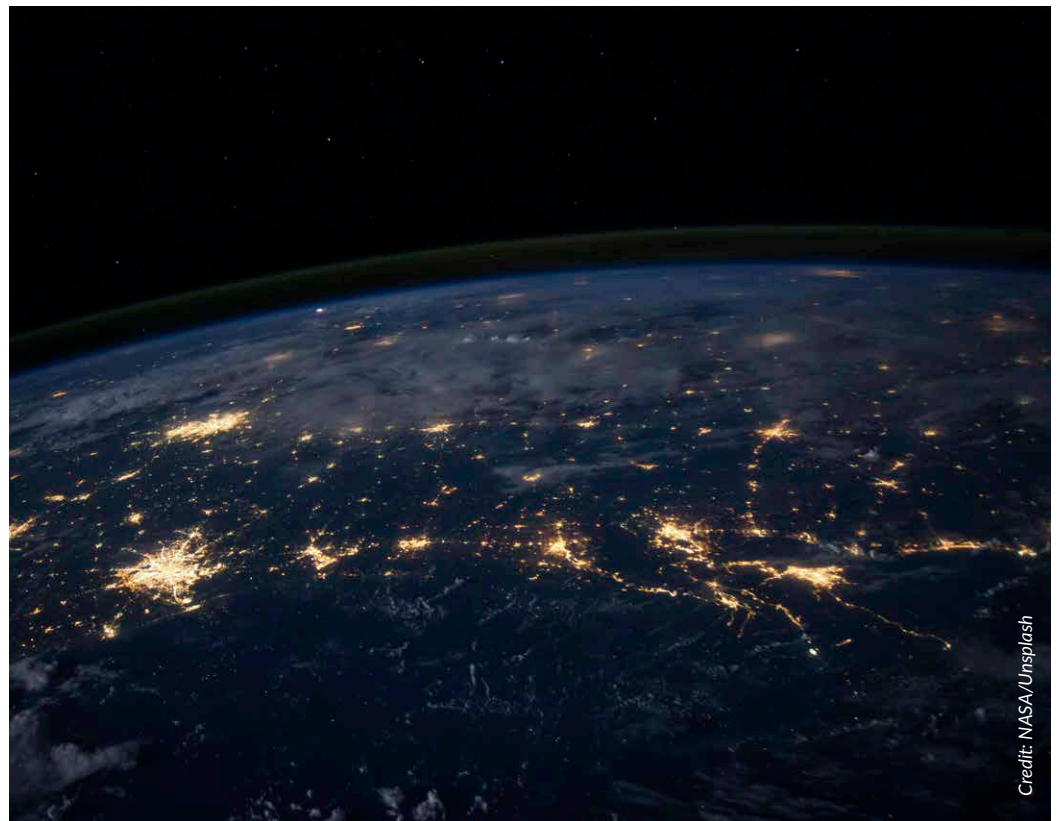
1. Creativity and innovative thinking

"The night was still dark and the moon shone through. The river was a pale, ghostly outline through the tall trees of the hills. He could hear a distant car horn. The moonlight streamed through the tall, dark windows, illuminating the face of an old woman that was leaning on a wall."

Do you find the above passage spooky? Does knowing that it was generated by artificial intelligence (AI) make it spookier? Many people point to examples like this in fear of what AI could produce creatively in the future. But in reality, computers are still far removed from what the human brain can achieve. While computers are bound by programming, the human brain can innovate quickly, create endlessly, and openly imagine and dream. Human creativity is not just reserved for artistic industries, creative thinking is at the core of innovation across the board. It's a powerful business tool that will become even more important as technology advances and automation takes over methodical tasks.

2. Complex problem solving

Let's be honest, the next 10 years are going to reveal some extremely complex problems to solve. From tackling climate change to successfully emerging as a global community after Covid-19, there are going to be some multi-dimensional challenges to navigate in the next decade. During any time of major change and development, complex problem solving is one of the most important skills to have in your toolkit. Complex problem solvers will be able to clearly define an issue, take into account various factors and perspectives, and deliver solu-



While computers are bound by programming, the human brain can innovate quickly, create endlessly, and openly imagine and dream.

tions that will be favourable by all stakeholders. It's a difficult skill and one that takes organisation, consideration and strong articulation – and that's why it will be so valuable in the coming years.

3. Analytical Reasoning

Big data is no longer a resource that only big businesses utilise. Now, and into the future, smaller businesses can access analytics that give relevant insights to their customers and audiences. Whether this is pulling numbers from Google Analytics, social media or an e-commerce platform, these numbers can help shape any business strategy and plans for growth. The access we have to insightful data is growing, but this means little without having the right people in place to understand and evaluate it.

4. People management

Human resources is an area that has

seen a dramatic evolution over the past few years. Long gone are the days of the stereotypical role of the HR manager that kept records, sorted paperwork, and held dry annual performance reviews. HR is now a dynamic field that allows innovative individuals to align and inspire companies to perform at their very best. Now very much a strategic role, HR is critical to ensuring that companies can achieve their goals, influence a positive culture, connect with great talent and continue to grow. They will also be essential in facilitating the very upskilling we're talking about in this article. While strong people management will continue to be an in-demand skill for the next decade, that isn't to say it won't continue to evolve.

5. Negotiation

Negotiation is one of those soft skills that is often overlooked. In some ways, this goes hand-in-hand with analytical reasoning. You may have the most compelling numbers possible and you may have even drawn great actionable items from these numbers. But without the negotiation skills to leverage these numbers for change, you can't achieve much. Negotiation is no longer just a great business skill for securing the big deals. It is a key part of balancing great ideas with analytical trends, and it will be a key interpersonal

skill in working with managers, clients, teams and customers over the next decade.

6. Tech literacy... and the willingness to embrace it

Have you ever worked for a company that's been resistant to digital innovation? Maybe they struggled to transfer their documents to the cloud, maybe they were resistant to experimenting with new software, or maybe they just had an old school approach to working. Whatever the reason, they are at major risk of being left behind if they don't dial up their technology literacy quickly. This is one of the most obvious, but also the most important skills on the list. With Covid-19, we've been exposed to the difficulty of not being prepared for digital-based work. A huge mistake would be to think that this is going to become less important. Remote and digital working is the new normal now for companies all over the world. It allows businesses to work efficiently, find great talent outside their home locations, and keep their employees happy. But of course, tech literacy is essential for these roles. Staff must be across digital communication channels, task management systems, cloud HR software and more if they are going to succeed in the future.

<https://employmenthero.com/uk>



Hope on the water

The Boat of Hope, philanthropist Bernie Hollywood OBE's latest campaign to raise funds and awareness for children and young people's mental health issues, was launched at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich in October

Shocked by the impact of the past year on young people's mental well-being, Hollywood is taking on a solo

row of 3,000 nautical miles across the Atlantic Ocean, to publicise the issue and raise funds for charities Samaritans and Love Rowing. Gillian Keegan MP, Minister for Mental Health, unveiled the specially commissioned Rannoch boat, in which Hollywood will be taking on a transatlantic row hoping to raise £1million.

www.boatofhope.com

The economic value of English law

New research for LegalUK by economics consultancy Oxera and funded by the legal industry has established how the value of English law goes far beyond benefits to the legal sector and underpins hundreds of trillions of dollars of annual business activity domestically and internationally

The report – the first of its kind to explore the economic value of English law – reveals that English law governed at least € 661.5 trillion of OTC derivatives trading in 2018, \$11.6 trillion of global metals trading in 2020, and £250 billion of global M&A in 2019. English law also governs insurance contracts worth £80 billion annually and is the law of choice for maritime contracts, a sector that contributes over £15 billion annually to the UK economy.

Underappreciated

"This is the first time anyone has looked at the economic value and contribution of English Law as distinct from legal services," said Guy Beringer CBE, a director of LegalUK. "It is extraordinary to see laid out in economic terms the extent to which English law is an underappreciated asset and



platform that provides huge economic value not only to the UK, but also the global economy. The fact that English law continuously evolves to reflect the issues businesses face is key to its success."

Predictability of outcomes

Oxera establishes that businesses using English law enjoy an advantage over businesses governed by other legal systems through lower transaction costs. English law does this by increasing the predictability of outcomes and hence growth in the volume of transactions in an economy. This benefits all users of English law, not just UK companies or individuals.

The report identifies several opportunities for English law to underpin transactions globally in new areas of the economy, such as sustainable finance, fintech, and cryptoassets.

www.legaluk.org/report/foreword

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"One thing that really stands out is the innovative mindset here," says Björn Rathjens, Engineering Manager at Klarna in Hessen. Klarna was founded in Sweden and came to Hessen, the state in the centre of Germany, in 2014. Björn is right: Hessen is a top location for international entrepreneurs who are able to think outside the box. For people who want to use their passion and great ideas to reach new horizons. For people just like you.

Hessen is a central hub for Europe's transportation and logistics network and offers ideal conditions for sustainable economic success. All European economic centres can be reached within a few hours by car, train and plane and our leading-edge infrastructure is developed continuously as needed, protecting the environment, and cutting costs. We are home to domestic and international market leaders. From here, many business headquarters tap into new markets and reach their existing customers. Throughout Germany. Throughout Europe. Worldwide.

Hessen has always been a leading destination for foreign direct investments in Europe. In total, over

13,000 international companies have already opted in favour of this location – especially in the ICT, life sciences and finance sectors. By the way, Klarna recently announced its plans to create 400 new jobs at its tech hub in Hessen.

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The foundation of Hessen's strong economy is the excellent education and training system. With its 31 prestigious universities and forward-thinking training facilities, Hessen is also a leading centre for science, innovation and R&D. This spirit of innovation is further reflected by the 40 technology and startup centres in the region.

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While market conditions in Europe are in a period of change and companies are redefining their business models, we are working closely with a network of business developers to build new bridges between London and Hessen. This puts us in a position to provide investors with suitable locations and tailor-made solutions.

Welcome to Hessen.

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Caution advised ... but will Plan B come in?

Since 'Freedom Day' in July, most Covid-19 legal restrictions and social distancing measures have ended. Since then, the economy has fully re-opened and the 'work from home' order dropped. People have been able to mix freely with no limit on numbers. The government has continued to urge caution, such as advising people to continue wearing masks in setting where social distancing is difficult, such as on public transport and to ensure good ventilation in indoor settings.

What is the current Covid-19 situation?

Recent weeks have seen an increase in Covid-19 cases, admissions to hospital and deaths, although these remain far lower than previously. On 22 October, the number of cases reached 52,007, the highest number since 17 July. According to Office for National Statistics data, it was estimated that around 1 in 60 people in England were infected with Covid-19 in October. However, many new Covid-19 cases occur in children and teenagers who are unlikely to be at serious risk from the virus.

At time of writing, 86 per cent of people aged 12 and over in the UK have had their first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine and 79 per cent have received both. A vaccine booster campaign for people aged over 50, health and social care workers and the most vulnerable has also begun, with more than six million booster doses administered so far. The Health Secretary, Sajid Javid, said that boosters can be booked online if people have not been invited for their vaccine by the NHS within a week of having received their second inoculation six months previously.

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Infection Survey, UK: 15 October 2021

■ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveysurvey/15october2021>

Covid-19 in the UK: How many coronavirus cases are there in my area?

■ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51768274>

How is the government tackling Covid-19 at present?

Currently the Government is sticking with its Plan A and has made it clear that it is not planning to introduce further measures at this time. During autumn and winter, the Government intends to build on the progress made in combating Covid-19 and ensure the country is ready for future challenges. This involves supporting the NHS and social care to make sure that the health service can cope with increased demand during winter.

Opinion is divided as to how much pressure the NHS will see in the coming months. Modelling provided by scientists, including Professor John Edmunds of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and a SAGE (Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies) member has made available to the Government predicts that case numbers will start to fall during November without the need for further restrictions (although they could rise again in spring as immunity wanes and people mix more). In contrast, Sajid Javid believes case numbers could reach 100,000 a day, although Downing Street has asserted that the NHS still has spare capacity.

Covid-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021

■ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021>

Covid-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021

■ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1020982/COVID-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021.pdf

COVID-19: PM vows to stick with his strategy, as WHO warns the UK's current situation is 'not healthy'

■ <https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-boris-johnson-admits-cases-are-high-but-insists-were-sticking-with-our-plan-12440273>

Covid cases to slump this winter, say scientists

■ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/24/coronavirus-cases-slump-winter-say-scientists/>

What is Plan B?

If Covid-19 case numbers, hospitalisations and deaths rise sharply over the coming weeks, the government may need to re-think its strategy and implement Plan B. This will mean the return of compulsory face-coverings in enclosed public spaces such as public transport and in shops. People will also be encouraged to work from home if they can.

A vaccine passport scheme could be introduced for high-risk venues, as is already the case in Scotland and Wales (although the Welsh scheme also gives

the option of taking a lateral flow test taken not more than 48 hours before the event, as well as vaccines).

A "vaccine-only certification" scheme would require all adults to prove that they are fully vaccinated to gain entry to: all nightclubs; crowded indoor settings with 500 or more attendees such as music venues; crowded outdoor settings with 4,000 or more attendees, such as outdoor festivals; and any settings with 10,000 or more attendees, such as large sporting or music events.

What is Plan B for tackling Covid in the UK this winter?

■ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/plan-b-covid-what-is-uk-b1944671.html>

COVID-19: How would Plan B tackle rising coronavirus cases - and when could it come into force?

■ <https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-how-would-plan-b-tackle-rising-coronavirus-cases-and-when-could-it-come-into-force-12438396>

UK government paves way to bring in tough 'plan B' Covid rules

■ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/23/uk-government-paves-way-to-bring-in-tough-plan-b-covid-rules>

What has changed for travellers arriving in England?

On Monday 4 October, the law in England changed so that fully vaccinated adults aged 18 and over arriving in England from any non-red list country no longer need to take a pre-departure PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test. The PCR test to be taken on or before day 2 of arriving back in England was also replaced with a cheaper lateral flow test. Fully vaccinated travellers do not have to quarantine from any non-red list country. However, they must take a PCR test if their lateral flow test is positive and then quarantine for ten full days if Covid-19 is confirmed.

Children aged four and under do not have to take any tests on arrival in England. Those aged between 5 and 17 years need to take a lateral flow test on day 2.

However, partially vaccinated or unvaccinated travellers still need to take a pre-departure PCR test before coming to England, together with PCR tests on or before day 2 and on day 8. They must also quarantine at home for ten days but can take a 'test to release' PCR test on day 5.

On 28 October, the government announced that it was removing the remaining seven countries from the 'red' list as from 1 November. They are Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Panama, Peru and Venezuela. People can now travel to these destinations for any reason, including holidays. Travellers arriving in England from these destinations no longer have to quarantine for 11 nights in a government-approved hotel, regardless of their vaccine status. However, the principle of the 'red' list and quarantine hotels are not being abolished and will be reinstated if the need for them arises.

Morocco banned flights to and from the UK as from Wednesday 27 October until further notice due to the rising number of cases in the UK.

Travel to England from another country during coronavirus (COVID-19)

■ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Gov.UK: Travel update: all countries removed from the UK's red list

■ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/travel-update-all-countries-removed-from-the-uks-red-list>

What you need to know about foreign travel from October

■ <https://www.abta.com/tips-and-advice/travelling-during-coronavirus/what-you-need-know-about-foreign-travel-from-october>

Covid-19 Q&A is written and researched by Alexa Michael, member research executive at LCCI

Issue 178 | November/December 2021

Capital matters

COVER STORY

Net Zero

Pages 72-79

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Your data has value to criminals. Do you protect it?

By Matt Dunn

Typically, roles such as business owners, employers, property owners, landlords, company directors or major shareholders involve sensitive data, and a failure to protect this data could have a **severe financial, reputational, and legal impact. So, if you pay a specialist security firm to protect valuable possessions, why would you not do the same for your valuable data?**



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security settings for mobile and office-based devices, communications systems, data storage facilities and other networked systems.



But it does not end with technology alone.

Many MSSP's will only offer technological protection such as firewalls, multi-factor authentication and network security. But **complete cyber security can only be achieved through an ongoing and evolving holistic approach.** Processes should be audited regularly as part of a gap analysis, and a culture of awareness in staff and even family must

be cultivated. The life of the HNWI is not straightforward and incurs a complexity that only a good MSSP can respond to in a proactive and agile manner.

Your sensitive data is valuable, so if you value the security of that data do not leave it to chance, or a poor MSSP. Contact Labyrinth Technology today to find out more.



Matt Dunn
Business Support Director
Labyrinth Technology



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Flexible workplace for the professionals

Located in the heart of Archway, Kozmik workspace is a family run business here to serve and support local businesses and professionals by providing all the high-tech facilities that you would expect but with a more personal and family 'feel'.

Kozmik is run by two brothers, Costa, and Michael Victoros, who have managed businesses in the Archway area for many years. Being a family driven team, has enabled them both to provide a space for local businesses and professionals whilst simultaneously creating 'a home from home' for all individuals and their working needs.

As you enter Kozmik, there is an intimate and friendly feel to the décor. Overhead skylights provide a refreshing natural light and the colourful yet subtle artwork from local artists add an instant warmth to this working environment. The breakout space is instantly inviting with comfortable seating and a well-equipped kitchenette which provides people working there with all their home comforts. It even boasts shower facilities too for anybody who may want to change before or after work.

Kozmik workspace offers a range of services to suit your working needs.



Professionals are able to hire a hot desk if they wish to use a space for a day, a week or even several months. Private offices are also available for customers who would like to work as part of a small team or individually but require more privacy. The conference room also enables professionals to host multi member conferences and

can be hired out for the day depending on your need. This room is a fair size and is a fully equipped audio-visual conference room with air conditioning and a 50 inch 4K smart TV using Logitech meet up video. The podcast studio is equally as impressive and is fully equipped with RODE sound and recording equipment. The studio is bright and bold in colour and is the perfect location for any podcasters or radio hosts to hold their event or recording.

The Kozmik team have strived to create a space where you can work professionally and comfortably with all your working needs being met. As their website promotes, Kozmik workspace is 'your professional home from home with all the high spec technology but without the noise and fuss' and this is certainly the case when you enter this gem in Archway.

'Work for yourself, not by yourself'
Kozmik Workspace
kozmikws.co.uk

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For any queries on features or advertising in *Capital Matters*, contact:

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INSIDE

Net Zero
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PEOPLE, PLANET, and PERFORMANCE

How to measure the performance gap.

WE SPEND OVER 90% OF OUR TIME INDOORS, so it is becoming increasingly important to understand how what we build, meets our present needs without compromising the ability of the future generations, and how our bodies and minds are impacted by the buildings where we live and work.

These days there is a greater awareness of the need to be more socially responsible and a desire to demonstrate our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) credentials. To measure our impact, tools have been developed to help us monitor these key metrics. Benchmarking of building is one such tool for monitoring its performance as well as assessing its relative performance by comparing it to that of other known buildings.

For many years there has been an emphasis on energy consumption and the Zero Carbon agenda. Save energy, save money, reduce carbon and save the planet. Building Regulation compliance models use simplified calculations intended to ensure that minimum regulatory requirements are met and to benchmark energy usage. Unfortunately, these approaches generally lead to significant underestimation of actual energy usage. The UKGBC's Net Zero Carbon framework, is a step forward in addressing net zero carbon across the whole life of a building. It makes sense that the framework provides two definitions for net zero carbon buildings – one for emissions from the construction



process, and one for in-use operational energy. The capital expenditure involved in construction regularly draws the eye due to the large numbers involved. However, the longevity of a built asset, and of the organisations that use it, means that real cost cannot be judged just in terms of capital expenditure. The true cost of a building can only be calculated if all the costs associated with its life are considered. Life Cycle Costing allows for a balance to be made between construction, maintenance and operational costs.

Actual energy consumption depends significantly on the criteria used for

the indoor environment (heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting). Indoor environment affects health, productivity, and comfort of the occupants. Saving Energy may have a negative impact on the quality of the Indoor Environment in the building. There are several key studies that have analysed the true cost of owning and using a building. They have looked at both the traditional view of Operational Expenditure but also include the more holistic view of including the staff costings of the occupants of the building. The outcome is rather startling.

The figures presented here indicate most of the cost

associated with a building actual comes from the occupants, rather than the capital or operational costs. It points to the value of a people first approach when it comes to decision making and investment appraisals. Energy efficient building are not always conducive to health, productivity, or comfort.

Understanding the true costs of a poor indoor environment to the employer, the building owner and for society in general is essential, as they are often considerably higher than the cost of the energy used in the same building.

Failure to address energy performance and Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) holistically means there is still a disparity in understanding what solutions work best. This issue is called a performance gap and requires a more integrated approach to energy, IEQ and other aspects of building performance. This all points to an overwhelming need for specifying criteria for the indoor environment so buildings and building service systems are designed with the occupants in mind. There needs to be standard ways to collect operational performance data.

In simple terms you just have to remember the 3Ps: **PEOPLE, PLANET, and PERFORMANCE.**

In 2017, a British Standard was published to provide guidance on how to specify the performance of a building and size the building systems for heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting parameters to meet one of four environmental quality categories.

Category	Level of Expectation
IEQ _I	High
IEQ _{II}	Medium
IEQ _{III}	Moderate
IEQ _{IV}	Low

Most building owners and occupiers are not aware of this specification, or more importantly how their building performs during everyday use. The pandemic has reinforced the importance of understanding how our

buildings performs and the quality of the indoor environment based on a need to improve infection control. The latest guidance for ventilation rates indicates buildings should achieve IEQ_{II} Medium performance standard. Most buildings have been designed to achieve the minimum compliance requirement of Building Regulations. This means they are only likely to achieve the lower standard of IEQ_{III} Moderate.

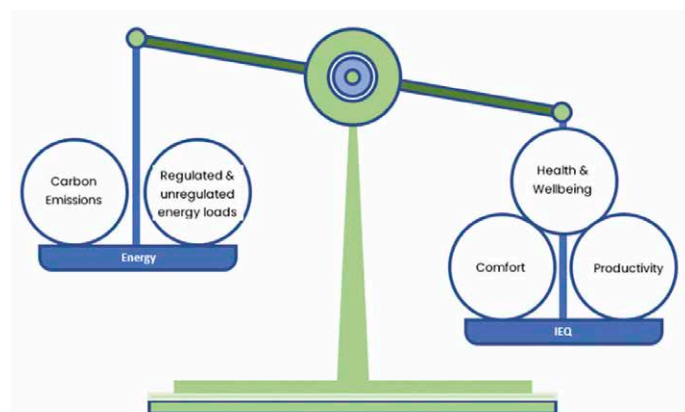
If you are a Building Owner or Tenant, you should have a clear picture of how your building performs and how it impacts both the **people** and the **planet**. You should consider how to best protect your investment in terms of your people and

property. The current government policies relate to energy efficiency and climate change mitigation. However, energy performance alone does not capture the full impact of buildings on occupants and the wider environment. You need to go above a pure compliance approach. You need to get insight about the **performance** of both people and property.

The most commonly used environmental rating tools in the UK (BREEAM, SKA and LEED) have very few compulsory wellness features within them. Those that are optional are subject to value engineering processes that focus on the cost to achieve each credit rather than protecting occupant wellness. This means that for any organisation to gauge how sustainable

and socially responsible they are being they need multiple benchmarking tools to cover three distinct categories: Environmental Sustainability, Occupant Health & Wellbeing; and Social Value.

This can be achieved through the adoption of a recognised standard such as BREEAM In-Use or the WELL Building Standard, or National Social Value Measurement Framework. Alternatively, a bespoke verification based on best practice and the current body of knowledge can be sought from a specialist consultancy. Any building Performance Verification should always be contrasted to how the occupants perceive the performance of the building through Post-Occupancy Evaluations.



If you want more information on how to optimise your indoor environment to maximise productivity, or understand how to minimise your health and safety risk and improve infection control, or any other Building Science issue...

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ESG MATTERS

Generate Returns for Investors

- 80% of companies that took concrete actions on health saw an improvement to their earnings and shareholder returns (TRS).
- Portfolios including companies with high scores on the Corporate Health Achievement Awards appreciated 99% more than that S&P 500 index (STOK)

Maximise Human and Social Capital Performance

- In Cundall's WELL certified workplace employee absenteeism dropped by 19% in one year.
- In CBRE Toronto and Vancouver WELL Certified workplaces, total employee turnover rate has fallen by almost a third and the hiring rate for new talent has doubled.
- Productivity rose by 30% in Landsec's WELL Certified workplace.

Control Health Costs and Reduce Losses

- Employees working while sick costs the US economy an estimated \$234Bn a year in lost productivity (The Guardian).
- According to Britain's Healthiest Workplace survey, the pressure to attend work at all costs (presenteeism) could ultimately cost UK businesses over £77Bn – in part due to the added mental and physical anxiety placed upon staff.
- Losing 1 employee costs about £11,000 or a third of that worker's annual earnings in expenses to re-hire (Forbes)

In simple terms you just have to remember the 3Ps: **PEOPLE, PLANET, and PERFORMANCE.**



Net Zero

Since 2007, UK Green Building Council has played a major role in improving the sustainability of the built environment. With sustainability at its core, UKGBC's aims to provide clarity, cohesion and leadership to a sometimes disparate sector. Today, with over 600 member organisations spanning the entire built environment value chain, UKGBC represents the ever-growing voices of current and future leaders, striving for transformational change within the industry.

Advancing Net Zero programme

Since the inception of UKGBC's 'Advancing Net Zero' programme in 2018, its mission has been to lead the UK's transition towards a net zero carbon built environment. Several key resources have been developed with the aim of facilitating the widespread uptake of net zero carbon buildings across the industry.

UKGBC has various projects aimed at assisting the industry with the transition to net zero. This article provides insights into key programme outputs and how these can help your organisation deliver its net zero ambitions on buildings. Particular focus has been given to:

- Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework Definition
- Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment
- Whole Life Carbon Roadmap for the UK Built Environment

Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework Definition

Summary

In the UK, the operation of buildings accounts for approximately 30% of total greenhouse gas emissions, mainly from heating, cooling and electricity use ((RICS, ICMS), 2019). Whilst the national grid continues its decarbonisation trajectory, it will be more critical than ever that embodied carbon is also addressed if we are to meet our ambitious whole life carbon targets.

For new buildings, the embodied carbon [resulting from the materials and construction processes used to build, maintain, operate and refurbish buildings] associated with their construction can account for up to half of the carbon impacts over its life cycle.

Through the formation of UKGBC's Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework, a definition of

what it practically means for a building to be 'net zero' has been sought and, in doing so, a pathway established for all to follow. Where historically 'zero carbon' policies focussed only on operational energy and modelled performance in new buildings, the framework expands on this to include in-use energy performance verification and to encompass the whole life carbon impacts of both new and, crucially, existing buildings. The framework sets out overarching principles and metrics that can be integrated into policy, but primarily can be used as a tool for business to drive the transition to a net zero carbon built environment.

Definition

The net zero carbon framework sets out definitions and principles around two approaches to net zero carbon, which are considered of equal importance:

Net zero – construction: "When the amount of carbon emissions associated with a building's product and construction stages up to practical completion is zero or negative, through the use of offsets".

Net zero carbon – operational energy: "When the amount of carbon emissions associated with the building's operational energy on an annual basis is zero or negative. A net zero carbon building is highly efficient and powered from on-site and/or off-site renewable energy sources, with any remaining carbon balance offset".

Application of the framework

The framework has been developed and represents industry consensus on how we can achieve net zero carbon buildings today. The framework can be applied as a whole, or in its component parts, to help build the industry's capacity to deliver net zero carbon buildings. Over the next few years, the scope and requirements set out will be developed to demonstrate the leading edge of thinking on net zero carbon buildings.

Principles of the framework

At the highest level UKGBC's framework follows three overarching principles:

Polluter pays

- Cost of emissions should be borne by those responsible for creating them

- Emissions should be measured and, where required, offset at the time they occur, in doing so, encouraging reduction and mitigation as first steps, before considering offsets
- Where appropriate, operational energy use should be delineated between those who have responsibility and the ability to influence energy use

Improve measurement and transparency

- Building emissions should be based on measured data rather than estimates
- There should be public disclosure of building emissions and transparency surrounding the nature of data collection
- Operational energy performance should focus on measured in-use energy consumption and generation
- Whole life carbon assessment of construction impact to be verified and updated at the point of completion.

Encourage action today and tighten requirements over time

- Future development of the framework to introduce more robust requirements and targets, e.g. the requirement to achieve minimum energy efficiency target, and expanding the scope of the whole life carbon approach.

For more details on the UKGBC's Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework Definition visit: <https://www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/net-zero-carbon-buildings-a-framework-definition>

Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment

Whilst UKGBC's Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework provides a structure and process to support the transition to net zero, the Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment (the Commitment) has been developed to advocate for such changes more widely amongst leading organisations within the industry. Developed by the World Green Building Council and launched in 2018, the Commitment aims to challenge companies, cities, states and regions to reach net zero building emissions across their portfolios by 2030, and to advocate for a net zero carbon built environment by 2050.

Purpose

The Commitment provides a platform for leading organisations to demonstrate real action by setting an advanced trajectory to achieve net zero within their own portfolios by 2030, whilst helping to inspire customers within their circles of influence and within their supply chains on the journey to net zero.

Currently 47 UKGBC members have currently signed up to the Commitment (representing a



Figure 1: Summary of key UKGBC workstreams

Continued on page 76

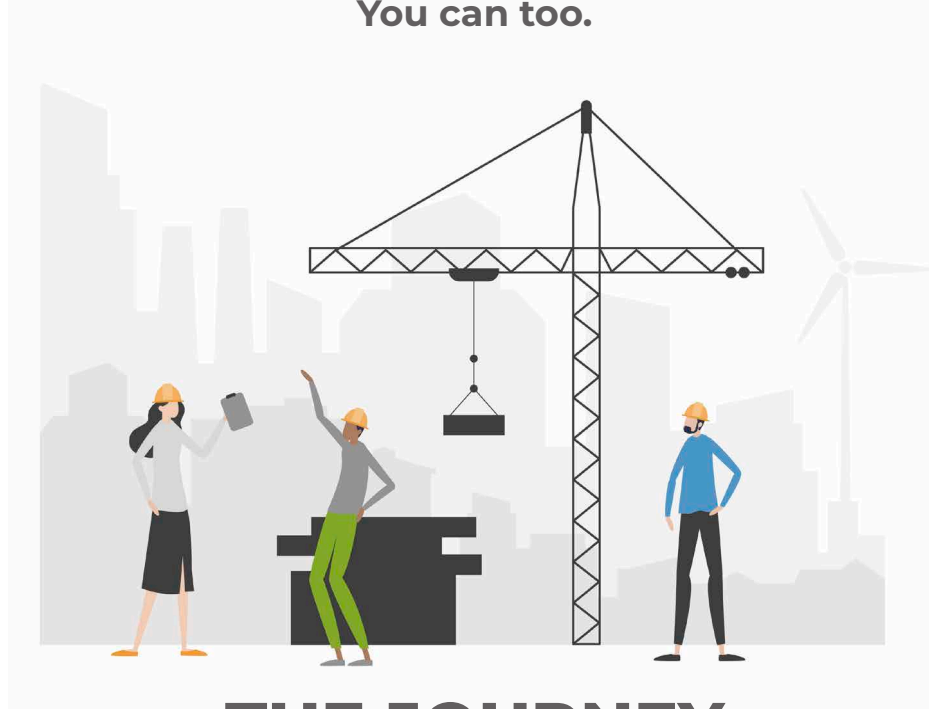


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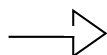
On your Net Zero journey, you track, we verify.



NET ZERO CLUB

COMMIT

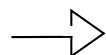
We can help you get set up with your Net Zero commitment, all we ask is that you are public about it and that it meets certain criteria, such as covering all three scopes of emissions and explicit references to mitigation action.



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NET ZERO CLUB

NET ZERO

You have a Science Based Target (or equivalent) in place and no net emissions from Scope 1 & 2, with a plan for ongoing Scope 3 solutions. You may choose to offset more of your emissions on the way by using reputable offsets, gaining "Carbon Neutral" status.

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third of global signatories).

Expansion to include whole life carbon

The Commitment underwent a major update in 2021 to widen the scope to include additional actions that account for embodied carbon emissions, as part of a whole life carbon response to net zero.

The commitment currently requires that by 2030:

- Existing buildings reduce their energy consumption and eliminate emissions from energy and refrigerants removing fossil fuel use as fast as practicable where applicable and where necessary, compensate for residual emissions.
- New developments and major renovations are built to be highly efficient, powered by renewables, with a maximum reduction in embodied carbon and compensation of all residual upfront emissions.

As set out as part of WorldGBC's Whole Life Carbon Vision, by 2030 all new projects globally must achieve at least 40% embodied carbon reductions, with a focus on upfront carbon. Those signed up to the Commitment must go above and beyond to achieve maximum reductions. For any organisation that is serious about net zero and wanting to demonstrate leadership specifically for the buildings they own, occupy or develop, the Commitment is one of the best available tools for achieving this. The Commitment is particularly relevant to professional services firms where occupied buildings can account for one of their largest scopes of emissions, alongside business travel. For more details on the UKGBC's Commitment, to see the current list of current signatories, and learn how to sign up, visit: <https://www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/thecommitment>

Whole Life Carbon Roadmap for the UK Built Environment

Announcing its launch in December 2020, UKGBC is one of several European GBCs developing a national Whole Life Carbon Roadmap ('the Roadmap'). The roadmap aims to build a common vision and agreed actions for achieving net zero carbon in construction, operation and demolition of buildings and infrastructure.

The roadmap highlights and provides focus to the emissions footprint specific of the UK's built environment, whilst presenting a view of the specific actions required for the sector to reduce its emissions.

Co-created in partnership with a project Steering Group, with input from professional institutions and key sector bodies, four task

groups focusing on, new build, domestic retrofit, non-domestic retrofit and infrastructure sought to establish a roadmap prioritising the following goals:

- Build consensus on a pathway to a net zero carbon-built environment among business and industry bodies
- Identify key interventions required and any critical interdependencies
- Develop sectoral carbon targets
- Set out actions, owners and processes to achieve these targets.
- Identify a range of policy recommendations to support, incentivise and where necessary regulate carbon reduction measures.
- Encourage and enable greater consistency between sector-based action plans that are published or in development.

Established within the Roadmap, a carbon trajectory for the built environment through to 2050 is defined, based on projections of multiple interrelated factors and interventions across the sector. Whilst there are high levels of uncertainty with such an exercise, the process highlights some of the key trade-offs and value judgements required between different interventions that will be required across the sector, within the context of an overarching carbon budget.

Whilst strategic thinking will be necessary to make the correct choices in coming years, to appropriately allocate an annual carbon budget, some key interventions have been put forward within the trajectory. These are summarised for each of the four task groups below:

Domestic Retrofit

- Responsible for the vast majority of the UK's building operational emissions, improvement to energy efficiency and heating demand is crucial in existing domestic buildings to enable the effective adoption of heat pump technology to electrify domestic heat.
- The scale and pace of the programme is unprecedented but would be transformative in job creation and secondary benefits.
- Further work is required to review decarbonisation projections for key supply chains, such as insulation and heat-pumps in order to identify ways to minimise their impact.

Non-domestic Building Energy Performance

- Energy performance improvements must accelerate across all non-domestic sectors, with the emergence of performance-based rating schemes and mandatory disclosure of energy performance.
- Focus to energy use intensity of buildings, alongside the phasing out of fossil-fuel

heating systems.

New Buildings

- All new buildings to be future-proofed to avoid the need for additional retrofit works prior to 2050.
- Design focus, regulation and standards to switch to energy performance in-use.
- Future standards and regulations will need to introduce limits for peak demand reduction, space heating limits (thermal demand) and energy intensities.

Embodied Carbon

- Provided the reductions required in coming years, it is suggested that regulation of embodied carbon should be introduced by the early 2020s, embedding consistent measurement and introducing emission limits.
- Carbon needs to be at the forefront of infrastructure decision making, in the context of overarching carbon budgets.
- Focus to shift towards driving the circular economy, developing second-hand materials markets and increasing materials re-use.
- Strategic thinking on improved utilisation and change-of-use of existing building stock to reduce embodied emissions.

The finalised version of UKGBC's Roadmap will be released on 11th November 2021 and will build on the key areas outlined here following its consultation period.

For more details on the Whole Life Carbon Roadmap visit: <https://www.ukgbc.org/events/cop26-whole-life-carbon-roadmap-launch/>

COP26

Limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees is critical, and although it's sometimes seen as a hackneyed phrase, we're truly now at a critical tipping point; one where we must seize the opportunity to set and protect the 1.5 degree pathway. The built environment is a major contributor to global emissions and our buildings - and the communities that live and work in and around them - will be especially vulnerable to the catastrophic consequences of climate change if we don't act decisively. We already have many of the solutions required to build better now, and our sector stands ready to play its part. COP26 is the time for ambition, but also critically plans and action.

At COP26, UKGBC is committed to the following:

1. Championing the built environment as a critical solutions provider to the climate and nature crises, to be embraced by state and non-state actors alike.
2. Calling on UK and world leaders not just to set out ambitious plans but to ensure that translates into direct and immediate action to accelerate the capacity of our industry to deliver, through ambitious green finance mechanisms, standards and global net zero commitments.
3. Advocating for the strengthening of key elements of UK Government buildings policy, such as a coordinated retrofit programme.
4. Utilising COP26 to convene and work with UKGBC members and other built environment stakeholders to support the advancement of ambitious commitments and collaboration for accelerated climate action.

For more details on UKGBC events and activities happening at COP, sign up via the following page: <https://www.ukgbc.org/courses-and-events/>

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Special offer only available to LCCI members until the 31st of December. Book directly, quoting 'LCCI' to receive up to 30% discount on bed & breakfast rates. T&C's apply.

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Members' noticeboard



■ GILBERT-ASH LONDON

Europe's first eco-mosque, built by leading construction and fit-out company, Gilbert-Ash, has been nominated for the 2021 Stirling Prize Award.

Cambridge Central Mosque is one of six projects to be selected from the 54 2021 RIBA National Award winners.

RIBA's Stirling Prize has been awarded annually, with the exception of last year, since 1996 to buildings deemed to be the most significant of the year for the evolution of architecture and the built environment.

Cambridge Central Mosque is the first eco-friendly mosque in Europe. Marks Barfield Architects, who are in the running for the award, designed the building to accommodate up to 1000 worshippers.

Gilbert-Ash has had three projects shortlisted for prestigious prize prior to Cambridge Central Mosque. Shortlisted projects have included the Lyric Theatre in 2012, the Giant's Causeway Visitor's Centre in 2013 and the Everyman Theatre, which went on to win the 2014 Stirling Prize.



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■ BARNES ROFFE LLP

Barnes Roffe LLP bolsters its corporate finance offering with new senior hire.

Leading London based accountancy firm Barnes Roffe LLP has announced the addition of Dan Wright as Senior Manager to its Corporate Finance team.

Our Corporate Finance department provides investors and business owners with independent value-added advice. Our service offering includes M&A execution, tax advisory, structuring, due diligence and transactional services. Together with our other business lines, we offer a full suite of corporate finance services for companies across industries and borders.

Barnes Roffe's influence stretches beyond the UK shores. Leveraging on our membership of the IPG Global Network, we regularly work on behalf of our clients with companies from jurisdictions across the globe.

If you'd like to talk about any aspect of corporate finance with a team you can trust to deliver, get in touch with us today: we'd love to hear from you.

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■ IMPERIAL COLLEGE BUSINESS SCHOOL

Imperial College Business School has launched a new leadership development programme that can be fully funded using the Government's Apprenticeship Levy. The Imperial College and Corndel Executive Development Programme is taught in a blended format featuring one-to-one online coaching, a pioneering digital learning curriculum, online group sessions and masterclasses from renowned academics.

Participants will develop and evolve their leadership skills in the context of digitally transformed organisations. Topics include understanding sources of digital value, implementing digital transformation, and navigating regulatory and cyber security challenges.

The programme is 12-months long and designed for professionals who have at least five years of management experience and are looking to progress into senior management roles.

For more information go to www.imperial.ac.uk/business-school/executive-education/imperial-and-cornel-executive-development-programme/



■ CRASH

CRASH helps adults who are homeless and children and adults who need end of life care in a hospice by constructing and refurbishing the buildings and places they need.

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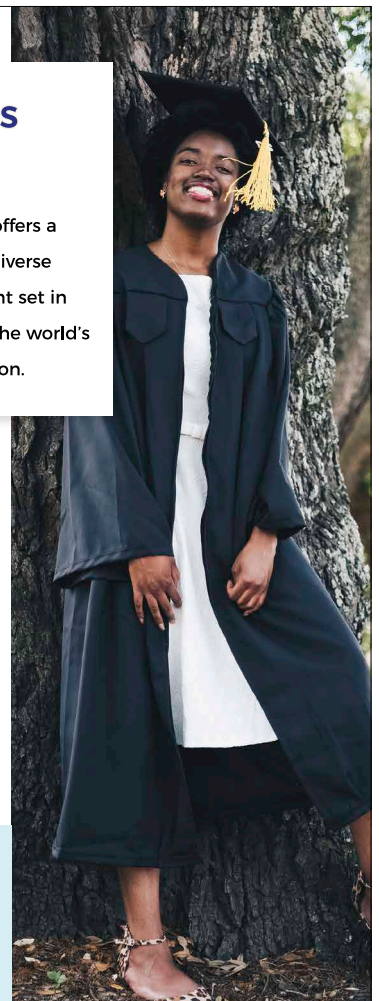
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Mark Downing (pictured), the company's founder and Managing Director has steered the company through some challenging times but is rightly very proud of the company's achievements. Mark has always enjoyed being a manufacturer however, after the 2008 credit crunch Mark made the decision to manufacture as much as possible in house giving the company much more control over the design and, quality and availability of its products. Today the company boasts a world class electronics manufacturing facility and has won the Prestigious BIBA's awards 4 times being the recipient of the Company of the Year, Manufacturer of the Year (twice) and the International trade award. Scorpion has also been awarded the Norther Automotive Alliance award 3 times.

Mark explains; "There are some big events driving changes in the market and my job is to make sure we take full advantage.

- **Coronavirus;** this has accelerated the shift to online sales and in turn the parcel delivery service providers. These companies require accurate and up to date information about the movement and location of their fleets. Also, there is a big focus on security, vehicle & contents theft. Scorpion's Fleet Management telematics system is a market leader in this field.

- **Crime;** Unfortunately, we are seeing an ever upward trend in vehicle crime and a reduction in available resources for the Police, so Scorpion is seen as a valuable partner to the police with its stolen vehicle prevention and recovery products. If you wake up one morning and find your car has gone off the drive, you will have a 95% better chance of recovering that vehicle and a much better response from the police if you have Scorpion with its 24/7/365 monitoring team in your corner.

So as we enter a new year when hopefully we will see the world retuning to normal with the roll out of the vaccine, the distribution of which is monitored by Scorpion Tracking products, and the dust settles from the Brexit transition we are certainly looking forward to a very exciting next decade of Innovation and Growth.

Best of luck and good business to all of our valued customers.

Mark Downing



Call our Chorley office on **01257 249928** or visit **www.scorpionauto.com** for further information on any of the company's products or services.

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IT'S NOT THE SIZE
OF THE DOG...**



**WE PROTECT
WHAT MATTERS**