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DIRECTION



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People, Skills & The Workplace

Welcome to May/June edition of Business Direction, where our focus is on People, Skills, and the Workplace. People are undoubtedly the cornerstone of any organisation. A skilled and cohesive team is the foundation upon which innovation, productivity, and customer satisfaction are built.

At the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, our ethos is rooted in supporting businesses to thrive. We firmly believe that organisations who invest in their people, nurturing their skills and development throughout their careers, are the ones that will drive long-term success and sustainable growth. A commitment to workforce development is not just beneficial; it is essential for businesses looking to remain competitive in an ever-evolving landscape.



Sharon Smith
Chief Executive

The Chamber recently announced their Manifesto for 2025/26, and within it, a key focus on People, inclusivity, and diversity. A diverse workforce fosters creativity, innovation, and problem-solving, while businesses that prioritise inclusivity see higher employee engagement, productivity, and satisfaction. When employees feel valued, they contribute their best work, benefiting the company's performance.

Investing in your people means investing in their continuous development. By creating clear development plans, setting measurable targets, and providing access to training, you're not just enhancing individual skills, you're creating a workforce that drives business success. A team that is well-equipped, motivated, and constantly developing new skills is essential for fostering a good company culture.

At the Chamber, we firmly believe in encouraging our team to upskill and broaden their knowledge at every opportunity. This commitment to personal and professional growth strengthens the foundation of our business. We offer over 120 diverse training courses to all Members, ranging from intermediate Excel training to Marketing and PR courses, as well as our comprehensive 6-part Leadership Development Series.

As a Chamber, we promise to keep advancing the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), while advocating for local apprenticeship opportunities, work-based experiences, and ensuring businesses have ample chances to collaborate with local universities, schools, and colleges.

Throughout this edition, read all the latest news from businesses across the two counties, explore our training offering and hear from Strategic Member, ISO QSL, in their exclusive interview.

Best Regards,
Sharon Smith

Our Patrons are:



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The Chambers Charity Partners of the Year!

Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce the selection of two charities as their 'Charity Partners of the Year' for 2025/26!

We are truly inspired by the remarkable work being done within our local community and have seen firsthand the vital need for gifts, time, and financial donations from our Charity Members. In order to dedicate our efforts to a meaningful cause over the coming financial year, we have chosen to support two Charities, focusing on them through various fundraising activities throughout 2025/26.

The chosen Charity Partners for 2025/26 are Haygrove Community Gardens in Herefordshire and Worcestershire Association of Carers in Worcester. Both organisations were selected through a random generator, and we are eager to collaborate with them in the year ahead.

More about our Charity Partners:

Haygrove Community Gardens:

The Haygrove Community Gardens Charity was established to offer support to those who would benefit from therapeutic horticulture, to engage school children in the growing of healthy fruit and vegetables, and to provide accessible green space for education and enjoyment. We develop community gardens providing outdoor learning, horticultural skills and an awareness of how food is produced, improving self-confidence, supporting social interaction and teaching new skills.

Our parent company, Haygrove, is fortunate to have bases in many beautiful parts of the world, and believes that it is important to support the communities that share these special places. Community gardens also facilitate the integration of other local businesses into the community. By forming partnerships with local businesses, we can not only help ensure the gardens' ongoing success, but also provide a means by which their staff can benefit from using the garden, whilst helping its other visitors.



Worcestershire Association of Carers:

The home of support for all unpaid carers in and around Worcestershire.

We are a registered charity providing a range of information, advice and support to carers. The charity was founded by a group of carers in 1997 with the aim of being an organisation run by carers for carers. By a carer we mean anyone who provides any of the following unpaid support to a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental ill-health or substance misuse problems.



Chamber Member Benefits

Westfield Health

Everyone who becomes a Chamber member, no matter the level, has access to the exclusive Westfield Health primary health plan.

Exclusively available to Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber Members, the Chamber Primary Health Plan starts from £7.41 per employee, per month and allows staff to claim money back, up to set limits, for things such as sight tests and glasses, dental bills, therapy treatments and consultations. The plan also provides access to a range of valuable health and wellbeing services including 24-hour helpline, expert medical opinion, gym discounts and Westfield Rewards.

Numerous studies have shown that employee wellbeing is linked to greater productivity, motivation and satisfaction. Westfield Health aim to transform people's mental and physical wellbeing to create happier, healthier employees and more resilient businesses.

Whether that's mental health support, gym management, health cash plans or wellbeing webinars, Westfield Health will work alongside you to improve your employees' health and wellbeing and take care of your most important asset, your people.

For more information visit www.hwchamber.co.uk/membership.



Stephen Alexander raises money for Redditch Food Bank

The Redditch-based bid management and marketing consultancy, has supported Friends of Isaac's Food Bank.



The business recently ran a campaign to generate funds from their clients all over the UK to support the charity and proudly presented the donated shopping vouchers,

along with members of their family, to Isaac at their food bank warehouse.

Friends of Isaac Food Bank was started by Isaac at the age of nine in 2020 when he launched a pop-up greenhouse outside his house. Today, they operate five food banks across Redditch, providing free food parcels and essential items to anyone in need.

The food shopping vouchers donated by Stephen Alexander will go directly towards helping fund new food items to be shared amongst its food banks across the town.

Stephen Timmins, director and co-founder at Stephen Alexander, said: "What Isaac

has done is simply incredible and we were compelled to support the amazing work he and his family are doing. Community support and engagement is a big part of what we do at Stephen Alexander and as business owners from the town, me, Alex, and our team are always looking for ways to get involved in local initiatives and charities that do important work to support the people of Redditch. We were delighted to meet Isaac and his family and present the donation and to have the opportunity to take our children to their warehouse to learn more about the great work Isaac is doing."

www.stephen-alexander.com

Whitehall changes positive for SME residential developers

The Labour government continues to take steps to ensure the pace of housebuilding across the UK is increased year on year.

Many local authorities, including those within Herefordshire and Worcestershire, are keen to achieve housing targets and this represents a good opportunity for smaller housebuilders in the two counties to play their part, and capitalise on more local sites becoming available.

The key point is that small to medium local developers here in the two counties should continue to keep a close eye on smaller sites. There will be infill sites

locally which larger developers won't have the appetite to build on themselves, and this represents a unique opportunity in the coming years for the building sector's SME housebuilders.

To arrange a further discussion, you can email Paul Harris at mfg Solicitors: paul.harris@mfgsolicitors.com

Visit the website for more information at www.mfgsolicitors.com



Reskill your next generation workforce: leaders, workers and recruits

In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is emerging as a powerful tool to enhance learning and streamline administrative tasks.

The speed of technological change is exponential and currently disruptive, driven by transformative technologies. These innovations will fundamentally alter work processes, requiring business leaders to rethink workforce skills. To address this, The Department for Education funds The Development Manager (TDM) to deliver:

- Skills Bootcamps
- Apprenticeships
- Degree Apprenticeships

Digital Transformation

To drive digital transformation, organisations must develop skills not only in new recruits but also challenge and retain existing talent. Disruptive technologies pose challenges to workforce development and business



functions. As business leaders, we can either follow others or proactively make digital transformation a continuous process within our organisations.

Performance Competence

TDM's employer partner clients describe us

as a "skills first" training provider. What they mean by this is that:

Instead of telling you what we think you need to know about the skills, knowledge and behaviours for each apprenticeship programme, we instead ask you as the employer organisation, what the performance competence is in the job role that the apprentice is currently engaged in. What matters most to YOU (not to us) in terms of the tasks and outputs needed from this employee?

It's then incumbent upon TDM to reverse engineer the requirements of the apprenticeship standard into your own employer-unique impacts.

Access our DfE-funded coaching support and contact us at enquiries@tdm.co.uk.

Managing client pressure without burning out your team

For many small businesses and charities, clients and service users are at the heart of what we do. But when expectations start creeping up - tighter deadlines, faster responses, “just one more quick thing” - that pressure can quickly land on your team.



And if we're not careful, the people doing the work quietly start to burn out.

From an HR perspective, managing external pressure starts internally. Establishing clear boundaries, setting realistic workloads, and fostering honest conversations make a huge difference. If your team doesn't feel empowered to say “we can do that, but not by Friday” without fear of repercussions, that's a problem waiting to

happen, potentially leading to burnout and decreased productivity.

It's not about being difficult - it's about being sustainable. Overpromising might keep a client happy short-term, but if your team is stretched too thin, mistakes happen, morale dips and people start quietly looking elsewhere.

Encourage your team to flag when something isn't realistic. Support your managers in having constructive conversations with clients. And check in regularly - not just about targets, but about how people are coping.

Looking after your people helps you look after your clients. It's all connected.

So yes, clients matter. But your team does too - and if you get the balance right, everyone benefits.

Contact us at www.marcheshr.co.uk.

Nurture your workforce and promote enjoyment in Herefordshire nature

As new legislation makes employing people more expensive than ever, getting the best out of employees - and holding on to them - is vital.

Companies must nurture people and promote camaraderie and enjoyment at work. In the endeavour to motivate and retain staff, off-site teambuilding and corporate experiences are becoming more of an expectation than a mere perk.

White Heron Estate in Herefordshire, a conventional fruit and poultry farm, has introduced an exciting diversification - E-Bike Tours & Tastings. These are fun, healthily competitive, and educational: about agriculture, sustainability and how food arrives on our tables. Ending at an outdoor boardroom/dining table overlooking the vineyards, the experience brings dynamism and creativity to meetings, as well as an entertaining team-building opportunity.

Another massive change to the workplace comes with AI. As is often cited, many of the “jobs” today's school-children will have don't even exist yet. Innovation, critical thinking and creativity will be increasingly valuable. What does this mean for Herefordshire & Worcestershire specifically,



and how can companies like White Heron help? Our rural economy based on agriculture and tourism, brings scope for creativity, innovation and diversification - and team-building and experiential opportunities in the big Herefordshire outdoors are a valuable part of that.

Can creativity and critical thinking be replaced by machines? We think not. And even the slickest AI cannot replace this human touch and the pleasure of experience - especially outside in nature where you can free your mind. Nurture and hang on to your valuable humans!



How do companies retain and secure highly qualified and skilled overseas staff for their business?

If you are a company who employ staff from overseas who are a genuine and strong asset to your business, you may be considering retaining them after they have completed their studies or probation period.

At Alexandra Kaleniuk Immigration Consulting we are experts in advising and assisting small and medium sized businesses across the whole of the UK in a wide variety of sectors on how to expand and enhance their workforce, which in turn helps with the growth and continued success of the business.

Several businesses take on international students and graduates for part-time work, who bring specialist and highly valued skills. We have extensive experience in assisting both employers and employees with the next steps, ensuring a seamless transition to permanent sponsorship and employment, while navigating complex regulatory requirements.

Our aim is to make the process as straightforward and stress free as possible for all concerned with our clear and professional approach each step of the way. We pride ourselves on our focus on a positive and strong relationship with our clients as well as an excellent track record in our dealings with UK Visas and Immigration and the Home Office.

If you would like to know more about how we can potentially help your business please contact us via email at alex@akic.co.uk, telephone us on **0121 2317145** or visit our website at www.alexkaleniuk.com.



The law firm for life

Julian Milan

International trade – maintaining momentum

Trading on an international scale can represent long-term, successful opportunities for UK businesses. There are, however, a number of factors to consider when selling products to overseas customers.

In this latest edition of Business Direction, Julian Milan, a senior associate in the Corporate team at mfg Solicitors, briefly covers how to stay ahead of the chasing pack, whilst avoiding legal pitfalls.

Dealing successfully with customers from other countries can often bring a myriad of complicated processes to overcome, but getting the basics right can also deliver high rewards.

Right people, right processes

First and foremost, moving goods across borders requires the correct completion of documentation for clearing customs, demonstrating the origin of goods and meeting other shipping or transport requirements. Whilst there is some guidance on the Gov.uk website, for most businesses a freight forwarder is likely to be required to assist in ensuring every box is ticked

Transporting goods from one country to another also involves prior agreement about which party will bear the responsibility and cost for arranging transport to the final location, how that is done, insurance for loss in transit, customs clearance and paying any duty that's required for the country of destination.

‘Incoterms®’ which stands for International Commercial Terms, are internationally recognised terms developed by the International Chamber of Commerce which provide 11 alternative terms which can be used by the parties to allocate tasks, costs and risks between them. The choice can have significant cost implications, so quotations for export customers should be clear on which Incoterm® the quotation is based.

If a business is using standard terms of sale prepared for UK customers, it will also need to ensure that any provisions in the standard terms which are inconsistent with the agreed Incoterm® are excluded from their contract with the export customer.

The contract must also specify the currency for payment and businesses will need to consider the risks of fluctuations in exchange rates and how they might mitigate the risks involved.

Credit and reducing risk

If the value of the goods is significant, and there is concern that the customer may not pay, the risks are obviously greater when the customer is in another country. In such cases, the business may seek payment by means of a letter of credit or consider the possibility of insuring against this risk through the Whitehall-backed Export Credit Guarantee Department.

The supplier must also be aware of factors potentially affecting its ability to fulfil its own obligations. Aside from wars and a pandemic, supply chains have been significantly affected in recent years by shortages in materials, components and labour, and by energy price increases and inflation more generally. It is simply not possible to mitigate adequately every risk and so it is important that contracts are drafted to limit exposure.

When looking to sell into new markets, it may also help to use a local intermediary in the form of a distributor or agent. A key point will be whether the intermediary is exclusive or non-exclusive and whether the supplier reserves the right also to sell direct to customers in the territory.

The choice of governing law and jurisdiction always need to be addressed and sometimes even the language of a contract.

In summary, selling into new export markets does represent a major opportunity for growth for many UK businesses. As outlined, there are many factors to consider however, and contracts with customers need to address these.

To arrange a discussion around international trade opportunities for your business, Chamber members can contact Julian through julian.milan@mfgsolicitors.com



For all your Corporate needs

Contact us now
0845 5555321 mfgsolicitors.com





Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce Releases Business Manifesto for 2025/26

Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce has launched its Business Manifesto for 2025/26, outlining its key priorities for the year ahead.

More information about support and our policies can be found on the Chamber website
hwchamber.co.uk/support/policy

Based on extensive research, including insights from the Quarterly Economic Survey and direct engagement with businesses, the Manifesto highlights the challenges faced by local companies and how the Chamber remains committed to supporting business growth across the two counties.

The 2025/26 Manifesto reflects the core areas where our Members look to us for guidance:

- Business Costs
- People, Inclusivity and Diversity
- Cyber Security and Technology
- International Trade
- Profit & Revenue
- Sustainability

These priorities are shaped by real business experiences and will drive the Chamber's focus throughout the year.

Sharon Smith, Chief Executive of the Chamber, commented:

"Our mission is to ensure that businesses in Herefordshire and Worcestershire have the support, opportunities, and advocacy they need to succeed. This Manifesto is more than just a document, it's a commitment to taking action, listening to our Members, and championing their needs at every level."

Download the full Manifesto and see how we're supporting businesses in 2025/26:

www.hwchamber.co.uk/manifesto-2025-26

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Celebrating 145 Years: Introducing Henry Westons 1880 Vintage

It all began in 1878 when Henry Weston settled at The Bounds and started producing ciders and perries from 1880.

Using the wide variety of apples grown in the surrounding Herefordshire orchards he started the art of pressing and blending the fruit with a focus to craft quality ciders.

Fast forward to 2025 and Westons Cider proudly continue to use traditional cider apples sourced within 50 miles of the original mill. We work with over 200 fruit growers, supporting long-term contracts in our heartland. Freshly pressed and slowly matured using the heart and soul of the region's orchards to develop the most refreshing and authentic ciders around. Henry Westons 1880 Vintage is a true celebration of our heritage and craftsmanship, made from a recipe passed down through five generations of the Westons family. For 145 years, we've been



dedicated to producing exceptional ciders and this launch perfectly combines our rich history with the evolving tastes of modern consumers. Please join us in raising a glass.

Please visit the website for more information: www.westons-cider.co.uk.

Building Futures: How Kidderminster College's Skills for Green Technology Centre is Shaping Tomorrow's Workforce

Kidderminster College's brand-new Green Technology Centre opened its doors in September 2024 and is already making a significant impact to the local community.



During Women in Construction Week, Kidderminster College celebrated the incredible female learners at Kidderminster College's Green Technology Centre who have been paving the way for the next generation of women in the trades. They also recognised the inspiring women in education who have been dedicated to empowering and supporting them every step of the way.

The college takes pride in collaborating with local employers to develop its curriculum. A recent example of this was a visit to Kidderminster Town Hall, where college staff



toured the nearly completed renovation project. They are delighted that construction learners have now been invited to assist with the final finishing touches across various trades, gaining valuable hands-on experience in the process.

To book a tour of the centre please contact kcemployers@kidderminster.ac.uk or scan the barcode.

For further details on college provision and upcoming events, please visit the website at www.kidderminster.ac.uk.



Enterprising Worcestershire fuels entrepreneurial success

Enterprising Worcestershire is empowering entrepreneurs and early-stage businesses across the county through its offer of bespoke coaching and 1-to-1 support. Since its launch, the business coaching programme has helped 165 businesses.

One such business is Flex 3D Printing Ltd, founded by James Birkett. What began as a hobbyist 3D printing venture soon evolved into a thriving business. As demand grew, James moved his operations from his living room to a rented office space and dedicated more time to his growing enterprise. To navigate this pivotal phase, James reached out to Enterprising Worcestershire, the County Council's business coaching and support programme, facilitated by Real World Consultancy (RWC).

Paired with an experienced coach, James and his team evaluated their business model by identifying barriers to growth and developed a comprehensive business plan. "We were supported to make realistic plans and reviewed every area of the business," recalls James. This guidance led to significant investments in custom software for faster order quoting and streamlined workflows.

With specialist guidance from RWC, Flex 3D Printing Ltd hired a 3D Artist, Finance Director, Production Manager and Software Engineer to work on enhancing their website and order management system.

James's journey from hobbyist to business owner highlights the power of targeted business coaching. Flex 3D Printing Ltd is now positioned for continued success in the UK's 3D printing sector.

For more information on the latest business support, please visit: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/businesssupport.

*This programme is funded by UKSPF and delivered in partnership with District Councils.

Ormerod Rutter Announced as Community Partner for Rik Mayall Comedy Festival

Ormerod Rutter has been confirmed as a community partner for the inaugural Rik Mayall Comedy Festival, taking place in Droitwich Spa from 31 May to 7 June 2025.



As one of Worcestershire's leading independent accountancy firms, Ormerod Rutter will support the festival's final day event, 'Party in the Park,' a community celebration to mark the conclusion of the week-long festival. The event will feature live comedy, music, and family-friendly entertainment, bringing together residents and visitors for a memorable finale.

Julian Powell, Finance Director of the Rik Mayall Comedy Festival, said: "We are incredibly grateful to Ormerod Rutter for their support as a community partner. As a well-respected business in the region, their commitment to the local community is

evident, and we're delighted to have them involved in the festival's closing celebrations."

Tony Archer, Partner at Ormerod Rutter, added: "Droitwich Spa has a strong sense of community, and we are always looking for ways to give back. The Rik Mayall Comedy Festival is a brilliant addition to the town's cultural calendar, and we are proud to support the final day celebrations, ensuring the festival ends on a high."

The Rik Mayall Comedy Festival will feature a variety of performances, screenings, and workshops, with events taking place at the Norbury Theatre and other venues across Droitwich Spa. The festival is volunteer-led, supported by Rik Mayall's family, and aims to celebrate his legacy while bringing new visitors to the town, cementing its reputation and a great place to live, work and visit.

Contact

For more information about:

Ormerod Rutter's involvement in the festival, please contact: marketing@ormerodrutter.co.uk.

The Rik Mayall Comedy Festival, please contact: press@rikmayallcomedyfestival.com.

Melbourne to Midlands: Global Talent Exchange Powers Accounting Innovation

A West Midlands accounting firm is embracing global talent exchange to enhance career development and client service. Ballards LLP, based in Birmingham and Worcestershire, is leveraging its AGN International membership to participate in a reciprocal international secondment programme.

This initiative allows employees to develop their skills overseas while fostering global relationships. It also strengthens Ballards' ability to support international clients, a growing focus for the firm. Later this year, a Ballards team member will travel to Australia, while this month, the firm is hosting its first secondee—Tom Roscrow, Audit and Accounts Senior from Ashfords Accountants in Melbourne.

Tom has been actively integrating with the UK firm, gaining insights into different accounting practices. "Seeing how other firms approach their work and team environments gives me a fresh perspective," he said. Despite cultural similarities, some differences stand out, such as hotdesking, which contrasts with Australian managers having private offices.

Beyond professional insights, the experience offers personal enrichment. "I've never been to Europe, so the chance to travel and work was a major draw. Plus, I was ready for a break from the heat!" Tom added.

Andy Bewick, Partner at Ballards LLP, highlighted the programme's value: "International



secondments create a cross-pollination of ideas, benefiting both firms. Tom's fresh perspective has been invaluable."

AGN International's exchange programme continues to drive professional growth, cross-border knowledge sharing, and stronger global collaboration.

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Our Approach: Drawing inspiration from global thought leaders, we translate ideas into actionable, engaging and enjoyable learning experiences.

Services Offered:

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- **Training**
- **Coaching**
- **Leadership & Team Development**
- **Mentoring**

Located in the heart of Worcestershire, we're dedicated to partnering with businesses that share our unwavering commitment to continuous learning and growth. We firmly believe that your people are the key to your success.

Let's Discuss Your Business Challenges: We're always eager to engage in conversations about your latest business hurdles. Whether it's nurturing a culture of creativity or empowering individuals to reach their full potential, *a 20-minute chat can often illuminate your next steps, even if you're unsure of what they might be at first.*



Contact Liz Gait **TODAY!** e: liz@egpeopledevelopment.co.uk
or visit www.egpeopledevelopment.co.uk

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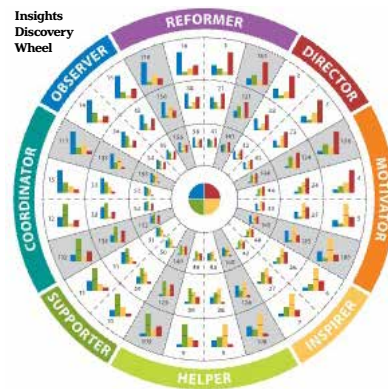
AI won't have all the answers

Developing your leadership talent may be the best investment you make.

Leaders in your business aren't just the founders, Managing Directors or those with direct reports – leaders are present right across your business. They are great at working with others, positively supporting and challenging convention, continuously developing and being aware of what is going on across the business and their team.

Investing in leadership development is just what we have done working with one local business – Sitemark www.sitemark.co.uk. Based in Malvern, this facilities management consultancy has a team of 14 project managers and business managers, sales, procurement and admin staff. Whilst data driven by the benchmarking and audit work which they do in some iconic buildings, including the University of Durham and in Canary Wharf, they recognised the success of their business lay in developing their leadership talent, focused around their values – Innovation, Ambition, Teamwork & Excellence.

We've worked on self-awareness using the globally used psychometric tool 'Insights Discovery', run sessions on Team Effectiveness, Personal Effectiveness & Creativity.



Currently embracing the potential of AI in developing their work, they are however recognising that this cannot be solely relied upon to drive their business success. It is in the development of their leadership capacity which will set them apart from other businesses in their industry. Teams will still need to develop their competencies in collaboration, empathy, communication and creativity and it is humans who will achieve success in these areas, not AI.

If you're noticing some dysfunction in teams, lack of trust, disintegrating communication or



a lack of purpose in your business, perhaps now is the time to invest in some leadership development – discover the potential of the people who you work with.

Are you curious? Want to invest in your human talent?

Visit: www.egpeopledevelopment.co.uk

Contact: liz@egpeopledevelopment.co.uk



WORCESTERSHIRE TALENT & SKILLS PLEDGE

The Worcestershire Talent & Skills Pledge is designed to support Worcestershire businesses to create their future workforce, developing skills and boosting productivity for employers in the county.

Name

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Role

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For more information, and to submit your pledge, contact
Worcestershire Growth Hub:
info@worcestershiregrowthhub.co.uk or 01905 677888

WorkWell: Helping employers reduce absence and build a healthier workforce

A healthy workforce is a productive workforce. According to a 2023 report by the World Health Organisation (WHO), companies that implement effective health and wellbeing programmes can increase productivity by up to 20%.

Yet, absenteeism remains a significant challenge for many businesses, with mental health concerns being the leading cause. Recent data from the Quarterly Economic Survey shows that:

- 25.96% of work absences are due to depression, anxiety, or nervous disorders.
- 10.18% are caused by other mental health conditions, including phobias and nervous disorders.
- 9.82% result from chest or breathing problems, such as asthma or bronchitis.
- 9.47% are linked to heart and blood circulation issues.
- 6.67% stem from stomach, liver, or digestive conditions.

Despite these challenges, 25.75% of employers still have no formal absence management process.

Why should employers engage with WorkWell?

As an employer, your commitment to the health and wellbeing of your employees not only supports individuals but also brings tangible business benefits, including:

- Reducing absence and improving productivity
- Demonstrating investment in employee wellbeing
- Boosting staff morale and engagement
- Supporting employee retention and reducing turnover costs
- Helping employees return to work following absence
- Providing guidance on reasonable adjustments to keep staff in work
- Minimising the financial impact of sickness absence and staff replacement

What is WorkWell?

In 2024, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) commissioned the NHS to deliver WorkWell - a new programme designed to provide early intervention and tailored support for employees experiencing health-related barriers to work.

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire is proud to be delivering WorkWell, which offers:

- Expert assessments to identify challenges affecting work and wellbeing.
- Personalised action plans to help individuals overcome barriers.



- Access to local clinical and non-clinical support, such as mental health services, physiotherapy, and financial advice.
- Practical support for employers, including guidance on reasonable adjustments and workplace wellbeing strategies.

How Can Employers Access WorkWell?

WorkWell services are free, confidential, and easy to access. Employers can refer employees (with their consent) if they:

- Need support managing a health condition at work
- Are struggling to return after a period of sickness absence
- Require guidance on reasonable adjustments to continue working effectively

GPs, Jobcentre Plus, and employees themselves can also refer directly into WorkWell.

On-the-Ground Support: Work and Health Coaches

To ensure effective early intervention, we have recruited 15 Work and Health Coaches across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Based within GP practices but working across the community, these specialists help individuals

stay in work, return to work, and manage their health effectively.

For employers, our Work and Health Coaches offer:

- Advice on reasonable adjustments to help employees stay in work
- Support for return-to-work planning following absence
- Guidance on workplace health conversations

By proactively supporting employee health, you can reduce long-term sickness absence, lower recruitment costs, and create a more engaged and productive workforce.

Let's Work Together for a Healthier Future

Investing in workplace health is not just the right thing to do - it makes business sense. A culture that prioritises employee wellbeing leads to a stronger, more productive workforce.

By partnering with WorkWell, you can reduce absence, retain skilled employees, and demonstrate your commitment to staff wellbeing.

For more information on how WorkWell can support your business, please contact amelia.ringer@nhs.net.



Funded by
UK Government



WorkWell

Do you have employees who are finding it hard to manage work because of a health condition? **WorkWell** can help!



Scan the QR code to find out about the WorkWell programme that offers coaching, guidance and support to help your employees stay in or return to work.



www.hwics.org.uk/our-services/workwell

Taking the Pressure Off Health and Safety & HR for Local Businesses

Navigating the Health and Safety and HR world can be challenging, especially for small and medium-sized businesses that must balance compliance with other business needs.

At CXCS, we know that not every business needs a full-time Health and Safety or HR team, but every business needs peace of mind that it is meeting its legal obligations. That's where we come in.

Based in Herefordshire, we offer practical, flexible support for businesses across the region, with no lengthy contracts and no corporate jargon. We have experienced professionals on hand when you need them. Whether handling a tricky employee situation, carrying out a risk assessment,



“We work with everyone from sole traders to growing teams, helping you stay compliant, reduce risk, and focus on what you do best.”

or needing advice on meeting your legal obligations, we provide the reassurance and expertise that helps businesses thrive.

We work with everyone from sole traders to growing teams, helping you stay compliant, reduce risk, and focus on what you do best.

Let's discuss whether HR or Health and Safety are on your to-do list (but never quite at the top). We're local, responsive, and easy to work with, like your ideal business partner.

Find out more at cxcs.co.uk/commercial, info@cxcs.co.uk or call **01981 5901514**.

Local. Reliable. No Strings Attached.

Tailored Health and Safety and HR support for your business!

We remove the stress with our expertise when you need it most.

- Local & responsive
- In-house expertise, on demand
- No long-term tie-ins
- Simple, practical advice

Let us handle compliance – so you can focus on your business.



Scan the QR code to get started

01981 590514
info@cxcs.co.uk
cxcs.co.uk/commercial



HoW College & University of Worcester Open New University Centre

HoW marked Colleges Week by joining the University of Worcester for the opening of a new University Centre.

The centre will see the University of Worcester and HoW College working more closely to provide a growing number of higher education opportunities for learners across the region, with staff from both organisations working together to provide students with an enriched curriculum and enhanced aspirations.

Michelle Dowse, Principal and CEO of Heart of Worcestershire College, said: “The launch of the new University Centre is not only about creating more opportunities and improving pathways for our students, but it further strengthens our partnerships with the University of Worcester.”

She added: “Our role in Worcestershire as an anchor institution is something that is hugely important to us, and we have a

shared vision that, by working together, we can offer a high-quality education which benefits both the students and the wider community, combining our own strengths of academic excellence with the broader opportunities which the university offers.”

Professor David Green CBE DL, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive of the University of Worcester, said: “The purpose of this centre is to help nurture and support the invaluable work that HoW college does across Worcestershire, and to make it even more straightforward for its graduates to gain access to courses at the University.”

He added: “The establishment of this Centre is further proof of the shared commitment we all have to nurturing education and building skills across the region.”



For information on courses at Heart of Worcestershire College please visit the website at www.howcollege.ac.uk.

For information on courses at University of Worcester visit www.worcester.ac.uk.

Why Electricians need to be so skilled, and why learning doesn't stop after qualifying

At PAT-MAN 24/7 LTD we are constantly striving for excellence, to be at the top of our game we need to continually upgrade our skills, qualifications and knowledge in the newest energy trends.

Did you know the electrical industry is constantly evolving? These changes are driven by advancements in technology, sustainability efforts, and changing regulatory requirements. As new energy-efficient solutions emerge, such as smart grids, renewable energy integration, and electric vehicle infrastructure, professionals must stay informed to ensure compliance and maintain safety standards.

Regulations are frequently updated to address emerging risks, improve system reliability, and enhance environmental sustainability. Compliance with standards like the National Electrical Code (NEC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, and local building codes is essential for electricians, engineers, and contractors. Failure to adapt to these changes can result in safety hazards, legal consequences, and inefficiencies.

Continuous education and certification programs help industry professionals stay current with the latest codes, materials, and best practices. Additionally, digital tools and automation are reshaping electrical work, requiring adaptability and ongoing training.

By staying up to date with regulatory changes and embracing innovation, the electrical



industry ensures safer, more efficient, and sustainable energy solutions for the future.

We provide all our staff with the appropriate training to get them briefed with all new regulations and we frequently attend training regarding net zero products.

We are proud to say that our standard are assessed by the NICEIC and construction line and we have a company that our clients can trust.

www.pat-man247.com





WE CAN HELP FILL YOUR VACANCIES!

- **Access job-ready 16-24-year-olds** – Careers Worcs connects businesses with young people actively looking for work and career opportunities.
- **Fill vacancies quickly** – Save time and effort by reaching local candidates who are eager to step into employment.
- **Tailored recruitment support** – Careers Worcs provides businesses with free support to match vacancies with suitable candidates.
- **Support for work experience and apprenticeships** – Careers Worcs can assist in setting up placements that benefit both businesses and young workers.
- **Completely free service** – There are no costs to businesses for using Careers Worcs to find young employees.

CAREERS WORCS

EMAIL: CAREERSADMIN@WORCESTERSHIRE.GOV.UK CALL: 0300 666 3 666



Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership

WWW.CAREERSWORCS.CO.UK



Careers Worcs: Connecting Businesses with Future Talent for Current Vacancies

Careers Worcestershire (Careers Worcs) is a free service dedicated to supporting 16–24-year-olds in Worcestershire into employment, education, training, or further development.

Through tailored advice, CV and interview workshops, and one-to-one support, the service ensures young people have the confidence, skills, and motivation to take their first steps into the world of work.

For businesses looking to fill vacancies quickly, Careers Worcs offers direct access to job-ready candidates who are

actively seeking employment. These motivated individuals bring fresh energy and adaptability and are keen to contribute from day one.

Whether you're recruiting for entry-level positions or junior roles, Careers Worcs can help you reach the right candidate, fast.

The service also provides completely free recruitment support, helping businesses match vacancies with suitable young people, simplifying the hiring process, and saving time. By investing in young talent, employers not only strengthen their workforce, but also play a vital role in supporting Worcestershire's future economy and skills landscape.

In addition to supporting employment opportunities, Careers Worcs can assist with setting up work experience placements and apprenticeships, helping organisations to nurture potential while offering valuable real-world experience to young people.

“With recruitment challenges affecting many sectors, now is the time to tap into local talent and develop the next generation of your workforce.”



With recruitment challenges affecting many sectors, now is the time to tap into local talent and develop the next generation of your workforce.

To find out more, or to advertise your vacancy to local young people, contact: careersadmin@worcestershire.gov.uk or call **0300 666 3 666**.

Please visit www.careersworcs.co.uk.

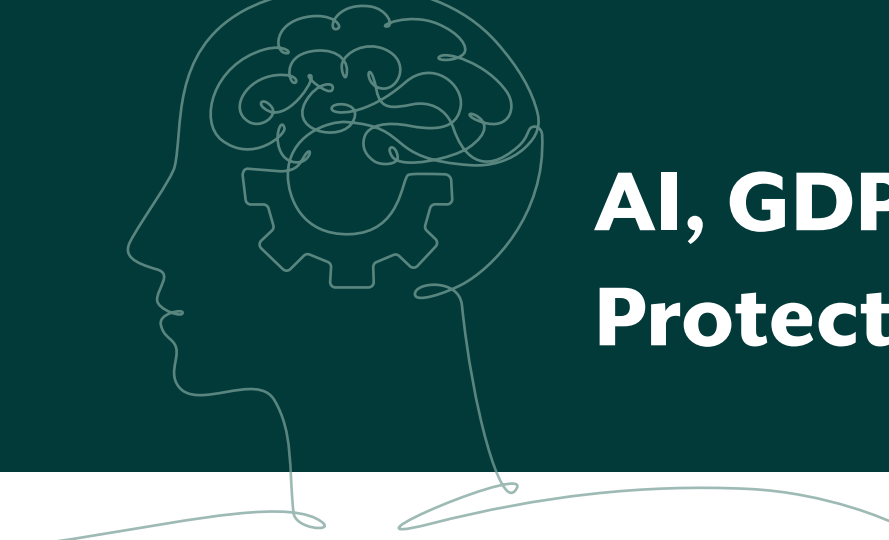
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Contact:
Angie Smith,
Business Development Manager

Email
a.smith@distinctivegroup.co.uk

Telephone
0191 5805472

Website
www.distinctivegroup.co.uk



AI, GDPR and the Protection of Rights

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionising the way we work, interact, and make decisions. It also presents serious challenges, particularly in relation to the protection of individual rights under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

AI's Impact

AI allows for the automation of tasks and the enhancement of the decision-making process. For example, in recruitment, AI-driven systems could be used to screen CVs, predict candidate success based on historical data and even conduct initial interviews. In the world of marketing, AI can be deployed to analyse consumer behaviour and tailor adverts to individual preferences to increase engagement.

Challenges under UK GDPR

Generative AI uses a large amount of data to assess and produce outputs. Much of this is likely to be personal data. UK GDPR aims to protect individuals' privacy and data and this can pose significant challenges for AI applications. AI system providers need to take into account data privacy and security.

UK GDPR requires data controllers to be transparent and to explain AI decision-making processes clearly. This can lead to tensions where AI algorithms are often complex and opaque, making it difficult for individuals to understand how their data is being used.

Finally, UK GDPR requires organisations to implement measures ensuring accountability and human oversight. Determining accountability in AI systems is challenging, especially when decisions are made autonomously.

Harnessing AI in a compliant manner

Businesses looking to harness the power of AI must adopt strategies to ensure they adhere to principles in UK GDPR, the EU AI Act and other regulations.

Good data hygiene practices are crucial for all businesses, not just those providing or deploying AI. Providers should seek to minimise personal data and collect only what is necessary for specified purposes and ensure it is anonymised or pseudonymised where possible.

Developers should consider "Explainable AI" to ensure their systems are transparent and explainable. This involves the use of processes and methods with clear documentation and communication to make the decisions and outputs of AI systems understandable and trustworthy to humans. AI providers should also conduct regular audits of their systems and undertake Data Protection Impact Assessments to identify and mitigate risks.

The EU AI Act refers to ensuring there is a "human-in-the-loop". This involves the review of critical decisions by humans as a safeguard so that AI decisions are fair, ethical, and aligned with human values.

HCR Legal LLP is authorised and regulated by the SRA



External support can help to fully implement a suitable plan, ensure the law is complied with, and that goals are achieved within a complex landscape. This support can provide a sounding board for ideas, as well as up-to-date information on ESG practices and processes.

Difficulties in protecting rights

Ensuring the protection of individual rights in AI systems is beset with difficulties. AI systems can perpetuate existing biases present in training data, leading to discriminatory outcomes. The complexity of AI models, particularly deep learning systems, makes it challenging to ensure transparency and accountability. Simplifying these models without compromising their effectiveness – or losing competitive advantage in the market – is a challenge.

It can be difficult to strike a balance between fostering innovation and ensuring regulatory compliance. The EU has been quick to regulate through its AI Act. Conversely, the USA, and to some extent UK, have been more wary about stifling innovation. This has led some to fear that this could lead to privacy abuses and a loss of trust.

Best Practices

While AI offers immense potential, it also presents significant challenges in protecting individual rights. Businesses have a number of options to ensure best practices are followed:

1. Develop and adhere to ethical AI principles that prioritise fairness, transparency, and accountability. These principles should guide the design, development, and deployment ensuring diverse and representative datasets
2. Involve stakeholders, including data subjects, in the development and deployment of AI systems to ensure diverse perspectives are considered and that meet the needs and expectations of all users
3. Implement continuous monitoring and improvement processes for AI systems and regularly update AI models to address biases, improve transparency, and enhance performance
4. Provide training about UK GDPR and ethics among employees. This ensures that everyone involved in AI development and deployment understands their responsibilities and the importance of protecting individual rights
5. Follow the Information Commissioner's Office guidance on ensuring that data is collected, processed, and stored in compliance with UK GDPR.



For more information, please contact

Frank Jennings, Partner, Commercial

T: 020 3824 9748 | **M:** 07788 584 305 | **E:** fjennings@hcrlaw.com

www.hcrlaw.com

Room Hire at Severn House, Worcester

Are you looking for a venue to host your next away day or business meeting?
Our training and meeting rooms are spacious, well-equipped and available for room hire. Situated 5 minutes away from Junction 6 of the M5, they are suitable for meetings, away days, your training sessions or even just some thinking space.

Visitors will be greeted in a courteous and professional manner and our rooms will provide the perfect setting, whatever your requirements.

Our prices are inclusive of all room hire equipment and refreshments – no hidden charges!

- Air conditioning/Heating
- Wi-Fi
- Coffee, tea and biscuits
- Water cooler
- Free onsite parking
- Flipchart and pens
- Plasma TV screen & HDMI connection
- Locally sourced buffets can be ordered on request



Our Meeting Rooms

We have four meeting rooms available to hire, all of which can be adapted to suit your requirements.

Conference room seating up to 25 theatre style & 14 u-shape. First floor.

Full day – £225+VAT Members / £280+VAT Non-members

Half day – £175+VAT Members / £215+VAT Non-members

IT suite that seats up to 10 in a u-shape. Ground floor.

Full day – £225+VAT Members / £280+VAT

Non-members

Half day – £175+VAT Members / £215+VAT Non-members

Small meeting room that seats up to 8. Ground floor.

Full day – £115+VAT Members / £170+VAT Non-members

Half day – £60+VAT Members / £90+VAT Non-members

Small meeting room that seats up to 8. First floor.

Full day – £115+VAT Members / £170+VAT

Non-members

Half day – £60+VAT Members / £90+VAT Non-members

The Severn House offices offer the following accessibility features; step free entrance to the building, lift, downstairs accessible toilets, disabled parking spaces and downstairs meeting rooms.

We can also accommodate any other needs/ requirements such as prayer rooms, guide dogs, brail kits etc.

To check availability or book please email training@hwchamber.co.uk or telephone **01905 673600**

More information about each training course and upcoming dates can be found on the Chamber website
hwchamber.co.uk/events-and-training-calendar

Meet the Chamber Training Team



Olivia Williams,
Head of Events
& Training



Amanda Swingewood,
Senior Training
Co-ordinator



Saskia Murphy,
Events & Training
Assistant

We would like to hear from you!

Whilst continuously expanding our training offering, we are always keen to hear from businesses about what training needs they have or skills shortages they are facing. Our dedicated training team are on hand to support and help find a solution for you.

We also welcome suggestions for new courses or workshops that will be most beneficial to our local businesses. To express your interest in delivering training on behalf of the Chamber or to put forward your suggestions for new course topics, please email training@hwchamber.co.uk

Training & Development

May Course Dates

Using the Telephone and Virtual Platforms in Selling
Tuesday 6 May, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Virtual

Google Analytics 4 - GA4 Workshop
Tuesday 6 May, 9.00am-12.30pm
£95+VAT Members / £115+VAT Non-members
Location: Virtual

Managing Neurodivergent Employees
Wednesday 7 May, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

Managing People in the Team
Wednesday 14 May, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

Fire Marshal Training
Thursday 15 May, 9.00am-4.00pm
£95+VAT Members / £115+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

Sexual Harassment Training
Thursday 15 May, 9.00am-12.30pm
£95+VAT Members / £115+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

Intermediate Microsoft Excel
Tuesday 20 May, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

IOSH Managing Safely® (4 day)
Tuesday 20 May -Friday 23 May, 9.00am-4.00pm
£495+VAT Members / £595+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

Mental Health First Aid (1 day)
Thursday 22 May, 9.00am-4.00pm
£210+VAT Members / £260+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

June Course Dates

Introduction to Microsoft Excel
Wednesday 4 June, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Virtual

Internal Auditor Training
Thursday 5 June, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

Assertiveness and Confidence
Thursday 5 June, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Virtual

Managing Performance in the Team
Tuesday 10 June, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

An Introduction to Digital Marketing and PR
Tuesday 17 June, 9.00am-11.00am
FREE for Members / £115+VAT Non-members
Location: Zoom

Professional Telephone Techniques
Wednesday 18 June, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

IOSH Managing Safely® Refresher
Wednesday 18 June, 9.00am-4.00pm
£175+VAT Members / £220+VAT Non-members
Location: Worcester

Search Engine Optimisation
Tuesday 24 June, 9.00am-12.30pm
£95+VAT Members / £115+VAT Non-members
Location: Virtual

***Courses may be subject to change from the time of printing.**



We would like to hear from you!

Whilst continuously expanding the training offering, the Training department are always looking for new ideas for courses. It's great to understand what topics will be most beneficial to local businesses.

For any suggestions, please email training@hwchamber.co.uk. More information about each training course and upcoming dates can be found on the Chamber website - hwchamber.co.uk/events-and-training-calendar

ISO QSL: Helping make your business better

ISO Quality Services Limited is celebrating its 25th anniversary. The secret to their enduring success? Helping businesses like yours to thrive and prosper.

Family values are very important to the management team at the Worcester-based firm.

Founder and chairman Peter Appleton is company patriarch; his wife Susan is director; and their daughters Jennifer Appleton and Debbie Farr are managing director and HR facilities director respectively.

Together, their highly successful business management consultancy – specialising in ISO training and certification – has built a close-knit professional team and lasting ties with a huge range of clients.

An ISO Management Standard is viewed as best practice in business management. It comprises a set of internationally recognised guidelines covering everything from Quality Management (ISO 9001) and Health and Safety (ISO 45001) to Environmental Management (ISO 14001) and Information Security Management (ISO 27001).

ISO Certification is proof that your company complies with excellent standards of governance and compliance. It shows stakeholders that your business is well-run – particularly useful if applying for finance, seeking investment, or even planning to sell up.

Jennifer says, “We believe we are the only family-run ISO certification business in the UK.

“I think this offers an extra layer of comfort for SMEs similar to ours, who are owner-managed or family-run, because we are similar to them.

“Our predominant market is SMEs, but we also work with some very large well-known companies.

“We certificate around 500 companies and also offer standalone ISO consultancy and training.

“We offer our services both remotely and physically. It’s crucial that we work with our clients closely through the whole journey to certification, and we’ve found that the most robust auditing is based in the physical environment.”

“Our services offer an affordable and accessible route to ISO. The big four in our industry may have thousands of clients, however they can’t offer the same level of personal service that we can.”

Jennifer adds, “Our services offer an affordable and accessible route to ISO. The big four in our industry may have thousands of clients, however they can’t offer the same level of personal service that we can.

“Our client relationships are not transactional – it’s a partnership which last years.”

Susan agrees, saying, “Our clients know they can call us at any time and speak with a person. People still do like the personal touch – we get a lot of positive feedback about that.”

Journey’s start

ISO QSL launched in spring 2000, when Peter incorporated his fledgling company.

“The new ISO 9001 standard had just been released. We started out with an old-style leaflet campaign across Ireland, and slowly but surely the company evolved.”

The business accrued hundreds of new clients, but the current company really took roots in 2010 when Peter returned to the UK and Jennifer joined the team.

She reflects, “Certification was slightly more niche in the early days, and we were also dealing with the transition to digital marketing.

“Most importantly, we were looking at our own business from an ISO perspective to make sure we ‘practice what we preach’. We refined our processes and systems and continue to adapt to new technology and regulations to this day.

“Today, we have clients based all over the world, although 80% of our business remains in the UK.

“ISO is still regarded as the ultimate ‘go to’ standard across a huge commercial marketplace because of its origins and history.”

Quality and the customer

Standard requirements are regularly upgraded to reflect ever-changing market conditions and demands.

But one thing that hasn’t changed is their core ethos and what they can achieve for the customer.

Although the current turbulence around Trump’s geopolitics has yet to settle, the team doesn’t think it will impact the global standards market too much long-term.

Peter explains, “As Jennifer has already mentioned, ISO represents the ultimate benchmark in business improvement and spans a lot of industries, while others are more niche.

“America has had its own standards for many years, but we are seeing them take more of an interest



in international ones, such as ISO. They see British standards as more authentic.”

Jen agrees, “We have definitely seen an increase over the last eight to 10 years in American interest.”

Anniversary celebrations

Debbie says the emphasis is definitely on charity for their silver jubilee.

“We enjoy a very good reputation throughout the UK, but the local business community means a lot to us.

“A big part of our celebrations is focused on supporting our charity, the Midlands Air Ambulance, who we’ve backed for nearly 20 years.

“In February, we raised £2.5k at Love Local, an exhibition-style networking event at Worcester Cricket Club.

“And we recently held our Good Egg awards for our clients, while a big Golf Day and quiz are also coming up.

“Plus, we’re sponsoring the Chamber of Commerce’s Awards’ after party this year, so there’s plenty to look forward to!”

The next 25

Looking ahead, Peter reflects, “My daughters are carrying the baton for the current generation, and the company will continue to grow in line with our values.

“I started with my own family, and now I have an extended ‘family’ of 20-plus people, who are all developing their careers.

“We continue to put a lot of time and effort into each customer. We don’t aim to grow too quickly and risk losing the customer service element.”

Jennifer agrees. “Our primary achievement as a business is to have really good people doing really good work for really good clients.

“If we can maintain those three things, then I think that’s what we would call a success for the next 25 years.”



For more information:
isoqsltd.com

Unlock your potential with new Master's in Professional Development at the University of Worcester

In today's fast-paced business world, Continuing Professional Development is vital for both organisations and individuals. Recognising this, a new Master's in Professional Development programme has been launched at the University of Worcester, offering a flexible and tailored approach to learning that caters to professionals across all sectors.

One of the stand-out features of this programme is its flexibility. Unlike traditional Master's programmes that require a set pathway, this new offering allows individuals to choose their own modules and pathways. This means professionals can design a bespoke qualification that aligns perfectly with their career aspirations and learning needs. Whether in healthcare, business, education, or any other field, this programme is designed to enhance individual's skills and knowledge in a way that is directly applicable to their profession.

The programme places a strong emphasis on work-based learning. Participants can undertake specific work-based learning modules or bring a project or piece of work from their job to earn credits through Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). This practical and flexible approach ensures that the learning is not only theoretical but also directly relevant to the workplace.

Participants can choose from a wide range of modules, including in leadership, research, and health assessment, which are designed to complement and enhance the work that professionals are already doing. By integrating these modules into their learning plan, participants can develop a comprehensive skill set that will aid their career progression.

Participants will be assigned a supervisor who will support their learning journey. This personalised guidance ensures that individuals can progress at their own pace and receive the help they need to succeed.



The programme also includes a project element, which allows participants to bring together their learning in a practical and meaningful way.

Understanding the demands of professional life, the programme can be completed flexibly, allowing individuals to balance their studies with their professional and personal commitments, making it a realistic option for busy professionals.

Professionals can begin their studies at any time of the year and have the option to exit with a Postgraduate Certificate,

Postgraduate Diploma, or continue to earn a full MA or MSc.

This new programme offers benefits to both individuals, in the form of career advancement and personal growth, and to organisations who want to invest in their staff's development, creating a more skilled and motivated workforce.

The programme is designed to create a learning experience that is both enriching and practical, ensuring that the skills and knowledge gained are directly applicable to the workplace.

The University will be running a series of roadshows for businesses and individuals to learn more about how this course can meet their professional development needs. Visit www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate-professional-development to find out more.

“Professionals can design a bespoke qualification that aligns perfectly with their career aspirations and learning needs.”



Power-Up! and help youngsters into work

The Power-Up! programme connects professionals like you with youngsters who need a career kickstart. Former student Libby McCann explains how her mentorship laid a fulfilling pathway into work.

Kids today often get bad press, but as the saying goes, 'Give a little, get a lot'.

This certainly rings true for Libby, now aged 20, and her business mentor Dr Rob Milford, of Milford Research & Consultancy Ltd, which specialises in leadership and management training and consultancy.

The pair first met through Power-Up! – designed to bridge the gap between academia and the world of work – during Libby's A-levels.

Rob's company is one of the driving forces behind the charitable foundation, and he devised its toolkits and activities, accredited by the Institute of Leadership. (The Power-Up! Mentor Foundation CIO is the charity developed in 2022 to deliver the programme across England and Wales.)

The aim is to give young people invaluable practical skills and support and build confidence and self-esteem while they decide their fledgling career moves. Their mentors, on the other hand, get the chance to give back to the community while helping up-and-coming talent grow.

Libby's journey

She explains, "As part of my business course, I designed a CV for a pretend role and did a mock interview with Rob at school.

"We ended up having a really good chat, and he realised my design skills could help market his company as I'm very passionate about photography and all things creative."

Libby started out doing summer work, creating promotional materials for Milford Research.

Four years on she is the company's full-time marketing and events coordinator.

"Rob's firm is all about opening up new opportunities for people, so back then he thought, 'Why not do that for me!'" Libby adds.

"His main role as mentor was to offer careers guidance, but he was always



Libby McCann and Rob Milford.

available for a chat over the phone if I was having a bad day.

"It's like having another person to turn to for guidance - rather than an authoritative figure - who you respect, trust and can have fun conversations with."

At school, Libby knew she wanted to make the most of her creative skills and had considered university. "I have always been interested in forms of visual art and marketing but it's a big gamble if you end up doing something you're not interested in."

"Power-Up! laid a lot of steppingstones for me, and I'm really grateful for all the opportunities I've been given."

"Rob has been an amazing mentor, even helping me choose courses to advance my career. As a young person, I'm so lucky to work for someone who talks to me like an equal."

The Power-Up! principle

The programme is designed for youngsters between 13 and 18, linking them with business owners and industry leaders who can offer hands-on advice and encouragement.

"It's ideal for students who may just be coasting through school and aren't sure on what to do next," Libby says. "They're quiet with reasonable grades but don't attract much attention in class."

"It's not aimed at the high achievers or the ones who need extra help – although of course mentoring is also available to them. It's more for the general students in the middle."

Becoming a mentor

Power-Up! is a voluntary scheme which means giving up at least an hour of your working month to work at an assigned school. All mentors must have a full enhanced DBS check prior to their first visit and undergo mentoring training.

Meet-ups can be arranged for sixth formers during free periods, and at break times for younger students. "A session usually consists of a short workshop focusing on business skills like communication - or just being there to listen if your mentee is having a bad day," Libby explains.

And while Power-Up! is mainly based in Worcestershire for now, it has attracted a lot of interest across the country, with expansion on the cards.

As for Libby, she can't wait to pass her own freshly acquired mentoring skills on to other youngsters soon.

"I've done the training, which was really fun, mingling with people of all ages from different industries. Plus, I can talk to students from their own perspective, which makes it easier for them to open up."

"I've grown so much in the last four years. That in-between stage of not really being a teenager or an adult can be really hard, and Power-Up! helped me to develop a better understanding of myself and my future during."

"I'll definitely be going 'back to my roots' at my old high school. I can't wait to share everything I've learned so far."

Full details about getting involved can be found at: www.milfordresearch.uk/power-up-programme.

Chamber Business Awards Finalists announced

Sponsored by Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council

Best use of Technology and Trends

sponsored by EBC Group

Ocius Consulting Limited, Redhill Manufacturing Ltd, RGS Worcester and StarkEV Ltd

Charity Business of the Year

sponsored by Milford Research & Consultancy Ltd

Acorns Children's Hospice, Midlands Air Ambulance Charity, ONSIDE, Primrose Hospice & Family Support Centre and The ELY Memorial Fund

Commitment to the Community

sponsored by Malvern Panalytical

Community Housing, Friends of Isaac's Food Bank, Heart of Worcestershire College, Hereford and Worcester fire and Rescue Service, Milford Research and Consultancy Limited and Severn Arts

Employer of the Year

sponsored by Heart of Worcestershire College

ABE (Ledbury) Limited, Bishop Fleming, CXCS Group, Dawleys and Hayward Wright

Excellence in Customer Service

sponsored by Wyevale Nurseries

Community Housing, Dawleys, EMS Group UK, Hogarths Stone Manor and Surf Tech IT Ltd

Excellence in Innovation

sponsored by Malvern Hills Science Park

EBC Group, Ocius Consulting Limited, ONE Creative Environments and The Key Safe Company

Excellence in Manufacturing and Engineering

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KGD, Leading Edge Power, Pharma Packaging Systems Ltd, Trueline Expanded Products and Underwood Steel Stockholders Ltd

Excellence in Professional Services

sponsored by LawFinity

Britannic Place Financial Management Limited, Fisher German LLP, GJS Dillon Ltd, Ormerod Rutter Chartered Accountants and Sutcliffe & Co Insurance

Excellence in Sustainability

sponsored by Vinegar Works

Blackpole Recycling, Greensafe IT, OLPRO, Wye Valley Brewery and Wyevale Nurseries Ltd

Health & Wellbeing in the Workplace

sponsored by Kingspan Insulation

Acorns Children's Hospice, Bradley Haynes Law, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Lucart Hygiene Ltd and Matcon Ltd

High Growth Business of the Year

sponsored by mfg Solicitors LLP

BuzzGen, Clearview Environmental (Midlands) Ltd, Level Peaks Associates Ltd, Limelite HR & Learning and Simson Aggregate Solutions Ltd

International Trade Business of the Year

sponsored by Bishop Fleming

Evenproducts Limited, Kimal Plc, Level Peaks Associates Ltd, OLPRO and Optimec Metrology Limited

Micro Business of the Year

sponsored by Worcestershire Growth Hub

ChoColours, GJS Dillon – The House Surveyors, Haze Environmental Ltd, Miss Milly Limited, Prime Mix Marketing Ltd and TIEM Design

Most Promising New Business

sponsored by Hayward Wright

Bid Essentials Ltd, Evolve Weight Loss, Online Media Works, The Business of Mindfulness Ltd and Vinegar Works Ltd

Small Business of the Year

sponsored by Britannic Place Financial Management

Apogee Associates Limited, BuzzGen, Rapid Relocate Limited (part of the HotelshopUK Group), Wickens Engineering Ltd and Your Property Box Estate

Tickets

Winners will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on Thursday 12th June at the Worcester Arena from 5.30pm.

Single tickets: £119.00+VAT Members / £159.00+VAT Non-members

Table of 10 tickets: £1,070.00+VAT Members / £1,430.00+VAT Non-members

Tickets can be purchased by emailing the events team on events@hwchamber.co.uk

NMITE Announces Groundbreaking New Partnership with AWE

NMITE has taken another major step towards establishing itself as a nationally significant new university, securing a new partnership with AWE—one of the UK's most important engineering organisations. Recognising the strength of NMITE's approach and the calibre of its graduates, AWE has committed to recruiting a steady pipeline of talent from NMITE's new BSc (Hons) Construction Management degree.

The partnership delivers a significant economic boost to Herefordshire, with AWE fully funding ten student places for the programme starting in September 2025. Each sponsored student will have their tuition fees fully paid by AWE and enjoy additional financial support for living costs. They will also then move straight into a professional AWE job when they graduate. This support amounts to a major new investment in NMITE and the county of Herefordshire as each new student will contribute tens of thousands of pounds to the local economy while gaining cutting-edge skills in sustainable construction and project management.

This collaboration reinforces NMITE's growing reputation for producing highly skilled, job-ready graduates who are in strong demand by national employers. It is yet another example of NMITE's success in doing things differently—and proving that its model delivers results.



James Newby, President & Chief Executive of NMITE, said: "This is a fantastic endorsement of NMITE's unique approach. AWE's commitment to funding our students and recruiting our graduates demonstrates how we are creating industry-ready professionals who can meet national skills demands while delivering economic benefits locally. NMITE recruits students based on their motivation to succeed, whatever their background—so this could be a life-changing opportunity for

local people who may not have previously considered this career path, offering full financial support and a guaranteed route into a great job."

Dr Martin Thomas, Engineering Talent Lead at AWE, added: "Our mission to keep the UK, and everyone within it, safe and secure can only be achieved with cutting-edge facilities and state-of-the-art infrastructure. Over the coming decades, construction managers will play a leading role in making this a reality. Our unique challenges require unique solutions. NMITE's ability to cut through engrained ways of thinking to create innovative skills solutions means we are proud to partner with them on the exciting BSc Construction Management course."

For more information about NMITE's BSc (Hons) Construction Management degree, please visit www.nmite.ac.uk.

Worcester Warriors Return to Professional Rugby: A New Era Begins

After more than two years away from professional rugby, Worcester Warriors have officially been confirmed as a member of the newly formed Tier 2 league, set to compete in the 2025/26 season. This milestone marks the club's long-awaited return, led by Junction 6 Limited, which took over the club and Sixways Stadium in 2024.

The decision to revive Worcester Warriors at the Tier 2 level, rather than restarting from the bottom of the rugby pyramid, was driven by a commitment to preserving the club's rich legacy and history, whilst also ensuring a strong, sustainable future for professional rugby in Worcester. This move, however, comes with the responsibility of settling all rugby creditors, a process the club has fully embraced.

Christopher Holland, Executive Chairman of Worcester Warriors, shared his thoughts on the club's return:

"In 2024 it became necessary for us to take over the freehold interests of the Stadium and the Warriors. That process has been challenging and rewarding in equal measure, and we have now made significant progress in stabilising the Sixways business as well as successfully navigating the detailed and demanding application process for entry of the

club into the second tier of professional rugby in England.

After careful consideration we chose to make the application to the new league under the name Worcester Warriors, a club founded in 1871, to preserve its history and legacy. As a result, even though we applied as a new non-league entrant, we are required to settle rugby creditors as defined by the RFU Regulation 5. We acknowledge and fully own this process and the responsibility that comes with it.

Had we opted to restart at the bottom of the rugby pyramid, as others have before us, the obligation to settle rugby creditors would have been removed. However, with the clear intent of investing and developing the future of rugby in the region, and to create opportunities and pathways within the sport, we have taken full responsibility for addressing these inherited obligations.



We now enter a defined period in which to provide financial guarantees, and to identify, validate, and agree all inherited rugby creditors. The completion of this process is the key to success and requires the collective support of all involved. We are committed to resolving this swiftly."

The RFU and Tier 2 Board have outlined rigorous financial and operational criteria for league entry, all of which Worcester Warriors have successfully met. The club has also committed to repaying the outstanding DCMS loan, further solidifying its financial security.



Lizzy Withers Promoted in New Role at ISO QSL

ISO Quality Services (ISO QSL) is delighted to announce the promotion of Lizzy Withers to the newly created position of Client Care Team Leader.



Since joining ISO QSL in 2022, Lizzy has gained extensive knowledge of ISO certifications, having previously been appointed as Client Care Advisor. In this role, she supported clients across a variety of industries with their ISO Certifications, including the popular ISO 9001 Quality Management and ISO 14001 Environmental Management standards. Her dedication to client success and providing an outstanding service has made her a key member of the team.

As Client Care Team Leader, Lizzy will lead and support the Client Care Advisors, overseeing day-to-day client engagement, assisting with client queries, and ensuring a positive customer

experience. ISO QSL takes great pride in delivering an industry-leading service, and Lizzy's promotion reflects its ongoing commitment to customer satisfaction.

Lizzy shared her excitement on the promotion: "I am thrilled to have been promoted to Client Care Team Leader. This is an exciting new chapter in my career after being with ISO QSL for nearly three years. I look forward to leading our brilliant team of Client Care Advisors and working together to achieve success in everything we do".

Lauren Kebby, Client Care Manager, added: "It has been great to see Lizzy step into the new role as Client Care Team Leader. She will play a key role in supporting both our clients and the team. This is a fantastic new journey for Lizzy, and I have no doubt she will embrace her new role".

Based in St Johns, Worcester, ISO QSL specialises in ISO certification, consultancy and training, helping organisations to streamline operations and drive long-term success.

For more information about ISO QSL, visit online at www.isoqsltd.com, or contact **0330 058 5551**.

James Carr becomes Group Sales Manager

IT-EPOS is pleased to announce James Carr has been promoted to Group Sales Manager, taking on the new role as the company looks to expand its offering to other businesses.

James will continue to support the growth of the business, ensuring that current and new customers are supported in all their IT, electronic POS and marketing needs. Working across all the sectors that make up IT-EPOS, James is excited to meet and engage with businesses across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

www.it-epos.co.uk



Megan Bayliss completes Paralegal course

Congratulations to Megan Bayliss, who is in our Private Client department, for successfully completing her Paralegal course with a focus on Court of Protection work. Megan is now a newly qualified Specialised Paralegal and will continue to support Amanda Piper in looking after our clients' affairs.



Megan joined the SME Solicitors team in 2024 after graduating from the University of Chester with a Law degree in 2023. Since then, she has had a strong commitment to her professional growth.

Samantha Lloyd, Head of Private Client, said, "Megan's transition from Court of Protection Caseworker to Specialised Paralegal is a testament to her dedication to looking after clients and developing her skills and expertise in the area. We're excited to see her thrive in her new role."

Well done, Meg, for this outstanding achievement!

FAUN Zoeller UK CEO Simon Hyde Awarded Prestigious Fellowship from the Institute of the Motor Industry

FAUN Zoeller UK is proud to announce that its CEO, Simon Hyde, has been awarded a Fellowship from the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI), alongside recognition as a Certificated Automotive Engineer, for his outstanding contributions to hydrogen technology and sustainable transport.

The IMI Fellowship is the organisation's highest accolade, awarded to individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and innovation within the automotive sector. Simon's work in advancing hydrogen-based solutions, particularly through championing Enginius, a pioneering hydrogen-powered truck brand in the UK, has played a significant role in supporting the country's transition to a zero-emission transport future.

The award was presented in front of FAUN Zoeller UK's Bluepower Hydrogen truck, Enginius, at South & City College Birmingham's new Hydrogen Workshop, a setting that highlights the growing importance of hydrogen technology in the sector.

Michelle Barrett BA (Hons) MIMI of the IMI commented; "I was honoured to present Simon Hyde, CEO of FAUN Zoeller UK, with his Fellow Membership and his Certificated Automotive Engineer recognition from the IMI in front of their Bluepower Hydrogen truck, Enginius, at South & City College Birmingham's new Hydrogen Workshop. Fellow Membership is the IMI's highest accolade awarded to individuals and showcases Simon's outstanding achievements within the automotive sector."

The IMI serves as the home for automotive professionals, bringing together a community of over 100,000 members who share a passion for the industry. With a strong focus on professional development and expertise, the IMI Professional Register ensures that its members are



recognised for their skills, knowledge, and commitment to driving the sector forward.

Reflecting on the honour, Simon Hyde said; "I am truly honoured to receive this Fellowship from the IMI. Hydrogen is playing a vital role in the journey to net zero, and this recognition is a testament to the incredible work being done at FAUN Zoeller UK. We are committed to delivering real-world hydrogen solutions that help decarbonise transport and industry, and I look forward to continuing to drive this forward."

FAUN Zoeller UK continues to push the boundaries of hydrogen technology, demonstrating how hydrogen-powered commercial vehicles like Enginius can provide practical and scalable solutions for the transport industry.

The entire team at FAUN Zoeller UK congratulates Simon on this well-deserved recognition and remains dedicated to pioneering innovative, sustainable mobility solutions.

Congratulations as Hazelton Mountford's AJ passes Chartered Institute of Insurance (CII) Exam

The team at Hazelton Mountford extend their congratulations to AJ who recently passed the Cert CII exam to obtain his first qualification.

AJ joined Hazelton Mountford as an apprentice account executive in 2022. Since then he has demonstrated dedication to his career in insurance, coupled with an eagerness to learn. AJ has taken the time to work with each part of the business, spending time in Let Property and Claims with our Handlers. Working closely with Group Director Simeon Chapman, AJ has also developed a specialism in Not-For-Profit, Church and Charity insurance.

As a result, he has now become a permanent Account Executive.

Jake Mountford, Group Director and AJ's Line Manager, is delighted: "AJ has come so far since he started on his journey



with Hazelton Mountford. We're proud to have him as part of our team and excited to watch his career grow from here."

The Chartered Insurance Institute (CII) training programmes are designed to

support people with their qualification journey in General Insurance and Personal Finance.

AJ confirms: "It's a great feeling to pass my first professional qualification in insurance. To know that all the hard work has paid off is incredibly satisfying and it has been an important step in my progression to becoming the best account executive that I can be. I hope my new expertise gained from this qualification will not only benefit myself and Hazelton Mountford, but also my clients."

For more about Careers in Insurance at Hazelton Mountford, visit the website at: www.hazeltonmountford.co.uk/careers-at-hazelton-mountford.





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'Leading Beyond the Business 2025' Event



MILFORD RESEARCH
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In collaboration with:



University of Worcester

The BOSS Competition Finale, April 3rd 2025



Business • Opportunity • Sponsorship • Support

University of Worcester students pitched sustainable business concepts to experienced business professionals (Dragons) for £10,000!

Leaving with £5000 each to invest into their companies, **Janka Chovancová** and **Andrej Nagy** of **Green Grow** and **Will Essex** of **Helico Clothing** were the winners of the evening!

Be a Dragon for BOSS 2026: Call: 01386 335878 or Email: libby.mccann@milfordresearch.co.uk

Empowering SMEs Through Digital Learning

At Make Strides, we're passionate about equipping businesses with the skills they need to thrive. That's why we've become a Strategic Member of the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, aligning our expertise in digital learning with their mission to support SMEs.

We believe that access to high-quality, flexible learning is a game-changer for businesses looking to develop their teams, future-proof their workforce, and stay competitive.

For many SMEs, investing in people is both a priority and a challenge. Time constraints, cost pressures, and rapidly evolving skills gaps can make traditional training feel out of reach. Digital learning solves these pains by offering bite-sized, engaging content that fits around work schedules, providing instant, scalable development opportunities without disruption. It allows businesses to nurture emerging talent, upskill existing teams, and embed a culture of continuous learning—all in a way that's practical and cost-effective.

Our Early Careers and Leadership programmes are designed with SMEs in mind, giving employees at all levels the skills to step up, contribute more, and drive business success. With digital-first, accredited training that's engaging, actionable,



and accessible, we help SMEs unlock the full potential of their people—because when people grow, businesses do too.

We're excited to work with the Chamber and their Members to make impactful learning more accessible than ever. Let's build the future of SME success, together.

Integrated Job Management Software with REM

At REM Systems, we provide tailored, modular Zero-Point solutions that optimise workpiece clamping, presetting, measuring, and automation, with integrated Job Management Software.

Partnering with EROWA, we help businesses make cost-effective, sustainable investments to enhance their production systems, regardless of the machine tool brand or generation. Our mission is to integrate your machinery seamlessly, improving productivity across manufacturing processes.

How REM Systems Can Benefit Your Business

REM Systems unlocks your manufacturing's full potential, delivering unmatched reliability and efficiency. EROWA's Swiss precision reduces downtime and boosts productivity, while automation solutions maximise unattended production, lower labouring costs and ensuring continuous operation, even after hours.

Maximise Your Manufacturing Hours

With EROWA's flexible manufacturing systems, your business can achieve up to 8,760 productive hours per year, eliminating costly downtime. We guide you through four stages of improvement:

1. Standardisation – Increase productivity to 1,200 hours.
2. Organisation – Reach 1,600 hours.
3. Automation – Achieve 4,000 hours of continuous operation.
4. Integration – Extend to 6,000 hours of annual operation.



These stages represent our commitment to elevating your business to new levels of productivity and profitability.

Transform Your Productivity with EROWA's Automation Systems

EROWA's automation systems seamlessly integrate with your operations. With versatile pallet handling and innovative tooling technologies, we help transform your workshop into a highly efficient, automated environment – maximising output, improving ROI, and reducing operational costs.

Shaping the Future of Manufacturing

As a Strategic Member of the HW Chamber of Commerce, we look forward to connecting with fellow businesses and driving innovation in manufacturing.

International Trade

New Tariff Policy

The Trump administration has unveiled a major new tariff policy that is set to transform America's global trade relationships.

As detailed in the "Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Declares National Emergency to Increase our Competitive Edge, Protect our Sovereignty, and Strengthen our National and Economic Security," issued by the White House on April 2, 2025, these measures aim to address what the administration considers persistent imbalances in international trade.

What are the new tariffs?

President Trump's recent executive order introduces a revised tariff structure:

- A baseline 10% tariff on imports from most countries (with exceptions for Canada and Mexico).
- Country-specific "reciprocal" tariffs based on how the U.S. assesses each nation's trade practices.
- The tariffs are expected to be implemented immediately, according to White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt, although the official documentation indicates phase-in dates of April 5 and April 9, 2025.

Additionally, a separate 25% tariff has been applied to all foreign-made automobiles, effective immediately at midnight on April 2, 2025. This applies to all imported vehicles, including those from the UK (e.g. Jaguar Land Rover).

For UK-made vehicles, the 25% automotive tariff will apply alongside the 10% reciprocal tariff for UK origin goods.

Unlike past tariff actions that targeted specific industries, this policy covers most imports, with some exceptions.

It's important to note that these new tariffs will be added on top of any existing Most Favored Nation (MFN) duties. As a result, the total tariff on many products will be a combination of:

- Existing MFN duties
- New reciprocal tariffs
- Any additional sector-specific tariffs (such as the 25% automotive tariff).

Who will be most affected?

The newly released tariff schedule reveals significant differences in how different countries will be impacted.

Countries with the highest tariff rates:

- Cambodia: 49%

- Laos: 48%
- Madagascar: 47%
- Vietnam: 46%
- Myanmar: 44%

Major trading partners:

- China: 34% (on top of the existing 20%, resulting in a total of approximately 54%)
- European Union: 20%
- Japan: 24%
- South Korea: 25%
- India: 26%
- United Kingdom: 10% (a significant advantage compared to the EU and other major economies)

Other countries with the lowest tariff rates (10%):

Countries including Australia, Brazil, Chile, Singapore, Peru, Dominican Republic, UAE, Argentina, Guatemala, Honduras, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and El Salvador.

Tariff rate methodology

The White House has shared a schedule of country-specific tariff rates, described as "discounted reciprocal tariffs." These rates are based on factors such as:

- Official tariff rates
- Value-added tax (VAT) impacts
- Currency manipulation assessments
- Non-tariff barriers (e.g., regulations and standards)

For example:

- The EU's barriers are assessed at 39%, but the reciprocal tariff is set at 20%.
- China's barriers are calculated at 67%, with a reciprocal tariff of 34%.

This methodology has sparked controversy, with many economists and trade experts questioning whether the various trade measures are being equated appropriately.

Key exemptions

Certain imports will be exempt from these reciprocal tariffs, including:

- Articles covered under 50 USC 1702(b)
- Steel and aluminium products already subject to Section 232 tariffs
- Autos under Section 232 tariffs
- Copper, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, lumber, and bullion (gold, silver, etc.)
- Energy products and minerals unavailable in the U.S.

Special cases: Canada and Mexico

The tariff approach for U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) partners is more nuanced:

- Existing fentanyl and migration-related tariffs remain in place.
- USMCA-compliant goods will continue to benefit from 0% tariffs.
- Non-compliant goods will face 25% tariffs (with a 10% rate for energy and potash).
- If existing orders are canceled, non-compliant goods will face 12% tariffs.

What's next?

The executive order allows for both escalation and de-escalation of tariffs:

- Tariffs may increase if other countries retaliate against U.S. exports.
- Tariffs could decrease if countries take significant steps to address trade imbalances.

Experts predict retaliatory actions from affected countries.

The EU has already indicated it's preparing countermeasures, and China may respond with its own tariffs.

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer has acknowledged the economic impact of the 10% tariff on the UK but has promised to respond in a "cool and calm" manner.

These reciprocal responses could escalate tensions and cause uncertainty in global supply chains in the coming months.

The importance of country of origin

It's crucial to understand that these tariffs are based on the country of origin of goods, not where they are exported from. This distinction matters for UK companies:

- UK-origin goods: Will face the 10% reciprocal tariff (plus any MFN duties).
- Re-exported goods: Products made in other countries but shipped via the UK will be subject to the tariff rate of the original country.

For example:

- A product made in the UK and exported to the U.S. will incur a 10% tariff (plus MFN duties).
- A product made in China but exported from the UK will face a 34% tariff (in addition to the existing 20% tariffs on Chinese goods, bringing the total to about 54%, plus any MFN duties).

UK companies working with re-exports or goods with components from multiple countries need to be especially diligent with origin documentation.

Meet Our International Trade Team



Kayla Ball



Emma Harris



Natalie Foxall



Sabrina Brown



Amy Timmins

Our International Trade Advisors are on hand to support you with any questions you may have. For further details, please don't hesitate to contact the team on **01905 673614** or email **internationaltrade@hwchamber.co.uk**.

Please note that the information provided in this article is accurate at the time of publication. However, data and figures may change over time. For the most current updates, please visit our website.



People to do Business With

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www.helenyandellphotography.com

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Integrated Growth Solutions

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Kidwells

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Marches HR Ltd

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www.marcheshr.co.uk

GTAccess Wins Prestigious ‘Access Rental Company of the Year’ Award

GTAccess is proud to announce that we have been awarded the highly prestigious Access Rental Company of the Year at this year’s industry awards ceremony held in Dublin.



With our Head Office based in Bromsgrove, GTAccess operates a strong network of 12 depots and 19 dedicated training centres nationwide, supported by a team of 170 skilled employees. We have long been committed to delivering exceptional service, safety, and industry-leading training across the UK. This recognition highlights the company’s continued growth, dedication to excellence, and unwavering

focus on customer satisfaction.

Speaking on the achievement, Jonathan Till, Managing Director of GTAccess, commented: “This award is a true testament to the dedication and hard work of our entire team. It wouldn’t have been possible without the outstanding employees we have, who consistently go above and beyond to provide the very best service in the industry.”

As proud founder members of the Access Alliance, GTAccess is delighted to represent the UK on a global stage, with entries for this award coming from companies worldwide. This win not only underscores our leadership in access rental but also showcases the strength and innovation of UK businesses in the global marketplace.

For more information about GTAccess and our services, visit **www.gtaccess.co.uk**.

NatWest’s Key Strategies to Manage Working Capital in 2025

In an unpredictable economy, businesses must optimise working capital by adjusting pricing, managing inventory efficiently, and leveraging digital tools.



Barry Lewis
NatWest Director
Commerical Banking, H&W

Five Key Strategies:

1. Adjust Pricing – Regularly update prices to reflect inflation and rising costs.
2. Optimise Inventory – Use flexible inventory strategies to avoid overstocking and free up capital.
3. Stay Agile – Adapt quickly to shifts in consumer demand.
4. Strengthen Financing Options – Build strong banking relationships and explore alternative funding.
5. Use Digital Tools – Improve cash flow management with financial forecasting software.

Managing Cash Flow & Supply Chains. With inflation driving up costs, businesses must manage liquidity carefully. Establishing

contingency funds and negotiating supplier payment terms can ease cash flow pressures. Just-in-time inventory strategies can prevent capital from being tied up in excess stock while avoiding stockouts that hurt sales.

Adapting to Consumer Trends. Growing demand for sustainability and digital services requires businesses to stay flexible. Adjusting product offerings and avoiding unnecessary inventory investment helps maintain strong cash flow.

Leveraging Technology. Digital financial tools streamline invoicing and payments, providing real-time insights to support better decision-making and financial stability.

Effective working capital management leads to:

1. Greater financial stability
2. Increased flexibility for growth
3. Stronger supplier relationships
4. Higher profit margins



Orbital10 acquires Pro-Active

Hereford-based Orbital10, a leading IT support and managed service provider, is pleased to announce the acquisition of Pro-Active, a prominent direct and digital marketing company.

Orbital10 has established itself as a trusted partner in IT support, managed services and cybersecurity. The acquisition marks Orbital10’s continued diversification, enhancing its service offerings to include comprehensive digital and data marketing solutions. The aim is to offer businesses an integrated suite of IT and marketing services, enhancing operational efficiency and market reach.

Pro-Active brings a wealth of expertise in digital marketing and customer engagement. The portfolio and expertise cover data acquisition, insights and cleaning, alongside advanced digital and AI marketing services, enabling businesses to effectively reach and engage their target audiences.

The integration of Pro-Active’s data and digital marketing proficiency with Orbital10’s IT infrastructure services creates a unique synergy, enabling clients to streamline their operations by consolidating IT infrastructure management with cutting-edge marketing strategies, resulting in improved productivity and a unified service experience.

“By combining IT services with digital marketing expertise, we are giving our customers a powerful advantage. Businesses today need more than just reliable technology—they need smart, data-driven solutions to reach their audiences and grow. This acquisition enables us to provide an all-in-one service that enhances efficiency, security, and customer engagement.”



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People, Skills, and the Workplace - Navigating the Future of Work

In today’s rapidly evolving job market, the ability to match the right talent with the right opportunities is more crucial than ever. Multistaff, a leading recruitment agency in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, has been at the forefront of this challenge for over a decade, consistently delivering exceptional results for both employers and job seekers.



The landscape of work is changing, with skills gaps widening and workplace dynamics shifting. Multistaff recognises the importance of addressing these challenges head-on. Their expertise goes beyond traditional recruitment, offering innovative workforce management solutions that include skills assessments, onboarding support, and ongoing performance tracking. This comprehensive approach ensures

“Multistaff recognises the importance of teamwork in addressing the skills gap. They actively engage with local businesses educational institutions to develop strategies for building a skilled workforce.”

long-term success for both employers and employees, addressing the evolving skills requirements of modern workplaces.

At the heart of Multistaff’s success is their commitment to understanding the unique needs of each client and candidate. As Mark Jones, Operations Director at AMCO, confirms, “Multistaff has consistently demonstrated its commitment to excellence and its dedication to improving the service we receive.” This tailored approach allows Multistaff to effectively bridge the skills gap across various industries, including manufacturing, logistics, office support, and skilled trades.

Looking ahead, Multistaff recognises the importance of teamwork in addressing the skills gap. They actively engage with local businesses and educational institutions to develop strategies for building a skilled workforce. This team effort is crucial in preparing for the future of work, where adaptability & continuous learning will be key.

Multistaff’s dedication to excellence is not only reflected in their client services but also in their vibrant workplace culture. The team actively engages in promotional activities, fundraisers, and group outings, fostering a sense of friendship and shared

purpose. Innovative policies, such as granting employees a day off to celebrate their birthdays, showcase Multistaff’s deep understanding of work-life balance and commitment to employee well-being. This approach not only enhances job satisfaction but also contributes to the overall success of their recruitment efforts.

Multistaff’s commitment to excellence, innovation, and community engagement positions them as a vital partner in shaping the future of work in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Their proactive approach to matching skills with opportunities and fostering a positive work environment demonstrates the forward-thinking strategy needed to thrive in today’s dynamic job market. As the workplace continues to evolve, Multistaff stands ready to guide both employers and job seekers through the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

01527 919 320 / hello@multistaff.co.uk
www.multistaff.co.uk



James Gormley joins Wyevale Nurseries

James Gormley who has a strong background in arboriculture and tree sales has been appointed as the new Key Account Manager for Wyevale Nurseries in Hereford (March 2025).

James, who previously worked with well-respected tree growers in the industry, will be assisting local authority sectors, as well as both landscape architects and contractors, with technical sales.

Kersten Catella, Sales Director at Wyevale Nurseries, says: “I’m really pleased to welcome James to the Wyevale Nurseries’ team. From our first conversation, it was clear he brings real energy with his deep-rooted passion for trees and biodiversity, exactly the kind of focus that adds real value to our customers.

“He’s thoughtful, driven, and brings a fresh perspective, but more than that, he’s got the kind of mindset that aligns with how we work: lead with energy, and build something that lasts. I’m excited to see the legacy he’ll help shape with our customers and our team.”

James’ arboriculture background is rooted in the local authority and contractor sector. In his career so far, he has gained vast experience with best practice tree surgery operations for both council and private organisations. He is also able to offer technical advice and site-specific solutions on tree root protection for planning approvals.

A personal favourite of his was the tree root protection he provided for the ancient ‘Old



Man’ Quercus robur at Calke Abbey. For the past 10 years, James has worked within the industry’s well-known tree nurseries both nationally and internationally, assisting with tree recommendations and supply. His passion for tree biodiversity drives him to understand tree planting that is in line with the UK’s environmental goals. This includes:

- Biodiverse tree selections for the climate change in the UK
- Research into a diverse mix of tree species to increase the declining bee population
- Tree recommendations within urban applications and site-specific benefit
- Trees that will assist with the UK becoming carbon natural

James explains: “Wyevale Nurseries has long been recognised as a leading expert among British growers. Joining the team has not only met my expectations but has significantly surpassed them.

“From the impressive logistics delivery system to the remarkable quality of the tree fields and the expertise of the staff, I have been thoroughly impressed. Furthermore, the warm welcome I received from every team member has made my transition all the more enjoyable. I am genuinely delighted to be a part of Wyevale Nurseries and to contribute to this esteemed organisation.”

Wyevale Nurseries, which celebrates its 95th anniversary this year, has a product selection that’s admired across the industry and the talented team regularly introduces new, award-winning plant varieties.

Its main business is to supply landscape contractors, local authorities, foresters, landowners and garden centres with a comprehensive array of trees, shrubs, hedging, herbaceous and specimen plants.

For further details about Wyevale Nurseries, please call **01432 845 200** or visit **www.wyevalenurseries.co.uk**.

Core Financial Efficiencies turns 1

Core Financial Efficiencies celebrated completing its first year of trade in April.

For Core, the journey through its first year of operations has been one of learning, adapting, and growing with each passing day. When trading began in spring 2024, the road ahead seemed both promising and uncertain, but over the year the business has built strong partnerships, working alongside some great people, which has helped it to achieve its initial promise.

In making this milestone the Droitwich based company extends its gratitude to all of those who have been part of the journey. In particular to the variety of businesses across Worcestershire that Core has worked with over the past 12 months, who have played a pivotal role in helping the company build momentum and establish its presence, which would not have been possible without their word of mouth, referrals, and repeat business.

Core is just at the beginning of its journey and is looking forward to its second year with a focus on refinement, growth and exploring new opportunities. The company continues to evolve, it plans to enhance its services while also exploring ways to expand its customer base and operational reach. Focussing on evolving customer internal accounting and software needs and looking to make further potential partnerships will be central to the company’s long-term strategy.

www.corefinanciaefficiencies.co.uk



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www.energyaudits.uk

New College Worcester Receives £18,500 from the National Lottery Community Fund for New Outdoor Play Equipment

New College Worcester (NCW) is delighted to announce that it has been awarded £18,500 from the National Lottery Community Fund to fund the installation of new outdoor play equipment for its students.



This generous funding will enhance the college's outdoor spaces and provide blind and visually impaired students with greater opportunities for physical activity, sensory exploration, and social interaction.

The new equipment will be designed to meet the unique needs of NCW's students. The outdoor play area will include a variety of accessible, inclusive, and engaging play structures, encouraging students to develop vital skills such as mobility, coordination, and independence, all while enjoying the benefits of outdoor play.

The funding will also contribute to the creation of a safe and stimulating environment where students can interact with their peers, build confidence, and enjoy recreational activities. This project aligns with NCW's commitment to providing a holistic educational experience that supports the academic, social, and emotional development of all students.

The funding will also enable NCW to continue its mission to provide world-class education and care for blind and visually impaired young people, empowering them to lead fulfilling and independent lives.

Sutcliffe & Co secure £5,000 award for local charity The Myriad Centre from the Aviva Broker Community Fund

Worcester-based insurance brokers Sutcliffe & Co is delighted to announce the success of their application to the annual Aviva Broker Community Fund and securing £5,000 towards their chosen local charity, The Myriad Centre.

The winners of the 2025 Aviva Broker Community Fund were announced and awarded at the awards event at the Honourable Artillery Company in London on 12th March 2025 after an application process that started in autumn 2024, when tens of brokers from across the UK got behind their causes to apply for a coveted share of the broker prize fund. For several years Sutcliffe & Co is delighted to have successfully applied to the prize fund and won support on behalf of a number of local causes, with only 28 brokers successfully securing awards of

£5,000, £10,000, or £20,000 for their favourite local causes each year.

The Myriad Centre is a registered charity providing specialist, personalised day respite services for adults over 18 with profound learning disabilities and severe physical and sensory disabilities. Based in Worcester, the centre supports young adults and their families from across Worcestershire and surrounding areas, with the aim to provide care and support for all to enjoy enriched lives.

For more information about Sutcliffe & Co supporting The Myriad Centre, please



contact their Head Office by calling **01905 21681** or alternatively email **enquiries@sutcliffeinsurance.co.uk**.

Courtyard install aquarium for the summer

The Courtyard is delighted to announce that a temporary aquarium, featuring interactive exhibits and educational activities for all ages, will be installed in its Gallery for families to visit for free this summer.



To celebrate a year of animal themed productions (The Jungle Book and Animal Farm), The Courtyard is turning its top floor gallery into an aquarium for the summer.

Bespoke glass panels have been commissioned to create the perfect viewing points for visitors, and deep-sea inspired creations by students from Hereford College of Arts will be displayed alongside the aquarium.

The glass panels will be installed on Tuesday 1 April with the aquarium officially opening on Saturday 31 May.

For more information about The Courtyard Aquarium please visit **courtyard.org.uk**.

The Courtyard is Herefordshire's centre for the arts. We provide a space for innovation, creativity, and participation for the whole community.

Hoople Group Sponsor Marches Family Network Running Team

Hoople Group are delighted to be shirt sponsors for the fantastic team of runners taking on challenges in aid of Marches Family Network this April.

Marches Family Network provides activities, services and short breaks for children and young people, aged 0-25 years, with a wide range of disabilities. The charity has provided valued support to families across Herefordshire and the surrounding areas since 1995.

The running team include family members of service users, employees and other supporters of this wonderful charity.



AMROS Events & Promotions partner with Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce

The Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce is delighted to once again partner with AMROS Events & Promotions to deliver a series of bespoke business networking opportunities, including the highly anticipated annual Charity Golf Day at Stourbridge Golf Club, the Lions Special “BIG LUNCH” in September plus many other events.



long-term business success. Attendees will benefit from exclusive insights, amusing anecdotes, shared knowledge, and the chance to expand their networks in a meaningful way.

Neil Bettridge, Director of AMROS remarked “over many years our partnership with The Chamber has allowed so many business relationships to prosper, and for numerous vital charities to benefit from significant fundraising. In 2024 alone we managed to raise more than £45,000. I am delighted to be working with Robert and the Chamber team again in 2025”.

Robert Elliot, Director of Business Engagement and Policy at Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce commented “the Chamber are very fortunate to have been able to work with Neil Bettridge on so many events over the years. In Neil we trust that each event will be delivered seamlessly and with great impact.”

Robert continued “We are thrilled to continue this partnership, bringing together professionals in an engaging and dynamic environment that benefits both businesses and charitable causes. We look forward to another successful year of networking, collaboration, and community impact.”

www.facebook.com/AMROSEvents

Sixways Stadium ground share deal will ‘transform’ Worcester City FC

The owner of Worcester City FC has said a deal to make Sixways Stadium its home for the next five years will help to ‘transform’ the football club.

Simon Lancaster, owner of the Northern Premier League Midlands Division side, has praised Knights’ real estate team for acting with agility to complete a complex negotiation to a tight deadline in order to get the deal over the line.

The five-year ground share deal will see Worcester City FC call Sixways Stadium their new home from July this year. Sixways stadium is a 12,000-capacity arena located five minutes from the M5 with conferencing and hospitality facilities for up to 500 people.

Featuring a state-of-the-art playing surface, the ground share deal will provide the club with a greater platform for growth on and off the pitch as they look to climb the football pyramid.

Senior Associate at Knights, James Menzies, led on the deal alongside Partner, Tony Gibb, with support from Michael Clark, a Property Litigation Partner.

Speaking about the significance of the move for Worcester City FC, Owner, Simon Lancaster said: “We were excited to get the deal over the line and everyone around the club has been buzzing, the players, the fans and the management, and I think it’s going to really transform the football club.

“The feedback has been 100% positive and everyone is just really excited to get in now. Attendances and the whole matchday experience will improve, providing the club with more opportunities for growth on and off the pitch.”

I see this as a big step towards strengthening our sports law offering, we are now instructed to deliver premium legal services by a number of sports clubs and sporting bodies up and down the country, and that is a growing side of the business that we are delighted to be able to offer.”

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Located off the A456, north of Tenbury Wells and in the Village of Burford, this new build development of 23 units is located adjacent to the Kerry Foods Factory. This position is a short distance from Teme Street, Tenbury Wells and the area offers many facilities to include: a variety of supermarkets, shops, services, primary and secondary schools, library, cottage hospital and cinema.

Description

Ground works have commenced on site for the construction of the 23 new build commercial units, which shall be built in terraces comprising of 6 buildings. These Architect designed commercial units are set within landscaped grounds, providing parking and loading areas within this gated modern estate. The units are available individually or as multiples, with neighbouring units.



Each unit will have personnel access to front, inset to the vertical glazing features and also an insulated roller shutter door. Internally each unit will benefit from LED lighting, W/C and kitchenette facilities. The units will be finished to a high specification with a target EPC rating of A, each being fitted with a solar panel.

Viewing

Via the Sole Agent's Great Witley Office
Great Witley, Worcestershire WR6 6JB

Contact: **Nick Jethwa**

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IT-EPOS champions organic growth through apprenticeships

Staff are at the heart of any business, particularly those with customer care at their centre. Finding ways to recruit and retain staff can be a challenge but IT-EPOS has overcome this by seeking apprenticeship opportunities to organically meet its needs.

IT-EPOS has employed and supported many employees with apprenticeships; finding that they are an extremely successful way of upskilling its team. Simon Underhill, Director, says “apprenticeships allow us to develop our team and their skill set in a way that supports the future of our business. It ensures that, not only do the team get skills that support them through their career but are also tailored to our needs. Having come from an apprenticeship background, I know it is an excellent way to nurture talent and it is rewarding to see employees grow and develop.”



Sophie Hope and Ellie Burton are two such apprentices, both training in areas they enjoy and that meet the business needs.

Sophie is obtaining her Level 5 Operations Manager apprenticeship while Ellie, with a focus on marketing, is completing her Level 3 Content Creator apprenticeship. “I enjoy learning about different styles of management and the importance of future planning. Training through an apprenticeship enables me to practice what I learn in real time and bring that learning into the office” says Sophie. While Ellie, completing an apprenticeship in a very different sector agrees, saying she enjoys learning as much as possible and bringing that learning into every task she does.

Do you want to be a Trustee?

Many of you will know of St George's Hall as a successful community Hall, café, cinema, and music venue in Bewdley. We are now looking to recruit new trustees to add to our team to help shape the Hall's future direction.

It's a voluntary role needing enthusiasm, energy, and certain skills, but the rewards are in seeing the Hall deliver the community benefits as set out in its charitable purposes.

St. George's Hall is managed by a small, dedicated team who, in turn, are governed by a Board of Trustees. The Trustees' role is to ensure that the Hall delivers a diverse range of facilities and benefits to the

local community, fostering a vibrant and inclusive environment through various events and services. Could you join our team and help shape that future?

Applications should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees, Anita Bickerdike, and received by 30th June 2025.

Please contact us:

Email: info@thehall-bewdley.org.uk
Phone: **01299 40011**



Triumph at Artemis Master Chef Competition

We're excited to give a huge shoutout to the incredible talent in our kitchens here at Crumplebury & Curradine Barns.



After a thrilling battle at the Artemis Master Chef competition in January, we're proud to announce that Tom Francis from Crumplebury took the crown alongside Matthew Thomson from Curradine Barns

as the champions of 2025! These talented chefs emerged victorious, showcasing not only their incredible cooking skills but also their ability to work together under pressure.

The competition was a true celebration of creativity, skill, and teamwork. Chefs were given the opportunity to work with seasonal ingredients like wood pigeon, oysters, bream, and venison, pushing themselves to deliver bold and innovative dishes that wowed the judges. But the event was much more than just a culinary contest – it was about passion, adaptability, and the spirit of collaboration, and our chefs excelled on every level.

We are incredibly proud of Tom and Matthew. Their achievement showcases the dedication

and attention to detail we put into every event we host at our exclusive use venues in Worcester. Whether it's a small, intimate gathering or a grand celebration, our chefs are passionate about working closely with clients to create bespoke menus tailored to the unique needs of each event.

This victory is a testament to our team's creativity, passion, and expertise. We look forward to bringing these exceptional dining experiences to all our future events. Here's to making every occasion unforgettable!

For more information, please visit
www.crumplebury.com
www.curradinebarns.co.uk

Empowering Employees – HR Strategies for overcoming workforce hurdles

With changing employee expectations, how can your business create a supportive and empowering workplace that attracts and retains top talent?

Worcestershire Growth Hub, in collaboration with Worcestershire County Council, has created a wealth of HR resources for Worcestershire businesses to tackle workforce challenges.

This includes a FREE online tool to support creation and tracking of comprehensive workforce plans and the associated HR policies and processes. This tool covers business strategy, team performance, critical roles, recruitment, succession planning, skills development, employer brand, and diversity and inclusion.

In addition, businesses can access up to £1,000 of FREE consultancy support with



a local HR professional to support you to implement these within your organisation. This includes tailored one-to-one guidance in any area covered by the HR and workforce tool, ensuring businesses receive expert advice to thrive.

To enhance HR practices around workforce planning, Worcestershire Growth Hub, in collaboration with Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce will

soon host a series of in-person workshops for those in HR roles. These workshops will offer practical solutions and actionable takeaways across a range of HR topics that can be quickly and easily implemented in the workplace.

Investing in your human resources and planning for your future workforce needs is crucial for businesses looking to stay competitive and foster a positive work environment. By taking advantage of these FREE resources, businesses can enhance employee engagement and performance, develop robust succession plans, promote diversity and inclusion, and strengthen their employer brand.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to empower your workforce and drive your business forward.

For more information and to access these resources contact the Worcestershire Growth Hub on **01905 677888** or email info@worcestershiregrowthhub.co.uk

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DRPG Take on Source to Sea Challenge for Charities

As part of DRPG's 45th-anniversary celebrations, CEO Dale Parmenter and the groups UK Marketing team are trading their usual workdays for the Source to Sea Challenge, an ambitious adventure designed to reflect the company's ongoing commitment to giving back. DRPG has set an impressive goal of completing 45 CSR projects throughout this milestone year, with this challenge being one of the most demanding and high-profile initiatives.

Over four days in May, the team will travel over 220 miles along the River Severn by foot, canoe, and bike, beginning in the rugged Welsh mountains and culminating at the iconic Severn Bridge.

Every step, paddle, and pedal will directly support four carefully selected charities—Meeting Needs, Wheels for All, Creative Futures, and the Severn Rivers Trust. These charities were chosen for their efforts in positively impacting local communities, supporting inclusivity in cycling, safeguarding environmental resources, and fostering the next generation of creative talent. The objective for the challenge is to secure £5,000 for each charity with the total goal set for £20,000 by the end of the 45th celebrations in June.

Speaking about the challenge, Dale said: "At DRPG, we believe in pushing boundaries—not just in our professional projects, but also in how we contribute to our community. The Source to Sea Challenge is an opportunity to raise awareness and crucial funds for organisations making a tangible difference in communities and industries that are very close to our hearts.

"It's also a fantastic way to celebrate DRPG's 45 years in business. For me personally, the River Severn and the towns, cities, and iconic landmarks along its route hold countless memories and significance throughout my career and family history, making this journey all the more special."

Joe Pimblett, CEO of Severn Rivers Trust, said "Here at Severn Rivers Trust, we're



thrilled to be a part of DRPG's Source to Sea Challenge. DRPG's contribution will be instrumental in helping us continue our hands-on work across the River Severn and its tributaries, where we're directly working with local communities to restore habitats, tackle river pollution, and improve the health of our rivers. The funds raised will play a vital role in supporting our practical, on-the-ground efforts to protect and enhance the river for both wildlife and the people who rely on it. We're excited to be part of this initiative and thankful to DRPG for helping us make a real, lasting difference."

Meeting Needs chair Chris Parnham said: "DRPG is a fantastic organisation and one of our best supporters and oldest charity partners. We are delighted that they have chosen Meeting Needs for this impressive

celebration of 45 years in business and hope that it encourages other event agencies to be equally ambitious and generous as them. Good luck to Dale and the team!"

From the charity Wheels for All, Head of Fundraising and Development, Nicola Henshaw said, "We're thrilled to have the support of DRPG who are taking on such an amazing challenge for Wheels for All and three other deserving charities."

Joining Dale during the water-based routes on canoe is Marketing and Engagement Lead for DRPG, Alex Cottom.

The team will be documenting their efforts across DRPG's social channels throughout the challenge. To support Dale and the DRPG team as they tackle this charity challenge, visit their donation page and help make a difference with every mile they cover.

BUSINESS DIRECTION

Business Direction, Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce's full colour bi-monthly publication. Designed and produced by business people for business people, with a total readership of over 10,500.

Please send all submissions to marketing@hwchamber.co.uk

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Talent and Skills

How can **Apprenticeships** Help your business



Succession planning

Apprenticeships can help your organisation to prepare for the future, addressing current and future skills gaps and ensuring your business is prepared to grow and adapt.

Recruit young talent

You can utilise apprenticeships to bring in young talent, which in turn can bring new fresh ideas and perspectives to your organisation.

Upskill existing staff

Apprenticeships are not just for new staff, you can use apprenticeships to progress and upskill your existing staff. Offering progression can help with retaining staff and addressing your future skills gaps.

These are just a few ways that apprenticeships can help your business to succeed.

