

THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR EAST CHESHIRE

East Cheshire
CHAMBER
of commerce & enterprise

September 2018 / Issue 56

Chamber



Chamber Golf Day 2018

Congratulations to this year's winners



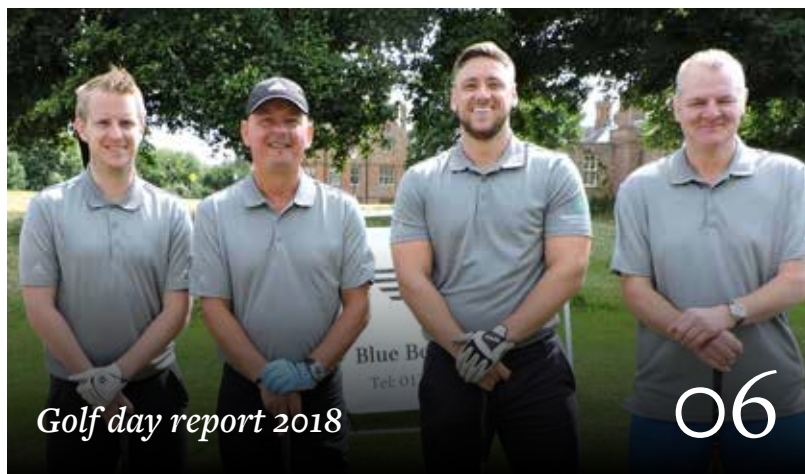
Congleton Link Road

Construction to start in October 2018 after a 5 year campaign.



Thank you to the Link 2 Prosperity group

Who took the case to parliament and made the Congleton Link Road a reality.



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Welcome from the Chief Executive

Welcome to the September issue of the CHAMBER magazine. I am pleased to report that whilst the sunshine has brought us a beautiful summer it also seems to have brought lots of good news that you can read about in this issue.

The first piece of good news is that a contractor, Graham Construction, has been appointed to build the Congleton Link Road. The 5.5Km road has been a long time coming but it is now on plan for work to be started before the end of the year and be completed by 2020.

Another success story is that a Congleton company has been chosen to redevelop the Congleton Leisure Centre. Pulse Design and Build, based on Radnor Park Congleton have been awarded the £9m contract. Preparatory work is due to be completed by March 2019 with the redevelopment work due to be completed by autumn the following year.

The summer has been a very busy time for the East Cheshire Chamber. Our export services are more and more in demand and we have a continually growing list of companies that are using us for export documents supporting shipments outside of Europe. It is pleasing to note that this increase is not restricted by sector, but is being used for exports of many varied products.

Our Golf Day in June was held at Vale Royal Abbey. A full report can be read on page 6 of this edition of CHAMBER. The day was a great success with 24 teams taking part and 114 people sitting down for dinner in the evening

The next "Sporting Event" will be the Clay Pigeon Shoot at Cloudside shooting ground in October. This event is being jointly sponsored by Berisfords Ribbons Ltd and Business Doctors. Full details can be found on page 5. The proceeds from the day will benefit Ruby's Fund, the East Cheshire Chamber's Charity for this year.

Can I close with a reminder to all of our readers, both members and non members, that the Chamber Expo takes place on 21st September at De Vere Cranage Estate, Byley, Holmes Chapel. This promises to be an excellent event and ends with a birthday celebration for De Vere Cranage Estate that will include a Hog Roast, Drinks and Live Music. Don't Miss It!

I hope you enjoy this edition of CHAMBER and if you have any articles that you wish to be considered for future copies please submit them to Jackie Randles on;
Jackie.randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

David

Events Calendar

East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Expo

21st September 2018

De Vere Cranage Estate,
Holmes Chapel,
Cheshire, CW4 8EW

Thursday Thirty but on a Wednesday!!

Due to unforeseen circumstances the meeting scheduled for 11th October 2018 has been moved to 24th October at Cloudside Shooting Ground:

24th October 2018

08:30 am – 10:00 am

Cloudside Shooting Ground,
Red Lane, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 3QG

Clay Pigeon Shoot

24th October 2018

Cloudside Shooting Ground
Red Lane, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 3QG
Details to be confirmed

Christmas Lunch

7th December 2018

Pecks Restaurant, Newcastle Road
Congleton, CW12 4SB
Booking forms will be emailed out
4 weeks before the event

Business Awards Nominations Open

14th January 2019

08:30 am – 10:00 am

Nomination Forms will be in
the January 2019 magazine

Thursday Thirty

17th January 2019

08:30 am – 10:00 am

DV8 Bar, Little Street, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 1AR

Thursday Thirty and B A information (enlightenment)

14th February 2019

08:30 am – 10:30 am

Details to be confirmed

Annual Business Awards 2019

5th April 2019

De Vere Cranage Estate, Byley Lane,
Cranage, Cheshire, CW4 8EW

Thursday Thirty

11th April 2019

08:30 am – 10:00 am

Tatton Estates, Ashley Hall, Ashley Rd,
Ashley, Altrincham, WA14 3QA

Events can be found on our website 'Events Page'

www.eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

Please email Jackie.randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk
for further details and booking forms

A word from Jackie Randles

Save the date in your diary - 14th February 2019!

On February 14th, 2019 we will be holding our regular Thursday Thirty meeting but we will be adding an information session on 'Tips for submitting an entry for the Business Awards' delivered by a 2018 award winner, this will be followed by a chance for you to ask questions and gather information and tips on how to prepare your entry. Further details for this meeting will be available nearer the time but the meeting will be open to more than the usual 30 people.

As a fellow cyclist who completed the challenge of riding from Lands' End to John O'Groats in 2012, I would like to congratulate Andy and Isabel Burrows from Acorn Occupational Health who also completed the challenge in July this year. Andy said "We met many interesting people and witnessed miles of beautiful countryside which made us all appreciate our little island. At the same time we manage to raise over £1,100 for our nominated charity". Well Done Andy and Isabel.

Jackie



New Members

The Chamber extends a very warm welcome to the following new members:



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Dave Heath has been in osteopathic practice for 35 years. Having run practices in Stoke on Trent and Congleton he is now working full time from Riverside Mill Congleton.

Dave did further training in psychotherapy to help his understanding of mind-body functioning and currently is interested in pain neuroscience and its application for managing chronic pain.

www.dhsteopathy.co.uk

David Heath: 07787557519

Email: info@dhsteopathy.co.uk

Riverside, Mountbatten Way, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1DY



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Are you interested in joining East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce?

Please contact David Watson at david.watson@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk or Jackie Randles at jackie.randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

Riverside, Mountbatten Way, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1DY

Tel: 01260 540570 | Fax: 08456766376 | www.eastcheshirechamber.co.uk



Autumn Clay Shoot at Cloudside

24th October 2018

Cloudside Shooting Grounds
Red Lane, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 3QG

Sponsored by Berisfords Ribbons
and Business Doctors

Further information and booking
forms will be emailed out at the
end of September

Itinerary

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 10.30 am | Breakfast |
| 11.00 am | Clay practice followed
by refreshments |
| 13.00 pm | Clay competition |
| 15.00 pm | Meal and presentation |



Why not join us at 08:30 for our Thursday Thirty networking
event, which is taking place at Cloudside before the shoot.
Contact Jackie Randles for more information.



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First Place Winners



Chamber Golf Day Report 2018

myers&co
solicitors

With 24 teams booked into Vale Royal Abbey for the East Cheshire Chamber Golf Day we knew that it was going to be a busy day, both out on the course and later in The Great Hall where dinner was served to 114 diners.



Wrights Marshall
Second Place Winners
Presented by Fiona Hampton
from Berisfords



Ersikine Murray
Third Place Winners
Presented by Andrew Chatterton
from Franklyn Financial Management



Di Watson
Astbury Ladies Team
**Ladies Best Individual
Score Winner**

Presented by Steven Percy
from SAS Daniels



Charlie Ried
Wright Marshall Team
Longest Drive Winner

Presented by Dave Edwards
from approved Inspectors



Simon Howell
Hampton Dean Team
Putting Competition Winner

Presented by Stephen Myers
from Myers & Co



Simon Howell
Hampton Dean Team
Putting Competition Winner

Presented by Stephen Myers
from Myers & Co



John Broadbent
Richborough Estates Team
Nearest the Pin Winner

Presented by Mike Hampton
from Hampton Dean



Reliance Medical Team

The format for the day was a stableford 4 ball with the best 2 scores to count. With 96 Golfers all out on the course for a "Shot Gun Start" it did sound like a tall order to manage but it went very smoothly thanks to competitors avoiding slow play and picking up when they were out of the scoring.

The course looked in superb condition and was enhanced by the various BMWs dotted around the club house and tees, all supplied by the major sponsor, Blue Bell BMW.

Blue Bell also provided the prize of a "MINI ONE" for a "HOLE IN ONE" on the tenth hole and Golfing Holidays for the same achievement on two other holes. Sadly no golfer was successful and the Mini went back to Crewe.

Other sponsors on the day were Approved Inspectors who sponsored the "Longest Drive", Myers & Co who sponsored the "Putting Competition", Berisfords Ribbons, Franklyn Financial Management, Hampton Dean Construction and SAS Daniels Solicitors.

The putting competition was won by Simon Howell of the Hampton Dean Team, the Longest Drive was won by Charlie Reed of the Wright Marshall Team and the Nearest the pin was won by John Broadbent of the Richborough

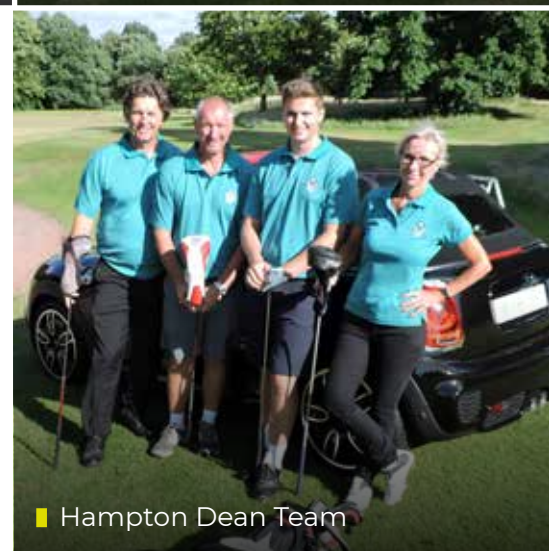
Estates Team. The best ladies individual score went Di Watson who was playing with the Astbury Ladies.

Third place went Erskine Murray's Team, second place to the Wright Marshall Team and the winning Team was ALPS LTD with a score of 92 points.

Following the Golf Competition everyone enjoyed a succulent Roast Beef Diner.

After dinner a charity raffle and auction took place with proceeds going to Ruby's Fund, this year's Chamber Charity of the Year. The amount raised was £4,070 in total. This was helped by David Watson's announcement that Tim McCloud, Chamber Vice- Chair, and David Watson are to take up the challenge of driving 5 Alpine Passes in 5 Days in a 5 series BMW to raise £5,000 for Ruby's Fund.

Mike Hampton of Hampton Dean Ltd, Alan Smith of Reliance Medical Ltd and Edward Whitehead of Plasto-Sac Ltd got them off to a flying start with £2,500 of sponsorship, half of the target total! All in all, it was a fantastic day!



Hampton Dean Team



Member Spotlight

Bringing local businesses into focus



Phil Barker

*Managing Director,
Red Planet Business Services*

What motivates you?

I am always working to achieve the best outcome from every situation, both professionally and personally. The sense of achievement that I get when accomplishing the task, motivates me to continually reach the same high standards and repeat the experience over again.

What have you found to be the most satisfying moment in business?

Knowing that your actions or decisions have had a positive impact on the person or business that you have been entrusted to support. Working in payroll, we are responsible for making sure that everyone we pay on a weekly basis, is paid accurately and on-time, every time. All people's circumstances are different, and our actions could have far reaching repercussions if we don't do our job properly.

If you had the chance to start your career over again, what would you do differently?

I would have sought out opportunities to work in different areas within the business sooner and see where my strengths were best suited. This would have enabled faster progression and development.

How do you spend your leisure time?

When I'm not working I like to spend as much time as I can with my wife and two daughters, along with my only male companion in the family, Harley the dog. I like watching most sports, particularly football, and I am a keen golfer and cyclist.

If you could talk to one person from history, who would it be and why?

Sir Matt Busby, one of football's greatest ever managers to hear his advice on building successful teams, especially in the face of adversity.

Who has been your greatest inspiration?

My Mum. Her values, kindness, strength and generosity are traits that I try and emulate on a daily basis and demonstrate in my business when dealing with clients and my colleagues.



Andrew Whiteley

*Audit and Accounts Manager,
Harts Limited*



What motivates you?

I often relate what accountants do to putting pieces of a jigsaw together to paint a picture of a business. From this picture we can see all sorts of information that enables a company to see how it is doing and gives them insight into ways to improve and grow. I'm motivated by the desire to make that picture as clear as possible so clients understand what they are looking at.

What have you found to be the most satisfying moment in business?

I once converted Sage 50 accounting data into Sage 200 which was extremely complicated and took quite some time to plan and complete but it enabled the client to produce information about his business he had never seen before. I was quite mentally fried at the end but it was certainly worth it.

If you had the chance to start your career over again, what would you do differently?

I would probably have taken my career a bit more seriously and worked a bit harder when I was younger but then again, you're only young once so I don't have any major regrets.

How do you spend your Leisure time?

I have two young boys so most of my leisure time is taken up having fun with them, which often involves being beaten on gaming consoles. If I do get any time to myself, which isn't very often, I like to read autobiographies or play puzzles games on the PlayStation.

If you could talk to one person from history, who would it be and why?

I would love to have had a beer with Sid James. I grew up watching Carry On films and his laugh was just so infectious. The younger members of the team talk about how 'un-PC' they are but to me they are just pure comedy gold.

Who has been your greatest inspiration?

My son Daniel has been a massive inspiration to me. He was diagnosed with Oral Dyspraxia at a young age which meant he couldn't talk until early into his school years. Watching his determination and desire to overcome the condition and become the complete chatter box he now is has shown me that if you work hard enough and don't give up you can overcome anything.





Thursday Thirty Events

Sandbach R.U.F.C hosted the May Thursday Thirty and the chef treated everyone who attended to a sit down full English breakfast! Once again the meeting was fully subscribed.

Following breakfast we were given a short presentation about the club and the history of the club.

Sandbach RUFC is a rugby union team based in the Cheshire town of Sandbach. It operates four Senior sides, Junior and Senior Colts and ten Mini/Junior teams.

The July Thursday Thirty was hosted by Burns Garages at their showroom in Congleton and guests enjoyed varied breakfast baps, a selection of oatcakes and fruit.

Robert Burns gave a short overview about Burns Garages celebrating 100 years of

business and being in the fourth generation of the Burns family, he said that his number one objective is to "ensure all of our customers receive the very best service and great value for money at all times. The meeting was very well attended".

The Wheatsheaf in Sandbach were the hosts for the August Thursday Thirty and all the guests were treated to a fabulous breakfast of various baps, fresh fruit salad, granola and berries, Danish pastries and much more!

A former coaching inn built in 1890, The Wheatsheaf in Hightown, Sandbach has been acquired by The Pear Family, who own Pecks Restaurant in Congleton.

The Pears have breathed new life into the historic building. Following an extensive refurbishment and restoration, The Wheatsheaf in Sandbach has become

'A Quintessentially British Gastropub' which also offers luxury accommodation.

David Watson presented a cheque to last year's charity of the year, Kidneys For Life for the money raised at the Business Awards last March.



If you are interested in becoming a member of East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce you are welcome to join us at one of our Thursday Thirty events to meet other members and the Chamber team!!

Please see the events list on page 3 and visit our website www.eastcheshirechamber.co.uk



If you would like further information on any aspect of family law or business and divorce, please contact Cheryl Haywood, Solicitor in SAS Daniels' Family Law team on
01260 282300
cheryl.haywood@sasdanields.co.uk



Splitting up. How will your business continue?

The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics reveal 42% of all marriages now end in divorce. With 5.7 million small and medium sized enterprises in the UK in 2017, these figures suggest divorce could impact a significant number of businesses and individuals.

On setting up a small business, often for tax purposes, it is common for spouses to be named as shareholders, company secretary, even co-director, irrespective of the active involvement they will play in the day to day running of the enterprise.

The starting point

Upon divorce the starting point for asset division is an equal split, which can be adjusted according to various factors such as the needs of the parties and more specifically, the needs of any children of the family. The matrimonial pot will include consideration of the spouse (or spouses) interest in the business.

Will the business be able to continue?

Generally speaking, the family court will attempt to enable a profitable business to continue, not least as it is likely to be providing an income stream for either (or both) spouses. Usually, the court will also want to extricate the less involved spouse from the running of the business, as clearly if the personal relationship has broken down to necessitate divorce, it is improbable the parties will be able to harmoniously agree on all aspects of business planning and running moving forward.

The usual approach is for the value of the exiting spouse's interest in the business to be calculated. Some may be able to agree on this, others may require a single joint expert to be appointed. A single joint expert is a specialist who is agreed on, paid and instructed by both parties as opposed to each getting their own expert which would increase cost. This could entail the use of accountants with industry knowledge, forensic accountants, surveyors and/or tax specialists providing expert reports to the court and the spouses.

The experts appointed and their reports will be tailored to the specifics of the business concerned, and may cover issues such as:

- The value of business assets, with deliberation on the effect of realising those assets. E.g. a care home business may struggle if the building it occupies is to be sold. However if the business also owns a yacht, there is potential for sale of this unnecessary item to provide capital.
- Forecasting of maintainable profitability over a future period.
- Identifying anomalies and irregularities in the accounts and trading.
- Undertaking asset tracing, particularly where businesses inter-relate.
- Where the business is stated to be dependent on key people remaining, if this is in dispute, providing an opinion in relation to value the business both with and without the key players.

Offsetting

Once the business side has been agreed, it is then usual for attention to turn to the other assets held by the parties, such as the former matrimonial home, investments and savings. The value that the exiting spouse is relinquishing in the business may then be compensated by recourse to other assets, a process known as offsetting. Assuming this approach is satisfactory to both, the exiting spouse can then assign their interest/shares to the remaining spouse and resign from their positions within the business. This is subject to dealing with any provisions in the Articles of Association of the Company and any relevant shareholders agreement, particularly where there are shareholders other than the divorcing couple.

Some spouses elect to store money in their capital account upon realising that the marriage is in difficulties, in the hope it will escape attention. This is unlikely to be successful as disclosure of the account will reveal it and there is a duty on both parties to provide full disclosure of their respective financial positions.

Where both spouses are actively involved in the company I have had suggestions that they continue to work together post-divorce. I would usually counsel against this. The likelihood of this continuing to operate harmoniously is slim and substantial disruption to the smooth-running of the business is best avoided.

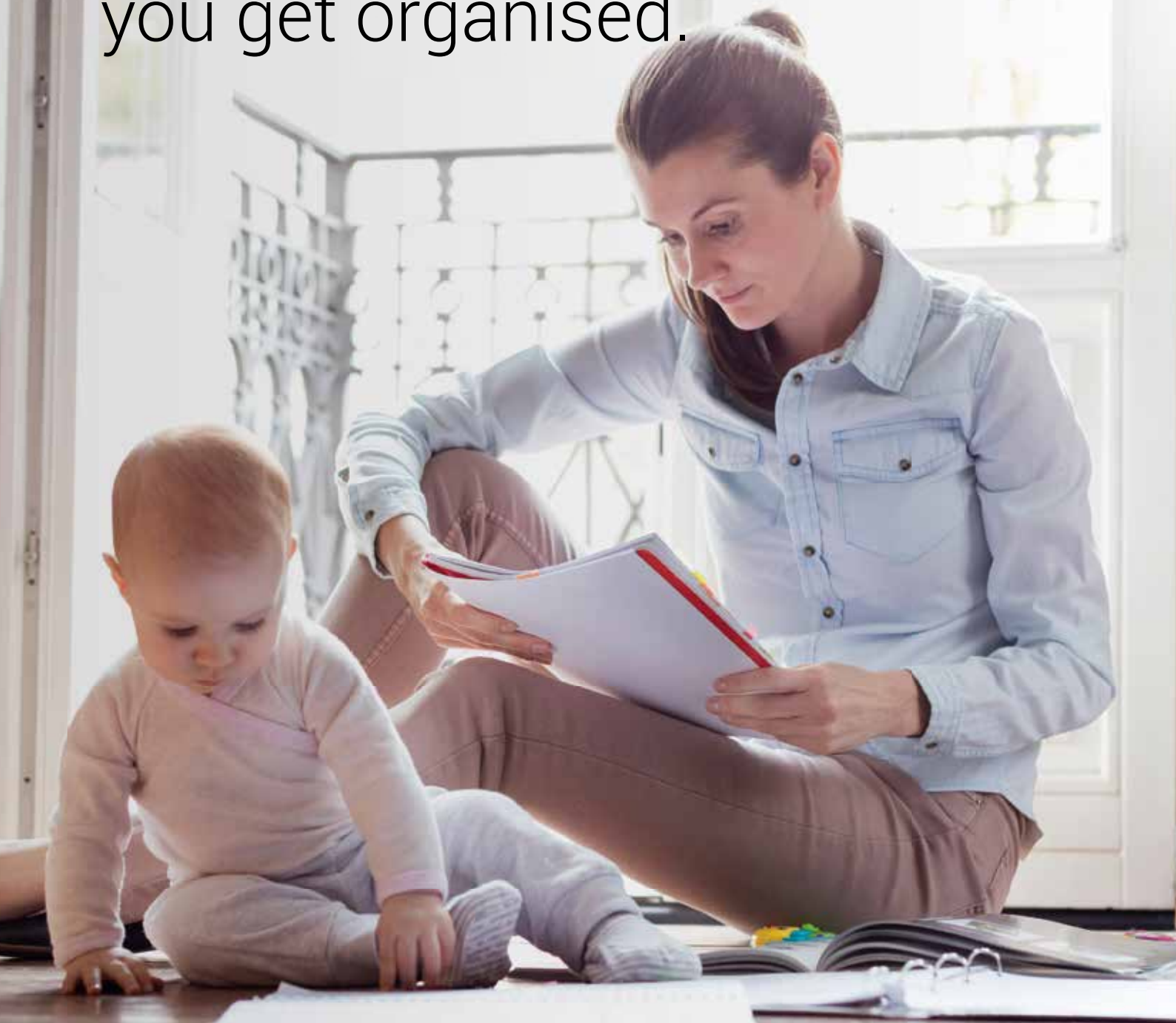
What precautionary measures can be taken?

A pre-nuptial agreement prior to marriage, or a post-nuptial agreement whilst the marriage is in place, may assist should divorce occur. It will be a document the Judge will consider as evidencing your intentions and contributions prior to marital breakdown. A specialist matrimonial solicitor will be able to help you with the preparation of these documents.

Keep business and personal assets and finances distinct. This will make it easier to disconnect the business as a separate entity should divorce occur.

You may want to consider involving others formally in the business, as this makes it harder for the courts to conclude the business is simply an alias for one spouse and can be considered as such. That said, this needs to be balanced with the potential for others to interfere in the business and a balance of risk exercise would need to be undertaken before this is considered.

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Council To Give Free Tendering Training To Boost Local Businesses

Cheshire East Council is to hold another series of free workshops to help business people learn how to win public sector contracts.

The procurement training events will be provided by the council's arms-length Skills and Growth Company and are targeted at local businesses in Cheshire East.

The latest free workshop is being provided to help smaller businesses in Cheshire East learn how to win public sector contracts.

The next workshop is taking place on 26 September 2018, from 9.30am to 5pm at Macclesfield College, Park Lane, Cheshire, SK11 8LF.

Future workshops are planned for December 2018 and March 2019.

The September workshop will show small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) from Cheshire East how public sector procurement works, the different frameworks in public sector contracts, how to identify the best opportunities

and how to write a winning bid. The workshop is suitable for businesses new to the tendering process or looking to improve how they tender.



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Wealth

FFM Summer Swing fundraising success.



IN AID OF

ST. JAMES'S PLACE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

On Thursday 12th July 2018, Andrew Chatterton, Managing Director of Franklyn Financial Management Ltd of Congleton hosted the eleventh annual Summer Swing Charity Golf Day and Gala Dinner at The Mere Golf Resort and Spa.

Yet again the beautiful weather played its part as 100 golfers took to the course and after some impressive scoring, the winning team which included Andy Chatterton scored an impressive 94 points. Porsche Centre Wilmslow donated a fantastic Porsche Golf Bag for 'nearest the pin' with Russell Gay from Urban Edge Architecture winning with a hole in one!

The golf was followed by a glamorous evening of fundraising for the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation. Over 360 guests attended the 'Diamonds and Pearls' themed evening sponsored by TorFx which exploded in to life with Sarah Ikumu of Britain's got Talent fame belting out the iconic Prince hit 'Purple Rain'. This was followed by timeless comedy with the legendary 'Mick Miller' before the band Jumpin' helped guests dance the night away. MC Darren Proctor from Key 103 Manchester Radio did an incredible job as compere for the evening.

THANK YOU
WE RAISED

£147,000

The evening raised an incredible £147,000 for the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation taking the total raised over the 11 years history of the Summer Swing to over £815,000.

Of the total amount raised, we're delighted that we were able to raise £34,000 through pledges for Friends for Leisure (www.friendsforleisure.org.uk) These funds will go towards helping young children with disabilities relieve some of the stress and social exclusion by promoting long lasting friendships and provide access to so many more leisure activities.

The event could not happen without the generosity of our main sponsors Clarke Willmott, Porsche Centre Wilmslow, TorFx, and Document and Data Shred along with all of Franklyn Financial Managements clients, suppliers and of course the team at FFM.



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5 Passes In 5 Days To Raise £5,000 For Ruby's Fund!

On 23rd September Chamber Chief Executive, David Watson and Tim McCloud, Managing Director of TMC Strategic Communications are embarking on a 2,500 mile road trip across the Alps in support of Chamber Charity of the Year, Ruby's Fund.

The 5-day Swiss challenge will take David and Tim through 5 Alpine passes, and local businesses have already started to sponsor the pair in return for a photo of them and their logo at these spectacular locations. For those willing to donate a little more, businesses can also get their name or logo on the car!

To get involved and help hit the £5,000 target contact Tim: tim@wearetmc.co.uk or visit the fundraising link below.

Every penny raised will go to Ruby's Fund, helping the charity get one step closer to their target of £250,000 to buy their current premises on Roe Street. #BOBAPPEAL



<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/TimMcCloud>

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Reliance Medical opens the doors at new premises



Reliance Medical welcomed friends, staff and family members to their official Open Day for their new West Avenue Head Office and International Distribution Centre on the 17th August 2018.

Development of the 42,500 sq ft site commenced in 2017, with the Customer Service, Sales, and Marketing teams being the last business functions to

move across early in 2018. This move represented a significant milestone in the history of the award-winning first aid and medical device manufacturer. Reliance Medical Chief Executive Andy Pear said; "This was a dramatic expansion of the business and we have been expanding quite rapidly".

Jonathan Williams, Marketing Manager for Reliance Medical

said; "Every aspect of the West Avenue development has been a bold vision, designed to symbolise the company's growth, aspirations, and optimism for the future." This can be seen in all aspects of the design, from the detail in the fixtures and fittings in the staff canteen, through to the 18 sq m video wall in the atrium; displaying corporate



and motivational messages. Even the building signage is on a scale few have seen before. The 80 sq m Reliance Medical logo wraps around the site as a symbol of the organisation's confidence, and a clear statement that industry in our region is leading the way.

Reliance Medical is the UK's leading trade distributor of the highest quality surgical dressings, healthcare products, medical equipment, and first aid supplies. For more information on Reliance Medical's products and services, please email sales@reliancemedical.co.uk or call 08456 448 808.



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From left to right:
Martin Webb, Howard Worth
Natalie Taylor, NatWest
Councillor Peter Groves, Cheshire East Council
Scott Harding, Poole Alcock.

£5,000 first prize for Dabbers Den winner 2018

Do you think you have what it takes to enter The Dabbers Den? We are on the look out for new businesses or a great business idea that could be presented to the Dabbers Judges. If you are trading in Cheshire East and have been in business for less than 3 years you could be in with the chance of winning a cash prize of £5,000.

Dabbers Den brings together Howard Worth Chartered Accountants, Poole Alcock Solicitors, NatWest Bank and Cheshire East Council with the aim of supporting and encouraging entrepreneurs and

to recognise new businesses.

Entry to the business competition opens on the 1st July with the deadline for submissions being the 31st October 2018. The winner will receive a substantial prize including £5,000 cash as well as expert accountancy, legal and financial mentoring from the judges organisations. For the 2018 competition this also includes a dedicated support package from Cheshire East Council including a half day mentoring session and attendance at a master class of the winner's choice.

Martin Webb, Partner at Howard Worth said "I am delighted to be joining the Judging panel for Dabbers Den for 2018. Over the last 6 years the competition has helped start-up businesses and entrepreneurs who might, otherwise have gone un-aided when it came to financial support and investment. I am excited to see this year's entries and look forward to finding out more about the businesses who apply".

If your business is based in Crewe, Nantwich, Sandbach, Middlewich or Tarporley and began trading following 1st

January 2015 then you are eligible to enter. Details of how to apply and full competition rules can be found on the website www.dabbersdencompetition.co.uk

The judges will be inviting shortlisted entrants into the Dabbers' Den in November, where they will be holding panel interviews to determine the worthy winner.

For further information visit www.dabbersdencompetition.co.uk





DABBERS' DEN 2018



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plus Legal, Accountancy, Financial and Business Mentoring

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Full competition rules, including eligibility conditions and full details of the prizes are available to view on the competition website www.dabbersdencompetition.co.uk. The Organisers wish to make it clear that neither the "The Dabbers' Den" Competition, nor its Organisers, have any involvement, connection or affiliation with the BBC or the BBC television programme, "Dragons Den".



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Thousands To Benefit From New Congleton Link Road

Thousands of drivers every day will benefit from faster journeys thanks to the new Congleton Link Road.

Cheshire East Council has appointed civil engineering company Graham Construction to deliver the Congleton Link Road scheme – which could begin construction later this year.

The 5.5km (3.5-mile) road will unlock key sites for housing and employment and provide a major economic boost to Congleton, relieving traffic congestion in the town centre and improving east-west connectivity.

The scheme links the A536 Macclesfield Road to the north with the A534 Sandbach Road to the west, improving travel between Macclesfield, Congleton and the M6.

Leo Martin, managing director of Graham Construction (civil engineering), said: "This strategically important scheme will bring long-term benefits to the Congleton community. We appreciate that traffic has been a considerable challenge in the town and the link road will serve to reduce congestion".

Philip Cox, chief executive of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, said: "This scheme will support the development of more than 2,400 homes and 20 hectares (50 acres) of employment land to the north of Congleton with the potential to generate 3,000 jobs by 2035 and

£13m per year into the local economy."

In 2013 the Link 2 Prosperity Group of local business leaders gathered the evidence needed to support Fiona Bruce, MP to lobby parliament and promote the benefits of the Link Road. In response to the news that the Link Road has been approved, Tim McCloud, Managing Director of TMC Strategic Communications and chairman of the Link 2 Prosperity group stated:

"We are delighted with the result. It is a testament to the hard work of the Link 2 Prosperity group, backing of local businesses and the unwavering dedication and commitment of Fiona Bruce. This is a great news day for Congleton and will help businesses expand, increase jobs and move us all a step closer to the regeneration of our town."

The Department for Transport will provide £45 million towards the £75 million project, which will save drivers on average seven minutes per journey.

Transport Minister Liz Sugg said:

"We are investing record amounts in improving our roads up and down the country to get drivers to shops, friends or work quicker than before.

This new bypass will not only lead to fewer accidents and cut congestion in Congleton, it will take lorries out of the town centre and improve air quality for its residents."

Cyclists will also get a better link around Congleton as a cycleway and path will be built alongside the road.

The works will start in October and end in 2020. Cheshire East is providing £9.63m and £20.8m will come from private developers.

Fiona Bruce with members of the Link 2 Prosperity group in 2013





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CHAMBER MAGAZINE

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