

THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR EAST CHESHIRE

East Cheshire
CHAMBER
of commerce & enterprise

May 2021 / Issue 63

Chamber

**Celebrating 15 years
of exceptional service
to the community**
and raising over £62,000 for Charity



Cobra Braiding Machinery
Winners of Queens Award for Enterprise



Virtual Thursday Thirty
Online networking meetings thrive



Congleton Community
Celebrating our 750th birthday



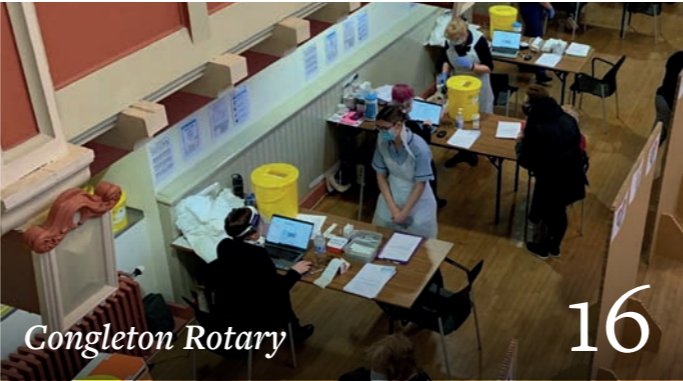
Golf Day 05



FFM Community 07



Niamh 14



Congleton Rotary 16

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Welcome from the Chief Executive



Hello and welcome to the first edition of Chamber since I have taken over the reins from David as Chief Executive.

Many of you already know me as I have worked with David for the past 10 years as the Chamber Manager, David has been a great inspiration to me and I plan to continue the work of supporting all our Chamber members.

In 2012 the Link to Prosperity Group was formed by the Chamber and started the drive towards the £90 million, 5.5 km route Congleton Link Road being built. The road was opened on 19th April and has been named 'Wolstenholme Elmy Way'

after Congleton's famous pioneering educationalist and votes for women campaigner, Elizabeth Clarke Wolstenholme Elmy.

At the time of writing this, 35.5 million people in United Kingdom have received their first dose of the Covid vaccination and 18 million have received their second dose. This is an amazing achievement, by offering vaccines to as many adults as possible by summer we should see further easing of restrictions and therefore the resumption of face-to-face Chamber events and the opening up of businesses as normal.

The 2021 Golf Day is going ahead on 23rd June at Mottram Hall Golf Club, please see page 5 for full details.

Thursday Thirty meetings are now running again each month (albeit virtually) and they are proving to be extremely popular, subject to the continued easing of restrictions we are planning to hold face to face meetings again in September.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Chamber; please remember we are here to help wherever we can. If you have any articles that you would like to be considered or you are interested in advertising space please contact either: jackie.randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk or Niamh.Hardy@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk or call the office on 01260 540 570.

Jackie

New Members

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



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Are you interested in joining East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce?

Please contact Jackie Randles at jackie.randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk





Cobra wins Queen's Award for Enterprise

We are pleased to announce that Cobra Braiding Machinery has been honoured with a Queen's Award for Enterprise for International Trade.

Cobra is one of 205 organisations in the United Kingdom to be recognised with this prestigious business award. It was announced on the 29th April Cobra has been recognised for its growth in international sales; which represents 95% of their sales.

Normally, the Award is announced on the 21st April at the same time as the Queen's official birthday, however this year the announcement was postponed as the Queen was in mourning for her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh.

Formal presentation of the Award includes a visit to Buckingham Palace and also a visit to Cobra by the Queen's representative in Cheshire.

Managing Director of Cobra, Neil Hyde, commented:

“My small team of 5 – Diane, Clyve, Steve, Terry, Jon and I feel honoured for our success in export markets to be honoured by the awarding of the Queens Award for International Trade. This will help strengthen the Cobra brand with our overseas customers particularly in the USA, Japan and Australia. We look forward to the visit to Buckingham Palace as well. I also appreciate the support the Chamber have given us for our exports over the years. This included a pointer in the direction of arranging for a party of 12 from Russia in staying at the Rams Head which Neil remembers well.”

COBRA
BRAIDING MACHINERY

East Cheshire Chamber would like to extend their congratulations to Cobra Braiding Machinery for being honoured with a Queen's Award for Enterprise for outstanding achievement in International Trade.



Join us on our Chamber Golf Day 2021

Mottram Hall Golf Club

The annual Chamber Golf Day will take place on Wednesday, 23rd June from 10.30 onwards at Mottram Hall Golf Club, located one mile from the picturesque village of Prestbury.

- 10.30 – 12.00 Registration & Breakfast
- 13.00 – Shotgun Start
- 13.00 – 17.00 Golf Competition
- 18.00 – 18.30 Drinks Reception
- 18.30 – 2 course Buffet Dinner and Prizegiving

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Early booking is recommended



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AT MOTTRAM HALL GOLF CLUB

23RD JUNE 2021

FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL JACKIE AT
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OFFICIAL PARTNERS



Stoke City Star, Nick Powell, surprises local Junior FC members

Ten lucky members of Congleton Town Juniors FC had a very special treat recently as Stoke City Football Club star, Nick Powell, was the surprise guest on a Zoom call with them.

Each Junior member on the call got to ask Powell a range of questions about his career, from what life at Stoke City FC is like, to how he has spent his time during lockdown.

The call was arranged for the children by Chamber Patron Sponsor, Franklyn Financial Management (FFM), as part of their Community Partner Programme which sees Congleton Town FC as one of their Community Partners.

FFM launched their Community Partner Programme to create mutually beneficial partnerships in the local area that are sustainable and positive, that help inspire

the local community, bring people together and provide a more connected approach to community projects.

Charles Porter, Commercial Director at Congleton Town FC, commented "The lucky Junior Members on the call had a lot of fun with Nick and got to ask him many different questions – he was a great sport! As Community Partners of Franklyn, it's great that they organise things like this for our members and help get the Congleton Town FC name out there even more."



Ian Cottrill, Business Relations Director at Franklyn, stated "As well as being proud Platinum Partners of Stoke City Football Club, we are also proud to have Congleton Town FC as one of our Community Partners. It was great to be able to link the two clubs together through

this surprise call! We hope the Juniors enjoyed it and that it was a little pick-me-up for them whilst they couldn't train as usual due to lockdown."

You can watch the highlight video from the call on the Franklyn Financial Management YouTube channel [now](#)

ffm
FRANKLYN
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

15 years of exceptional service to the community

David Watson, Chief Executive steps down from his role at the Chamber

David Watson, Chief Executive of East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, left the office in Riverside Mill on the 31st March for the last time, after 15 years of exceptional service to the community.

Having had a successful career in textiles and manufacturing, which took him from Leicester to Mauritius and finally to Congleton, David’s commitment and contribution to East Cheshire Chamber will leave a lasting impression on so many of us.

After selling his business, David joined the Chamber in 2006 after seeing an advert for Congleton Borough Chamber of Commerce who were looking for a seasoned professional to grow and develop the business as a product development coordinator.

In 2006, the Chamber was funded by Congleton Borough Council through South East Cheshire Enterprises and was far from the vibrant business community that makes up East Cheshire Chamber today. Ian Cottrill caught up with Dave to hear all about his time at the Chamber as it comes to an end.

So how did it all begin?

There were 72 members when I joined, I then set about bringing together a real community with local businesses. Lots of my business friends and contacts joined me at the Chamber which was great.

In my first year we had 8 teams at the Chamber Golf Day. The following year we had 20 teams that came along. It’s about bringing people together, connecting the community and getting people talking. That is what is going to grow the goodwill of the Chamber. When you look at the list of members now, so many are still very active now which is just fantastic.

For many of the Chamber community, the events are the first to go into the calendar. The prestigious Business Awards, the Chamber Shoot, the infamous Christmas lunch along with the many networking events throughout the year which are often fully booked.

I have loved every minute of being involved with the Chamber; however, it has not been without its challenges. In the early days when Cheshire East took over the council, South East Cheshire Enterprises was then disbanded and the future for the Chamber looked bleak. After discussions with the board, I was appointed as the new Chief Executive and started a new venture for the Chamber.



David pictured with Tim McCloud of TMC at the prestigious Chamber Business Awards.

New challenges arose as the funding from the council disappeared, so we had to become self-sufficient and through the help of my good friend Tim McCloud of TMC Strategic Communications we became ‘East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce’ and moved back to Congleton and set up home in Riverside Mill in 2010 where we are based to this day.

Why should people be involved with the Chamber?

There are different reasons for different people. The knowledge that exists in the Chamber from export documents to the networking, the community, and the chance to mix and work with like-minded people.

It has to be networking where everyone can get involved though. The great thing about the Chamber is its membership. When a new member joins, they are never left on their own. We aim to connect people together.

David has had a huge impact, not only on the Chamber, but also Congleton. In forming the ‘Link to prosperity group’ with local businesses, Fiona Bruce MP and the LEP to lobby the government for funding for the new link road in Congleton.

We also had George Osbourne opening the business awards in 2015 which was just fantastic, and I have been able to meet three members of the royal family whilst being part of the Chamber.

Just because it’s work it doesn’t mean you can’t enjoy it and have a smile on your face.

David has described his time at the Chamber as ‘quite possibly, the most enjoyable of his career’

It is such a shame that in my final year at the Chamber we have had to live through such sad and uncertain times. We have had to postpone all of the events including the business awards; however, we will all look forward to them even more when we can all get together.

When asked if he will still be involved in the Chamber... David replied... ‘If I am invited!’

David plans to use his new free time spending time with his family, playing golf, driving his MX5, along with lots of holidays. David will also continue to act as a trustee for the local charities that he supports.

I am sure that we will all wish David the very best for the future and I am sure we will see David at the many chamber events in the future.

David left the Chamber in very safe hands as Jackie Randles has taken the role of Chief Executive.

If you are interested in finding out more about East Cheshire Chamber and the benefits that a membership can bring then please see www.eastcheshirechamber.co.uk or contact Jackie.randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk



Since I first walked in to meet you in Chamber offices 4 years ago you have been a friend, mentor and all round great chap to be around. Your energy and enthusiasm for the Chamber and everyone involved is just incredible. Hearing your stories of how the chamber has developed has just been great and I know all of us at FFM will be part of supporting Jackie in continuing the great work that you have done.

I am sure I can speak on behalf of many of the members in wishing you all the best. I am looking forward to catching up for a beer or two, soon!

Enjoy your retirement mate and thanks again.

Ian Cottrill – Franklyn Financial Management



David pictured with George Osborne and Fiona Bruce MP.

For all the fun, the laughter and your unwavering passion for the Chamber. The difference you have made to the business community and personally for me, is huge. I will miss you at the Chamber but know your guidance, support and friendship will always be there.

Let us never forget, an M5, Swiss mountain passes, brilliant weather, whilst raising money for charity... it was the best holiday ever!

Thank you, David, for everything.

Tim McCloud – TMC and Vice Chair of the Chamber



In August 2010 I started working at the Chamber for David just one day a week to do the accounts, in February the following year, I became the Chamber manager. This was a baptism of fire as the Business Awards were only a few weeks ahead!

David has been a great inspiration to me and a pleasure to work with in the months/years going forward from then, offering support, guidance, and encouragement.

I wish David all the best in his retirement and look forward to seeing him calling in at the office (there will always be milk in the fridge) and future Chamber events.

Jackie Randles – Chief Exec of the Chamber

I first met David just over 10 years ago, as I was carrying out my due diligence on becoming a Business Doctor Franchisee. It was his aforementioned passion for the areas’ business community and explanation of his experience of the Franchise, that helped convince me to get involved. The rest, as they say, is history, it’s his fault that I’m a Business Doctor and Chamber Board Member!! And at the core of much business done, chamber events, and the infamous Badgers Days Out has been David’s continuing support and passion.

Very best wishes for a long and enjoyable retirement Watto!

Kevin Cook – Business Doctors



I first met Watto when a 21-year-old undergraduate and as a friend of the family and fellow patron of The Coach & Horses, he offered to drive me back to University in Leicester (his old stomping ground and rag trade centre). He made me laugh then and has continued to do so in the succeeding 32 years!

In his time at the Chamber, he has worked tirelessly for the benefit of the membership and the business community as a whole. It is with sadness that we see him step away from the limelight, though I doubt he will say quiet in his retirement.

He leaves the Chamber in rude health as it has gone from strength to strength under his direction.

Good Luck in your retirement Watto, you’ve earned the right to put your feet up.

Peter McNulty – Hammond McNulty

I first met David 21 years ago when I joined Hammond McNulty. In those days the Chamber held their Board meetings in Hammond McNulty’s board room. I remember being very vocal and said, “what does the Chamber actually do for businesses?” to which David replied, “join the Board and see for yourself”, so that’s exactly what I did.

I have got to know David with his larger-than-life personality. His passion and enthusiasm is infectious and he genuinely cares about his fellow Chamber members and their businesses. He leaves the Chamber in a very healthy financial position and in very good hands. He deserves to enjoy his retirement, but I am sure we will still see him at Chamber events.

David - enjoy your retirement and work on getting your golf handicap down. Your love of life and sense of fun will be missed at Board meetings.

Marie Shenton – Hammond McNulty and Chair of the Chamber



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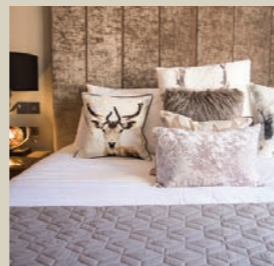
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Member Spotlight

Bringing local businesses into focus



Sue Heaven

The Rossendale Trust

What motivates you?

The challenge of fundraising for this great charity! These days, it is not enough to rattle a tin. We try to build a two-way relationship with people and businesses based upon mutual benefit, respect and understanding.

Who has been your greatest inspiration?

Maybe a little predictable, but probably my mother. As a single parent from the age of 36, she was a brave and determined individual who instilled in me, the principles of hard work, integrity, honesty and commitment. Parents set an example to their kids that lasts, whether they know it or not.

What has been your most satisfying moment in your role with The Rossendale Trust?

There have been many, but to choose two I would say winning the 'Business of the Year' award in 2019. That was a commendable achievement for a local charity. Secondly, seeing the care and commitment of the whole organisation in keeping our tenants safe and well throughout the past Covid year.

How do you spend your Leisure time?

I have a horse that I love to ride, I enjoy baking, and (when I can) I love to go on walking or cycling vacations with my husband, preferably somewhere warm, beautiful and remote!

What are today and tomorrow's challenges?

They are around maintaining interest in, and support for Rossendale Trust at a time when every person, business and organisation is fighting to re-establish their activity after the pandemic.

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

Maybe Dick Turpin! He was a handy fundraiser (although not for charity...) and he loved a good horse! Although I probably would not replicate his fundraising style and method!



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Victoria Greenwood

NW Mediation Solutions

What motivates you?

Making a difference. Having been a commercial litigator for the past 11 years I have seen the toll conflict can take on a person, both financially and emotionally. I am now in a position where I can help the parties resolve their dispute within a day – meaning no more legal fees, no more sleepless nights and they are free to move on with their lives. It is very rewarding.

How many hours do you work a day on average?

I try to work 9 – 5. Invariably this changes based on how busy we are. Mediation have been known to go on past midnight! As any business owner will tell you there is always something to be done. I never knew how much time was involved in marketing your business and I now have a huge respect for that profession.

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

For me this is two-fold. On the one hand I have the immense satisfaction of when a

mediation settles and people get closure and can move on with their lives – the weight lifted off their shoulder is palpable and a great feeling. From a business point of view when I get solicitors coming back to us over and over and then telling me they themselves now want to become a mediator because they have been so impressed with the process – well, that is pretty priceless too.

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

I've always regretted not following one of my dreams – to be a German teacher. I always figured if I didn't like being a solicitor I could change careers easily. Whilst I've moved into helping people resolve disputes through mediation it never seemed the right time to change professions completely. I've also never given up my dream of being an astronaut...! (clearly too much time was spent watching Star Trek in my youth!)

How do you spend your Leisure time?

In the past this would be abroad – Spain to relax and the USA to explore. I now take a great deal of pleasure in gardening and enjoy nothing more than watching Monty Don on a Friday night! I also keep chickens and have two dogs – Lola the Vizsla and Penny the flat coated retriever; weekends are never quiet!

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

It's impossible to pick just one – I'd love to meet my ancestors and find out what they were like and what motivated them in such hard times. I'd also love to meet Dusty Springfield, she was my first musical hero and I imagine she would have some amazing stories to tell.

Who has been your greatest inspiration?

I've had many strong female role models in my life – from my mum and grandmother to my amazing German teacher at High School (hence why I wanted to be a German teacher!). Their work ethic and enthusiasm for subject matters was infectious. My fictional role model would have to be the great Captain Janeway – not only did she start me drinking black coffee, but her character showed me that with enough grit and determination anything was achievable.

NW
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Chamber's new recruit

Hello, I am Niamh and I started working at the Chamber on March 1st, through the Kickstart scheme.

My experience joining the Chamber has been full of exciting learning kerbs, from getting to know all the businesses who are Chamber Members and what they do, to updating the benefits we are able to offer our members, to taking over our Social Media presence. This has meant that each day is different from the last, and full of things to do.

Joining through the Kickstart scheme has allowed me to have a careers advisor outside the Chamber and attend multiple workshops to help improve my skills. I have also been able to attend an Emergency First Aid at Work Course in the short time I have been with the Chamber.

I look forward to meeting you all at future events!

Adapting auditing for a Pandemic and beyond

Most auditors will tell you that one of the things they enjoy most about their jobs is spending time in clients' businesses. Taking the time to understand their products, processes, people, and even the Sunday evening routine of checking the traffic hotspots and planning the route for the Monday morning commute is ingrained in our minds. So, what do you do when everything changes, a pandemic breaks out and visiting clients is no longer possible?

At WR Partners, pausing our audit work until we could re-enter our clients' premises was not an option. Fortunately, our IT systems were already set up for the switch to remote working, with our business using paperless files and cloud-based software for several years, with a few minor adjustments, our virtual service was ready to go. By using a range of video calling software, we could match the platforms our clients were

working with and our team were easily able to keep in touch when working together. A suite of secure data transfer options allows us to get the large volumes of information needed for a remote audit from our clients safely and simply.

Looking to a post-pandemic world, is the current model the future? And moving forward, how much of a factor should location be in choosing your auditor? There is no denying that physical visits still build relationships better than video calls, but the old times (and costs) of placing multiple audit staff on site for weeks at a time, tying up clients' employees, may well be over. The rapid development and implementation of remote auditing processes, which still give the same quality of evidence, allows us to consider a hybrid model for the future, benefiting clients and staff alike. Lockdown isn't something that anyone wants to repeat, but it has shown that there are many efficiencies to be made and opportunities for those that are willing to take them.



Fran Johnson
Audit Partner



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Congleton Rotary Club volunteers help with the COVID-19 vaccinations

The Town Hall drive to vaccinate the adult population of Congleton and Holmes Chapel started with the most vulnerable – the octogenarians – first.

Now this is a spirited lot, not given to suffering fools lightly; sometimes over-confident and at other times needing gentle reassurance and positive direction.

So, it seemed quite appropriate that the Rotary Club should find itself in the midst of the volunteers needed at the Town Hall. At the heart of the action, some of the Rotarians that turned up were only a little younger than the population that they were helping! At first, the club played a supporting role, but it soon became clear that with volunteers emerging from the woodwork all over town, someone had to co-ordinate the effort. The role fell to Rotary.

The Rotarians were tasked with monitoring the queues outside, asking a pre-entry checklist, directing the caterpillar through registration, hand sanitisation, temperature control, vaccination and the obligatory post-vaccination monitoring for 15 minutes before leaving the town hall. Each shift needed a team of 12.

We are often asked how many people get vaccinated in a day. It all depends on how much vaccine is sent and what type it is. One day, we got through just under 1,500 Astra vaccinations and on another over 1,000 Pfizer.

The process is settling down now. The age groups are younger and even those elders returning for their second jabs know the ropes. Rotary is now managing a list of well over 90 volunteers in addition to its own members who turn up whenever they are free. And the process could become a long-term commitment. The first round anticipates all adults being vaccinated by the end of July and their second jabs could take us to the end of September. Now, the talk is of booster jabs to deal with variants starting, perhaps, as early as October."

Some overheard comments;

"Oh can't we stop a bit longer love, this is the first time I've seen anybody for 12 months and it's wonderful!"

"Are you together? 'We have been for 65 years. Do you know something we don't?'"



YOUR HEALTH IS OUR BUSINESS

Acorn OH have received many requests from clients, regarding their employee's mental health and their fitness to work. Most importantly, employers are asking what they should be doing to help and protect their workforce in these uncertain times. Wellbeing is a complete understanding of someone's physical, emotional, mental, and social state. It's more than just wellness, which typically focuses on a person's physical health, whereas wellbeing really delves into personal life and shows how everything is linked together and what effects this can have on each other. Having a healthy and happy workforce produces positive outcomes for businesses. By focusing on employee wellbeing, you are providing the helping hand in a time that they may need you the most.

Often a person's worries are linked to outside factors, understandably now with concerns about family, finance and health. Offering support from the workplace isn't always required for purely workplace issues, but in fact still links to how that person is feeling before/after work, thus affecting them whilst at work.



Covid-19 TESTING FOR TRAVEL

Commonly known as a 'Fit to Fly' - this is proof of a negative PCR test to show that a person has tested negative to Covid19 before they travel. We use an accredited lab with an option of same day results.

HOW CAN ACORN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH HELP?

- Mental health support
- Tailored counselling for employees
- Ongoing occupational therapist assistance
- Workplace wellbeing medicals
- Covid-19 testing and guidance



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computers for kids

closing the digital divide

Please support children in Cheshire East by donating your unwanted laptops or desktop computers

Our aim is to distribute over 1,000 computers in 100 days to children and families who need them.

- In spite of various government support schemes, Covid has accelerated the digital and educational divide for many children.
- Many computers loaned to children, now need to be returned to schools for use in classrooms.
- Online teaching is critical in ensuring that children catch up lost learning and improved educational outcomes for a better future.

Donating a laptop will make a huge difference to the lives and education of children and families in Cheshire East.

Your devices don't need to be new – we'll upcycle them! They just need to be in good working order and capable of running Windows 10.

All devices are professionally wiped of data and set up exclusively for educational purposes.

Just drop them off at one of our reception center's, and we will then co-ordinate distribution via schools to make sure they reach the children who need them most.

Local Drop Off Points			
Westfields Middlewich Road Sandbach CW11 1HZ	Delamere House, Delamere Street, Crewe CW1 2JZ	Town Hall, Market Place, Macclesfield, SK10 1EA	Knutsford Academy Bexton Road Knutsford WA16 0EA

For more information or if your business has equipment ready for delivery to one of the reception centres please contact us:
info@cheshireyoungcarers.com or 0151 3563176

Computers for Kids is a charitable initiative supported by:










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Virtual Thursday Thirty

We have had some incredible Virtual Thursday Thirty networking meetings over the past few months.

On Thursday 18th February we heard from Kerry Spink from Visyon, Andy Pear from The Lion & Swan and Marie and Yasmin from Synergy Recruitment, with some great networking being held after the presentations.

The Panellists for our 18th March Virtual Thursday Thirty were Hayley Rhodes from Acorn Occupational Health, Anna McIntosh from The Christie Charity and Warren Moores from SAS Daniels Solicitors. Our guests at the March Thursday Thirty heard

David Watson announcing his retirement, after 15 years with the Chamber.

Our most recent Virtual Thursday Thirty on 22nd April, saw Julie Doig from Hammond McNulty, Lynsey Whitley and Tony McCafferty from Youth Federation and Ian Mallon from Neon Freight as panellists. Again, we saw many regular members at this meeting and some new members getting involved.

Of course, we like to be organised at the chamber so have planned our next Virtual Thursday Thirty for 17th June and 15th July, with yet more chamber members as panellist and even more breakout rooms for you to enjoy. We are always on the lookout for even more panellists, if this interests you please email: Jackie.Randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

“ I really enjoyed it and now I've been to 3 events I'm getting to see the odd familiar face. Hope to meet some chamber members in real life in the not-too-distant future! ”

“ Another great meeting this morning.”

“ Thank you for hosting the Thursday Thirty meeting yesterday it was helpful and informative with some good connections being made.”

To keep up to date with our Thursday Thirties follow us on LinkedIn:
www.linkedin.com/company/east-cheshire-chamber-of-commerce-limited





it's coming....

How will you help to celebrate the
750th Anniversary of Congleton 1272-2022 ?

Congleton Community

Our 750th birthday!

It's not long now until Congleton comes together to celebrate its 750th birthday! Its business community is a crucial part of the town's fabric and we'd like you to become part of the festivities.

Commerce has been an important part of Congleton's make up for all of those 750 years. In fact, it was commerce that led to the granting of Congleton's Charter in 1272.

Things were very different back in the 13th Century. Congleton belonged to the De Lacy family.

In 1272 Henry de Lacy, 3rd Earl of Lincoln could see the town was growing economically and granted it its first charter. That enabled Congleton to hold fairs and markets and elect a mayor and ale taster. Just as importantly, it was finally allowed to establish a merchant guild. The forerunner of your organisation, it

was an association of artisans and merchants who would oversee the practice of their craft/trade in a particular area - and behead known criminals.

People would come from all over Cheshire to buy and sell at the Congleton fair. From then on, Congleton was a busy little market town, with a population of several hundred! Over 750 years the town has grown to nearly 30,000 residents.

In 2022 the celebrations will open with a real medieval feel. Heraldic Flags will decorate the town centre. The flag making project will be taking place this year and we would love our local businesses to be a part of it. The Thirteenth Century was a golden age of heraldry and we're planning to observe heraldic tradition. So the flags will be purely symbolic without words or numbers. But, we will be displaying the names of all the businesses who've kindly agreed to take part, in a prominent way. As part of this we're developing a trail for people to discover the flags and who they represent and we believe thousands will follow. If you know little about heraldry this is your chance to learn! We will help you design your flag in true Heraldic style, local artists will be

painting them and the Town Council will install them. We are applying for funding for this community project from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

For details of how to be involved and help with designing your flag email:
jo@congletoncommunityprojects.org,
or call us on 07833 742200

www.congleton750.org
www.congletoncommunityprojects.org/congleton750



This is Tewksbury - they inspired us and have been very supportive and helpful to us about all things heraldic!

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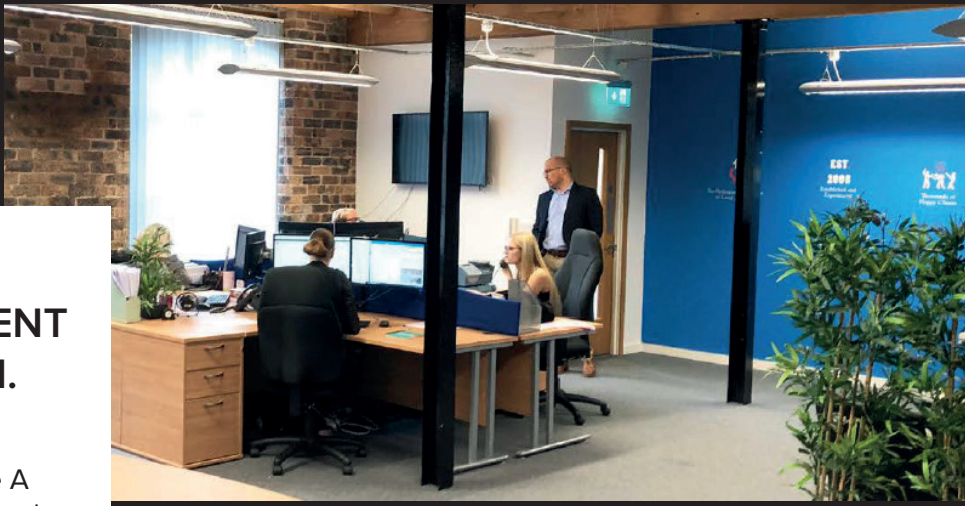
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