

September 2024

Chamber



Annual Golf Day Highlights 2024

Full report on page 6 & 7

Events Calendar

East Cheshire Young Professional Network (YPN) Team Building
17th September 2024
9.00am – 11.00am

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

Trading with Northern Ireland (UKSPF)
2nd October 2024
10.00am – 12.00pm
Virtual via Teams

Thursday Thirty
10th October 2024
8.30am – 10.00am
Eze Talk

Dane Mill Business Centre, Broadhurst Lane, Congleton, CW12 1LA

Annual Clay Shoot
16th October 2024
10.30am – 4.30pm

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

East Cheshire Young Professional Network (YPN) Networking
22nd October 2024
9.00am – 11.00am

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

UKSPF Discover BCorp
24th October 2024
9.30am – 12.00pm

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

East Cheshire Young Professional Network (YPN) Confidence in the Workplace
12th November 2024
9.00am – 11.00am

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

Thursday Thirty
21st November 2024
8.30am – 10.00am
Congleton Rotary
Location To be Confirmed

Chamber Christmas Lunch
6th December 2024
12.00pm – 5.00pm

Pecks Restaurant, Newcastle Road, Moreton, Nr. Congleton, CW12 4SB

East Cheshire Young Professional Network (YPN) LinkedIn
10th December 2024
9.00am – 11.00pm

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

Chamber Christmas Quiz Night
12th December 2024
5.00pm – 8.00pm

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

Thursday Thirty
16th January 2025
8.30am – 10.00am

Estate Planning Solutions
The Lion & Swan Hotel, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AH

East Cheshire Young Professional Network (YPN) Financial Awareness
21st January 2025
9.00am – 11.00am

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

UKSPF Wealth Management
23rd January 2025
9.00am – 12.00pm
Astbury Golf Club, Peel Lane, Astbury, Congleton, CW12 4RE

East Cheshire Young Professional Network (YPN) Mental Health Awareness
11th February 2025
9.00am – 11.00am

The Space, 35-37 High Street, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

Thursday Thirty
27th February 2025
8.30am – 10.00am

IronMarket, 10 Brindley Court, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 9QA

Annual Business Awards
28th March 2025
6.45pm onwards

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

If you would like to host a Thursday Thirty, we currently have availability on the 10th April 2025 and 22nd May 2025

Events can be found on our website 'Events Page' at www.eastcheshirechamber.co.uk/events

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Thank you to our patrons for your continued support



Welcome From The Chief Executive

Welcome to the September Edition of the Chamber Magazine!

As a committed advocate of the business community, East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce is committed to supporting and promoting local businesses and entrepreneurs. This magazine reflects our commitment to encourage growth, innovation, and collaboration within our vibrant community.

Whether you're a small start up or a well-established enterprise, each of our contributors significantly to shaping our region's economic landscape. We recognise the challenges you encounter and are here to support you at every turn. This magazine is designed to celebrate your successes, share your stories, and connect you with others who share your passion for fostering a thriving business environment.

In this edition, you'll find details on the various events we've organised for our Chamber Members. Looking ahead, we have our Annual Clay Shoot in October and our Christmas Lunch in December, with bookings opening soon. We're also thrilled to introduce a new event, the Chamber Christmas Quiz Night; more information can be found on page 24.

Our Annual Golf Day at Vale Royal Abbey Golf Club on the 19th June was a tremendous success, enhanced by beautiful weather. You can read the full report on pages 6 and 7.

Here at the Chamber, we are already hard at work preparing for our 2025 Annual Business Awards on 28th March. You can find full details with the available categories for entry on pages 14 and 15 in this magazine.

Finally, we would like to extend our congratulations to Sarah Russell MP on her new role as MP for Congleton. While we remain neutral on all matters political, we wish her every success.

Please remember, we are here to assist you in any way we can. If you need information about any events, wish to contribute articles for the next edition, or are interested in advertising space, please contact:

liz.longmore@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk or call the office on 01260 540570.

Jackie

Jackie Randles
Chief Executive

Welcome To Our New Members

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



Cheshire Business Coaching

Cheshire Business Coaching specialises in family-run and independent businesses, committed to helping and supporting as many small business owners as possible. We aim to teach other people to bring out their inner coach to improve their knowledge for both themselves and their business.

www.cheshirebusinesscoaching.com

Tel: 07432 515624



JFPF Limited

JFPF Limited - Based in Nantwich, with 40 plus years of expertise which extends to establishing efficient logistical solutions, industrial mineral supplies and the granulated products sector.

Tel: 07955 460818



Ansa Environmental Services

Ansa Environmental Services is an award-winning company based in Middlewich, that specialises in sustainable and creative environmental services. Ansa offers a wide variety of services including trade waste collection, grounds maintenance, transport solutions, training, play area inspection and maintenance.

www.ansa.co.uk

Tel: 01270 686797

Environmental Hub, Cledford Lane, Middlewich, CW10 0JR



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www.bathgatesilica.co.uk

Tel: 01270 762444

Arclid Quarry, Congleton Road, Sandbach
Cheshire, CW11 4SN

BOUTIQUE ROOMS

Both venues offer fully refurbished boutique rooms in a contemporary yet sympathetic style, every room exudes historic charm whilst enabling you to luxuriate in up-to-the-minute comforts and modern conveniences.

With our spacious function rooms and on-site parking, we offer the ideal venues for all kinds of business meetings, conferences and, a special focus on weddings, social gatherings and local societies.

We offer competitive Chamber rates for single occupancy, including breakfast, Monday to Friday.

Please contact us for more information.



info@wheatshiefsandbach.co.uk
wheatshiefsandbach.co.uk
01270 762013



info@lionandswan.co.uk
lionandswan.co.uk
01260 211211

Members of the Pear Hospitality Group.



East Cheshire Young Professionals Network #ECYPN

- ✓ Are you a young professional or apprentice looking to develop your business skills?
- ✓ Are you a Manager looking for an opportunity to help develop your younger members of staff into the leaders of the future?

Yes? Then join the East Cheshire Young Professionals Network Today!

This programme has been developed by the East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and The Cheshire & Warrington Pledge to deliver meaningful skills sessions and help foster the creation of a peer network for the next generation of business people in and around Congleton and the surrounding areas.

Whether you are an apprentice in the early stages of your career, a graduate starting your first job after university, or you have recently moved into a position where you have the chance to grow and develop as an employee - the East Cheshire Young Professionals Network is an exciting opportunity to learn new skills from experienced professionals who are experts in their fields.

To book your place or find out more about the #ECYPN programme, please contact:
Jackie Randles | jackie.randles@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

All of the sessions below will run from 9:00am - 11:00am at The_Space, Congleton

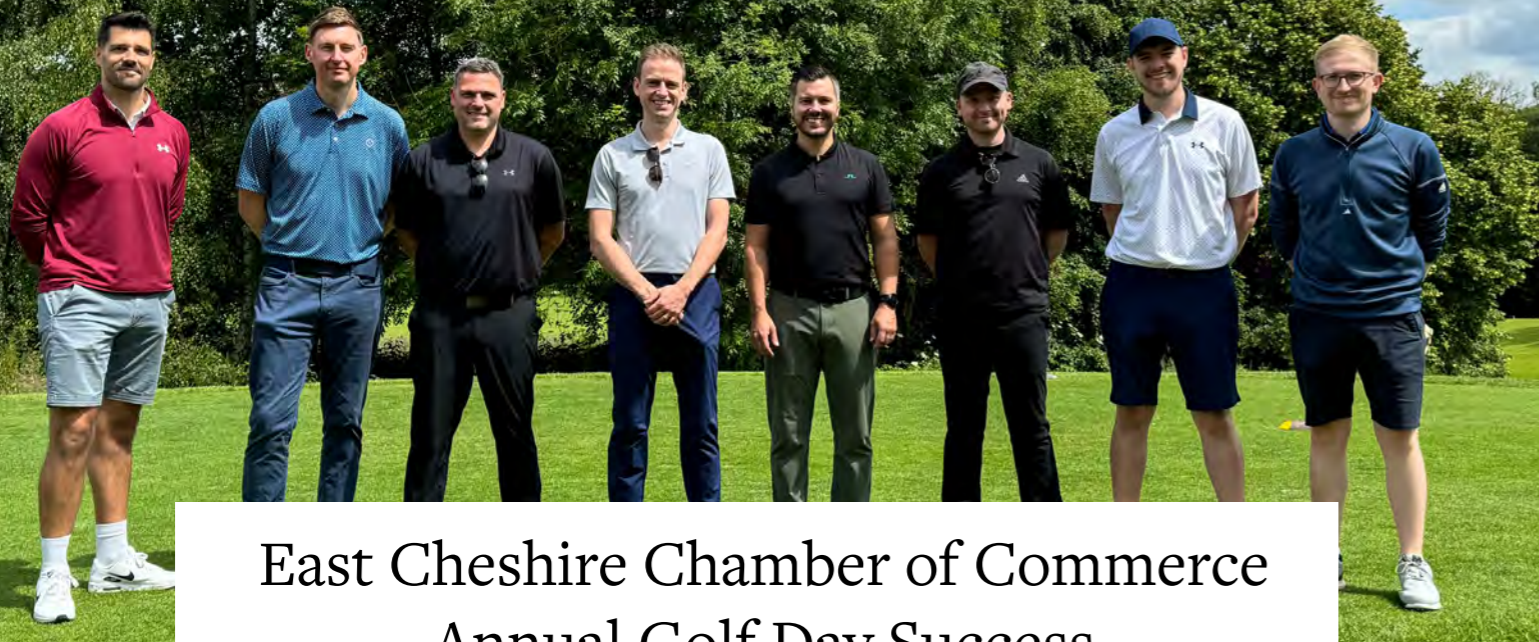
The content of the programme is:

Date	Session	Summary
17.09.2024	Team Building	Get to know young professionals in your area and develop team working skills through the magic of chocolate.
22.10.2024	Confidence in the Workplace	Learn to become confident in the workplace environment, using different techniques to make yourself stand out.
12.11.2024	Networking	Gain the knowledge on how to become a successful networker.
10.12.2024	LinkedIn	Learn all about the tricks and tips to use LinkedIn to the best of your ability, not only for the businesses but personal branding too.
21.01.2025	Financial Awareness	Gain an understanding of pensions and credit scores to help secure your future.
11.02.2025	Mental Health Awareness	Learn the skills and knowledge to help you manage your mental health and understand how you can support co-workers.



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East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Day Success

East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce held their Annual Golf Day, sponsored by Prism UK, on Wednesday 19th June 2024 at Vale Royal Abbey Golf Club, in Whitegate, Cheshire – and what a fabulous day it was.

The day started with registration, delicious bacon brioche rolls and some tea and coffee, shortly followed by a putting competition, a fun but competitive opportunity to win a beautiful glass trophy which went to David Flavell from Parx Mortgages & Insurance.

Out on the course, the sun shone all day, Jackie Randles and Liz Longmore from East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce were sat at hole 10 seeing teams through, taking team photographs and watching each team take their shots. Golfers were thrilled to witness a fabulous hole in one on hole 10,

by James Blackburn from Senior Aerospace Bird Bellows.

Halfway through the afternoon, Michael from Vale Royal Abbey Golf Club along with Jackie Randles from East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce drove around the course on a golf buggy to offer drinks and cookies to all the players, complimentary of East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce.

Once all the teams were back, a lovely roast beef carvery dinner, lemon meringue tart, tea, and coffee was served in The Great Hall after which the prize giving took place.

The longest drive was out on hole 15 and the trophy went to Tom Duggan from Richborough Estates, the winner of the Nearest the Pin on hole 6 went to Mackenzie Moore from Parx Mortgages & Insurance.

Awards were then presented to the teams, in third place were Prism UK, second place was won by Active Cheshire and the winning team were The Green Rangers, (Ian Mallon from Neon Freight, James Beckenham from Mactech Europe, Carl Gola from Bridging the Gap – Mind Matters).

The Chamber's Charity for this year, Bridging the Gap – Mind Matters were at the event and had some fabulous prizes for the raffle, which raised an amazing £610.



Nearest the Pin Winner – Mackenzie Moore, Parx Mortgages Team



Putting Competition Winner – David Flavell, Parx Mortgages & Insurance



Longest Drive Winner – Tom Duggan, Richborough Estates (Jackie Randles accepted this on Tom's behalf)



2nd Place team – Active Cheshire



3rd Place team – Prism UK



Winning Team – The Green Rangers (Individuals Team)



Annual Clay Shoot

Cloudside Shooting Grounds

The annual Chamber Clay Shoot will take place on Wednesday 16th October from 10.30am onwards, at Cloudside Shooting Grounds.

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

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

Sponsored by D2NA



For more information

Please contact Liz Longmore on 01260 540570 or
liz.longmore@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk
Early booking is recommended.

Affiliation Renewal with West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce

The East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise is pleased to announce its third year of affiliation with the West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce.

This affiliation strengthens the collective voice of businesses in the region, representing companies of all sizes and sectors on local, national, and international levels. Through this partnership, the East Cheshire Chamber now has direct access to the British Chambers of Commerce via the West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber, further enhancing their membership offerings and benefitting businesses in the area.

The affiliation also offers opportunities for developing complementary services, collaborating on shared initiatives, and providing a platform for business engagement. With the West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber's ongoing accreditation, the East Cheshire Chamber gains a direct link to the British Chambers of Commerce.

A service level agreement underpins this partnership, outlining the mutual benefits for both Chambers. Being affiliated with the West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber opens up new opportunities for members, including priority access to international trade events and discounted international trade training courses offered by the West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber.

"We are delighted to continue our Affiliate Partnership with East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. Collaboration is key in business and being able to work together ensures that businesses in East Cheshire can access additional support through the British Chambers of Commerce. We look forward to another year of successful engagement!"

Sarah Bailey, CEO West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce



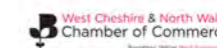
Chambers' Joint Event at LFC

On Tuesday 10th September, East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce had the privilege of attending a Networking Lunch hosted by the West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce at the iconic Liverpool Football Club. This exclusive event brought together members from both West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce and East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, providing a prime opportunity to network, enjoy a delicious two-course meal, and experience a guided tour of Anfield Stadium.

Representing East Cheshire Chamber, Liz Longmore was thrilled with the strong turnout and the chance to connect with so

many members. The afternoon began with engaging conversations, as attendees built valuable relationships before sitting down to lunch. Later, participants who had pre-booked were treated to an informative tour of the historic stadium, led by the gracious staff of Anfield.

This event was an exceptional platform for fostering collaboration and creating new business opportunities among Chamber members. As we renew our affiliation, we eagerly anticipate hosting more of these joint events, further strengthening connections and supporting our members in unlocking valuable growth opportunities.





NET-WORTH NTWRK powered by IronMarket

NET-WORTH NTWRK, powered by IronMarket, provides insight and expertise across wealth, risk and talent. Recognising that true wealth extends beyond mere financial assets, the NTWRK provides its members with a unique platform to connect, share insights, and access expert guidance.

NTWRK CEO, Wes Wilkes, and Director of Risk, Steve Burns shared their thoughts on all things finance, careers and life.

What motivates you?

Wes: I'm motivated in delivering what we've created. The thing that gets me up and gets me motivated every day is driving forward what we're trying to do, which is to deliver exceptional experience, amazing outcomes for our members and make a real difference.



Steve: I think both Wes and I have come from very dated industries that are very set in their ways and everyone seems to follow the same path. We are trying to do things differently and offer more to our members than just the services. It's what we add as value and how we work alongside our members at the same time as well.

How many hours do you work a day on average?

Wes: It's not about counting the hours but making the hours count.

For me, the blurred lines are actually a real advantage. My children have always come to our charity golf day. They don't just get to spend time with us, they get to meet our members; and get to know them.

When it comes to work/life balance, what's more important is individuals and for them to have the right balance that suits them. If that means that they want to perhaps be a little bit quieter at work, or want to work from home, that's cool. If they want to do a 9 to 5 and shut down, that's absolutely fine because there's no one size fits all.

We're all very different people. We might share values, we might share ideas, but we're all individuals.

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

Steve: For me personally, it's the fact that we're doing something different. With insurance, everyone seems to want to copy each other and say that they're the best at doing what they're doing.

We have proven it - our members are saying that we are doing something different than what other brokers are doing. Having that freedom, and the opportunity to try new things to improve the client journey means we are changing and adapting what insurance brokers are for our members.

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

Steve: Nothing, because everything I've done and been through, whether it was negative or positive, has put me in a position where I am now. I could quite easily say I should have done this earlier, but then actually, I don't think I'd be in the same position I am now.

Wes: No. It is one of those sliding doors kind of scenarios, isn't it? As Steve said, you might have done certain things a different way with hindsight but everything that you do ultimately leads you to where you are and who you are. The way you reflect on that is the important thing because that then dictates what you might do or be in the future.

How do you spend your leisure time?

Wes: For me it's all family. It's whatever we are doing, what we do next and spending time together.

Steve: Same for me, but very specifically, I've got a VW Camper van. It's an oldish one, so I have no choice but to chill out. I get to put a hoodie on and it's my time to switch off from being the insurance broker, business person.

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

Wes: Without question it would be my dad who we lost in 2014, so we could share everything that we've achieved as a family, and a business over the past 10 years. I've also always been fascinated by Churchill and his seismic impact on history, alongside my musical hero Jimi Hendrix.

If we think about wealth management, how has that whole landscape evolved, particularly over the past 12 months. Has AI had any influence over it?

Wes: In wealth management, technology is an ongoing conversation. We've always been early adopters in that respect, and you know, it will never replace a human experience. But ultimately, you can get some amazing help from technology.

The advantage we have is that because we are different than any other wealth management firm in the fact that we do discretionarily manage assets as well as advise, I've seen AI start to have a really strong influence in that area.

Steve: One of the newest topics that people still don't seem to grasp with AI is the risk of cyber. We are seeing more claims for cyber incidents than what we are on property claims now. The take up for our members or businesses in the UK actually purchasing cyber insurance is still 5-6% percent, whereas it should be 90-95%.

So, I would still say that's probably one of the biggest exposures at the moment for SMEs; the AI, cyber risk that everyone's jumping onto, but not fully understanding what they're exposing themselves to.



Thinking about the next five years and what that landscape looks like - what are you anticipating that's going to change, disrupt or improve your market?

Wes: The sector has become very acquisitional, influenced by vast amounts of private equity funding through large nationals. It's bred a real disconnect from the human relationship experience. We anticipate big change with the next generation however - hence our development of the Fint platform, making investment safe and accessible for Gen Z and beyond.

Steve: Insurance broking unfortunately still does carry a bit of a negative image, and I think this is actually enhancing that negativity - businesses are starting to feel that it is just a tick box exercise. There's no way you can protect a business properly without having that personal touch and understanding. Who they are, what they do, why and how they do it, so we know how an insurance product should react if something were to go wrong.

How would you describe the value of the NET-WORTH NTWRK, to prospective members in three words?

Wes: I can quote one of our members, Dave Bevan, who said, "changed my life".

Steve: Value, knowledge and integrity.

What do you perceive as the main barriers to long term talent retention?

Wes: For me, it fits alongside what I described earlier around the kind of acquisitional nature, and expectation around salary. With big firms acquiring a lot of private money, they're able to throw money towards getting a group of people with qualifications and it isn't necessarily the answer that we need in the sector to grow advisor numbers.

It's so important for us to ensure we're building a diverse and multi-talented team, whether that's young people, those looking for a career change with transferable skills and even those who have taken a career break and need a little more flexibility.

It creates a challenge for businesses like ours where we can offer phenomenal opportunities, but the price points don't match the acquisitional nature of the large firms.

What are your highlights from the inaugural 'Investival' event?

Wes: We've hosted an annual charity golf day since we started the business, inspired by my dad, to raise money for some incredible causes.

We really wanted to do something, but make it a little more of an event, so we had the idea to make it a two-day thing. We did a charity golf day on the Friday as usual, but on the Thursday, we had an event where we had a keynote speaker, the co-founder of Green and Blacks Joe Farley, and then we broke into a panel discussion with some really great local businesses.

It was all about getting a room full of like-minded people in to listen to a great story, ask questions and also network and connect with people.

Steve: One of the highlights for me was that I spotted three of our members that I'd introduced to each other, exchanging numbers. When I asked them afterwards, I found out it was because they could actually use each other's services. This is the power of the Net-Worth NTWRK, it's what we're trying to give back to the community.

What advice would you give to the next generation, in terms of pursuing a career pathway?

Wes: I think it is to look beyond the names we all have and the image that exists of this industry.

It's not about numbers, and it's not necessarily even about regulation or responsibility. It's about being able to connect with other humans and help them. So if you're a human, and you like talking to other humans, it's a career path you can create for yourself.

Steve: Insurance is a by-product of what we do. Every day is challenging and different. You learn so much from talking to other business owners and seeing people with different types of industries and trades that you just naturally learn more and then you can help other people in different areas.

It's a people career, it's not an insurance career.

Reserve your space at the Rise & Thrive event on 2nd October





CHESHIRE & WARRINGTON LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Is your business Gen Z ready?

Our second Cheshire & Warrington Business & Skills Conference, helping you better prepare for your next generation workforce.

The Cheshire & Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is delighted to host it's 2nd Business & Skills Conference.

This time, we're asking you if you're ready for your Generation Z workforce. We'll be:

- Discussing why and how to engage with your future talent;
- Supporting you and them with their transition to the workplace;
- Looking at inclusive recruitment and selection practices;
- Considering lots of other information to help you and your Gen Zs move forward, to lead your business to further success!

Come, network, eat the lunch and hear from your peers who have found the best ways to excel with Gen Z!



Scan the QR code to reserve a spot with eventbrite!



Thursday 14th November 2024, 9.30am - 3.30pm
The Engine Rooms,
101 Faraday Street, Warrington WA3 6YN

in
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www.cheshireandwarringtonsip.co.uk

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Plan for What you Want!

As a business owner, do you often find yourself dealing with all sorts of problems, being thrown off course by outside factors, not sure how to grow the business, how to get to the next stage and so on? Don't worry, you are not alone! Every business experiences these issues at some stage and it's how you deal with them that matters. One thing that can make an enormous difference though, is having a strategy for your business.

So, where do you see yourself and the business in 5 years' time? Where are you now and how are you going to get there?

- Have you considered what you want personally from the business?
- How much would you like to earn?
- How hard do you want to work?
- How do you feel on a Sunday evening?
- Are you really looking forward to work or do you wish the weekend was longer?

The answer to that question alone, can start to give an insight into how you feel about what you do.

Have a look at the products and services you offer. What other products and services you would like to offer? What is your team structure? Are key people tied to your business?

What does your marketing say about your business? Is it giving the desired message to the market? Do you have a marketing plan?

Do you know why people buy from you? (A quick tip. In most cases it's not price!) Take action to find out why.

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70%
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20%
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10%
action

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AWARDS 2025

FRIDAY 28TH MARCH

To be held at

DE VERE CRANAGE ESTATE,
BYLEY LANE, HOLMES CHAPEL,
CW4 8EW

6:45pm onwards

FIND OUT MORE



Visit our Business Awards page on our website
eastcheshirechamber.co.uk/business-awards-2025



Download and complete the nomination form for your own or another company
you wish to nominate. Email this to liz.longmore@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

CATEGORIES FOR ENTRY

BUSINESS
OF THE YEAR AWARD

PROFESSIONAL
SERVICE AWARD

SMALL BUSINESS
OF THE YEAR AWARD

YOUNG PERSON
OF THE YEAR AWARD

EMPLOYER
OF THE YEAR AWARD

CONTRIBUTION TO
THE COMMUNITY AWARD

EMPLOYEE
OF THE YEAR AWARD

BEST DIGITAL MARKETING
CAMPAIGN AWARD

EXCELLENCE IN
CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT
AWARD

2025 CHARITY OF THE YEAR

The 2025 Charity of the Year Award will be decided by a poll from the East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce members.

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Thursday Thirty Reports

We've had a busy few months with our Thursday Thirty networking mornings, hosting some fantastic events, and we're excited about what's coming up.

On the 8th May, Gazer Agency hosted us at the new Congleton Market Quarter, where we saw another excellent turnout. Michael Potts from Gazer Agency gave an insightful presentation on their role in the design and marketing for CMQ, as well as the next steps in development, introducing the key people behind the project.

In June, Astbury Mere Care Home hosted an intimate gathering, limited to one person per company due to the setting. This meeting fostered meaningful conversations, and Adriana Jaracz gave a brief talk about the services they offer to residents, followed by a small group tour of the home.

We gathered at Congleton Leisure Centre on the 18th July, where a lovely breakfast spread welcomed us. Becky Painter from Everybody Health & Leisure presented the services offered at their venues, including corporate memberships and the Everybody Foundation, their own charity. It was inspiring to hear about their contributions to the local community and their staff training and development programs.

In early August, we visited Pulse Fitness at their new iGym facilities. Chris Johnson, CEO & Founder of Pulse Fitness, shared the company's journey since its founding in 1984. Gym Manager Craig Murray then

spoke about the benefits of joining iGym and highlighted the unique features of their membership. Attendees also enjoyed a tour of the new facilities.

Alison Parr, the founder of Ruby's, welcomed everyone to the meeting held at Ruby's on Thursday 29th August. After a delightful made-to-order breakfast from the kitchen, Alison provided an engaging overview of how Ruby's Fund was established. Andy Pear, the Chair of the Board at Ruby's, also spoke briefly, informing everyone about ways they could support Ruby's if they wished. Guests were then given the opportunity to tour the building, including a visit to the Sensory Bus!



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The Power of Branding for SMEs

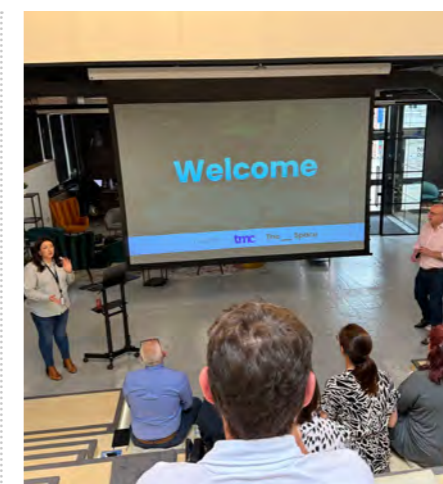
A strong brand is one of the most powerful assets an SME can have in their marketing toolkit.

It's not just about having a recognisable logo or a catchy slogan. Your brand is the entire experience you offer - everything your customers see, hear, and feel when they interact with your business.

It is everything that your audience says and thinks about you when you are not in the room. It's the foundation that will help you stand out, build customer loyalty, and ensure reliable growth.

The best brands are built on the idea of a unique vision (your ultimate aspiration), mission (the roadmap to achieve them) and beliefs (your 'why'). These core values shape your identity and help strengthen your position. When your brand reflects your authentic purpose, it resonates more deeply with customers, building a stronger and more 'human' connection that goes beyond a transactional relationship.

With that said, vision and values alone are not enough. You also need to bring your brand to life through consistent, distinct visuals, applied across your suite of marketing material and assets. From your logo and colour palette, to typography and imagery, they require frequent repetition



CEO Tim McCloud & Marketing Director Jess Peake, hosting TMC's Branding Workshop

for your prospective audience to take notice within a deafening landscape, vying for their attention. It is widely recognised that a customer typically engages with an organisation after 7 marketing touchpoints. Touchpoints that can only be identified with regularity, allowing for recognition and recall.

The Impact of a Strong Brand

So, why does this matter for SMEs?

A strong brand encourages customer loyalty. When customers trust your brand, they are more likely to return and recommend you to others. This loyalty can be a powerful differentiator in a crowded market.

This subject is one TMC explored in detail during their most recent branding workshop on behalf of the Chamber, guiding other local members through the complexities of creating brand impact. Hosted at The Space, Congleton, they explored iconic organisations who have leveraged the power of language, creativity and design to dominate their respective markets.

Branding Evolution

Even the most well-established companies and household names (think McDonalds, Apple and Starbucks), have recognised the importance of brand evolution. Their journey through design and positioning, whilst maintaining a global presence, have led the way for their counterparts to be brave. Brave in their approach to establishing and evolving their own brands.

Pink has always embodied the essence of TMC and sat at the core of their brand. The colour is brave, bold and unapologetic; much like the transformative work their team brings to life. At the inception, over 18 years ago, TMC wanted to stand out from the sea of blues and greens that the healthcare and technology space were so familiar with. If TMC were asking their clients to be brave, then so should they.

Adopting such a bright, impactful colour from the beginning, signalled the brand's commitment to creating positive impact for their clients. TMC are passionate about their industry, conscious of the responsibility it brings and are unafraid to challenge the status quo.

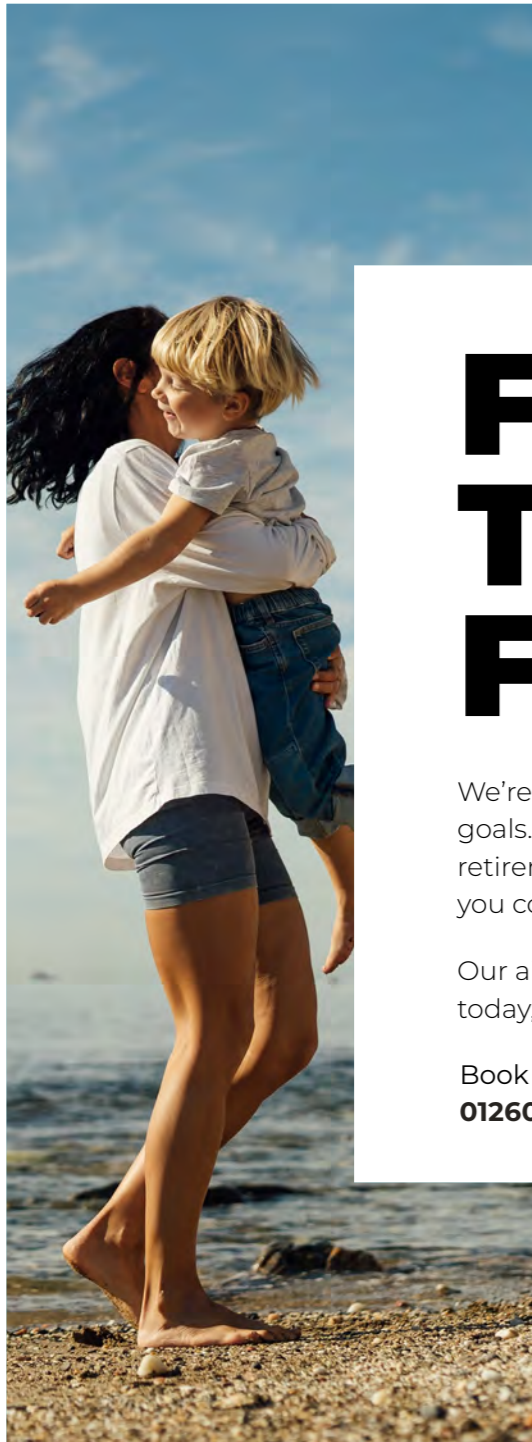
Over the years, the palette has evolved from a darker magenta, to the vivid shade TMC now embrace - and there's more change to come over the next few weeks as their own brand evolves. TMC are looking forward to embracing their own new chapter.

The bottom line when it comes to branding? Bring it to life; be consistent, be distinct, be authentic.

Investing in your brand is one of the most important investments you can make in your SME. It's not a one-time project, but an ongoing process of refining, reinforcing, and staying relevant at every opportunity.



*T&Cs: £28.00 per person, per month. Members must remain employed by the approved organisation to receive discounted rate, members may be requested to provide proof of employment by the approved corporate organisation at any time. The company must meet its minimum number of members within the corporate offer (currently 8).



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Upcoming Thursday Thirty's 2024



10th October 2024
08.30am – 10.00am
Eze Talk



27th February 2025
08.30am – 10.00am
IronMarket

For further details please contact
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Investment in Youth as Currie Young Bolsters its Teams

Insolvency practitioners Currie Young are investing in the future by adding three apprentices to their Staffordshire and Black Country teams.

Luke Whitehouse and Ruby Pugh will join the team as apprentice administrators, with Kaitlyn Pakeman, taking on the role of apprentice office administrator.

Nicky Harrop, Head of Business Development at Currie Young, said: "Our growing client list and work portfolio has led to a need to further expand our team."

"These appointments will increase our head count, providing the administrative support that we need. At the same time, we welcome the opportunity to invest in young people by offering apprenticeships, demonstrating our commitment to the areas in which our team live and work."

Luke will train at Currie Young's Brierley Hill office, while Ruby, and Kaitlyn, will be based in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Founded in 2015 by experienced insolvency practitioner Steve Currie, the firm has gone from strength to strength by building strong relationships with clients and a keen focus on rescuing companies and saving jobs.

Offices at Waterfront Business Park, Brierley Hill, and Lichfield Business Village were established in 2023, adding to the company's King Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme base.

Justin Brown, a Director at Currie Young, said: "We are committed to growing our presence in the Staffordshire, Cheshire, and Black Country areas. Recruiting Ruby, Luke and Kaitlyn underpins this commitment and enables us to continue providing a high-quality service to our clients, helping find the best outcomes for them, their companies, and their employees."



(L-R) Ruby Pugh, Luke Whitehouse, Kaitlyn Pakeman



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EAST CHESHIRE CHAMBER

CHRISTMAS

Quiz

FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2024
5PM - 8PM

The Space, 35-37 High Street,
Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

Further details to follow in November

WHO WE ARE

Our mission is to Bridge The Gap faced by people trying to access support for their mental health, removing barriers to keeping people well and preventing a mental health crisis.

We champion a blended approach of exercise sessions and talking therapy as first line treatment for early-stage mental ill-health and we strive for this to be accessible to all, at the point of need.

THE RESPITE PROGRAMME

We offer practical support to those in need through weekly talking therapy and exercise sessions, aiming to prioritise mental health.

We collaborate with local providers to adapt to individual needs and empower participants to develop coping mechanisms and healthy habits.

Select our 'Get Help' button on our website to apply.

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7-12	£210.00	£252.00
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*From 1st April 2023

CHAMBER MAGAZINE
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The Cheshire East Business Support Initiative

Start, Sustain and Succeed.

Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and businesses through the Cheshire East Chambers Network – all three Cheshire East Chambers of Commerce working together.

The listed workshops below are to be delivered by East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce:

Wednesday 2nd October 2024

Virtual by Teams

– Trading with Northern Ireland

Thursday 24th October 2024

The Space, 35-37 High Street Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AX

– Discover BCorp

Thursday 23rd January 2025

Astbury Golf Club, Peel Lane, Astbury, Congleton, CW12 4RE

– Wealth Management



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This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.



For more information and bookings for the East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Workshops, please email liz.longmore@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk