

THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR EAST CHESHIRE

East Cheshire
CHAMBER
of commerce & enterprise

August 2026

Chamber



Highlights from the 2026 Annual Golf Day

Full report on pages 8 & 9

Affiliated to:
 West Cheshire & North Wales
Chamber of Commerce
Together, We're Well Connected.

Events Calendar

Thursday Thirty
3rd September 2026
8.30am – 10.00am
Talbots Law,
The Wheatsheaf, 1 Hightown,
Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1AG

**Your Financial Future:
A Practical Workshop**
15th September 2026
8.30am – 12.30pm
Astbury Golf Club,
Peel Lane, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 4RE

Thursday Thirty
24th September 2026
8.30am – 10.00am
Petty Pool Trust,
Pool Lane, Northwich,
Cheshire, CW8 2DR

Annual Clay Shoot
14th October 2026
10.30am – 4.30pm
Cloudside Shooting Grounds,
Red Lane, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 3QG

Thursday Thirty
5th November 2026
8.30am – 10.00am
Majestical,
Danesford Community Centre,
West Road, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 4EY

Annual Christmas Lunch
4th December 2026
12.00pm – 5.00pm
Pecks Restaurant,
Swan Bank, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 1JR

Christmas Thursday Thirty
10th December 2026
8.30am – 10.00am
East Cheshire Chamber &
TMC Strategic Communications
The_Space,
35-37 High Street,
Congleton, Cheshire,
CW12 1AX

Thursday Thirty
14th January 2027
8.30am – 10.00am
Circus Starr,
The_Space,
35-37 High Street,
Congleton, Cheshire,
CW12 1AX

Thursday Thirty
25th February 2027
8.30am – 10.00am
Astbury Golf Club,
Peel Lane, Congleton,
Cheshire, CW12 4RE

Annual Business Awards
19th March 2027
6.30pm – 1.00am
De Vere Cranage Estate,
Byley Lane, Holmes Chapel,
Cheshire, CW4 8EW

Thursday Thirty
15th April 2027
8.30am – 10.00am
Parx Mortgages & Insurance Services,
Riverside Mill, Mountbatten Way,
Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1DY

Thursday Thirty
27th May 2027
8.30am – 10.00am
Congleton Rotary,
Location TBC

Annual Golf Day
16th June 2027
10.00am – 9.00pm
Vale Royal Abbey,
Vale Royal Drive, Whitegate,
Cheshire, CW8 2BA

Thursday Thirty
8th July 2027
8.30am – 10.00am
AVAILABLE

If you would like to host a Thursday Thirty, and would like further information or to express your interest for 2027, please contact Liz at the Chamber - liz.longmore@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

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 To Our New Members

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



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Jackie Randles Retires After 16 Years

After 16 years of dedicated service to East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, Chief Executive Jackie Randles will be stepping down from her role on the 31st August as she begins a well-earned part-time retirement.

Jackie first joined the Chamber in 2010, managing the accounts. Just six months later, she successfully applied for the role of Chamber Manager when the position became available only a few weeks before the Annual Business Awards. She was interviewed by David Watson, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Over the years, Jackie and David worked closely together to organise many of the Chamber's flagship events, including the Annual Business Awards, Golf Day, Clay Shoot, Christmas Lunch, and the ever-popular Thursday Thirty networking meetings. These events have played an important role in bringing businesses together, strengthening connections across the local business community, and creating opportunities for collaboration.

Jackie also became a key figure in the Chamber's export services. She has overseen the administration of Certificates of Origin and EUR1 documents, organised export training events for local exporters, and became an authorised signatory for the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office on documents requiring legalisation.



When David retired in March 2021 Jackie took the role of Chief Executive.

In September 2023, Jackie established an affiliation between East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and the British Chambers of Commerce-accredited West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce. Having worked closely together for many years, particularly in the area of export services, the two independent Chambers formalised their already strong relationship through this affiliation. This provided East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce with a direct link to the British Chambers of Commerce network, strengthening the support and opportunities available to its members.

Between 2023 and 2025, Jackie led the three East Cheshire Chambers in the successful delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Start, Sustain and Succeed programme, supporting businesses across Cheshire East at every stage of their journey.

Working in partnership with local stakeholders, Jackie oversaw the delivery of a wide range of business support initiatives, helping start-ups to establish themselves, existing businesses to grow and adapt, and established organisations to build resilience for the future. The programme provided valuable advice, networking opportunities, workshops and access to specialist support, enabling hundreds of businesses across the borough to develop, innovate and thrive.



Jackie's leadership throughout the programme demonstrated her commitment to strengthening the local business community and ensuring that businesses of all sizes could access the guidance and support they needed to succeed.

While Jackie is stepping down as Chief Executive, she will continue to support the Chamber in a part-time capacity through her work in accounts and by continuing her specialist role in export services. Jackie will also remain on the Chamber Board.

Liz Longmore, a familiar face to members of East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, will take on the role of Chamber Manager, supported by the Board of Directors. Having worked closely alongside Jackie for the past four and a half years, Liz brings valuable experience, continuity and a strong understanding of the Chamber and its members.

Words from the Chamber Manager

It is an exciting time for East Cheshire Chamber as we begin a new chapter with the transition in management. While there are some new developments ahead, our commitment to our members remains unchanged. You can continue to expect the same high-quality networking meetings, annual events, and dedicated business support that you know and value.

From January 2027, I will be introducing a weekly 'Chamber Hour'. Held every Friday by appointment, these sessions will give both existing and prospective members the opportunity to meet with me to discuss how they can maximise the value of Chamber membership. Whether you are looking to make the most of your current membership or want to learn more about the benefits of joining, I would be delighted to speak with you. If you are interested, please get in touch to arrange an appointment.

With the support of our Affiliate Chamber, West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce, we are delighted to launch the Young Chamber programme across schools throughout East Cheshire. Taking a phased approach, we are currently working with Sandbach High School and will provide further updates as the programme develops.

The Young Chamber Programme provides a fantastic opportunity for Chamber members to engage with the next generation, helping young people explore the wide range of pathways into employment and further education. It also enables businesses to showcase their industries, share valuable insights, and inspire future talent.



We will be sharing more information about the Young Chamber Programme over the coming months, including a range of exciting opportunities for businesses to get involved in ways that deliver lasting benefits for the Chamber, young people and their business. Please keep an eye on your emails and our monthly newsletter for the latest updates.

Since starting at East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, it has been a privilege to work alongside Jackie, whose guidance and mentorship have been invaluable. I am incredibly grateful for the unwavering support from Jackie and the Chamber Board throughout my journey. Thank you for the confidence you have placed in me to lead East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce into its next chapter.

Finally, thank you to all of our members for your continued support. I look forward to building on the strong relationships we have established and working together to achieve even greater success in the years ahead.

Liz Longmore, Chamber Manager



Chamber Board Members



Marie Shenton
Chair
Partner,
Hammond McNulty



Tim McCloud
Vice Chair
CEO,
TMC Strategic
Communications



Liz Longmore
Board Member
Chamber Manager,
East Cheshire Chamber
of Commerce



Andrew Pear
Board Member
CEO,
Pear Hospitality



Rebecca Medcalf
Board Member
Director & Solicitor,
Talbots Law



Jackie Randles
Board Member
East Cheshire Chamber
of Commerce



George Hayes
Board Member
Director of Governance
Risk and Compliance



Jessica Peake
Board Member
Marketing Director,
TMC Strategic
Communications



John Stewart
Board Member
Managing Director,
Senior Aerospace
Bird Bellows

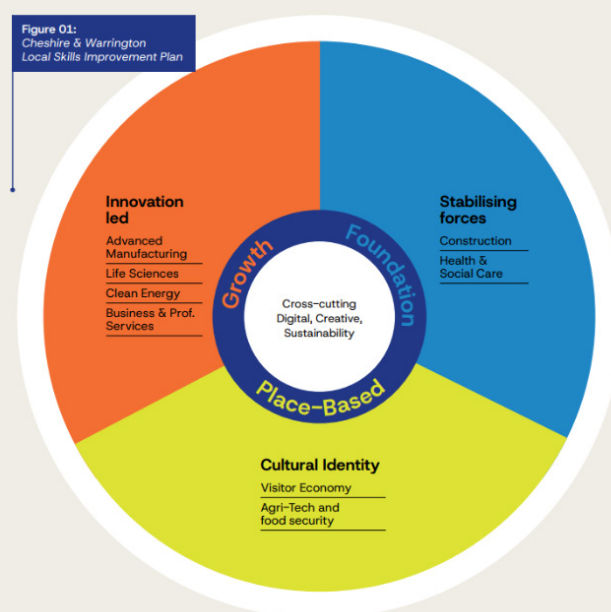
Shaping tomorrow's workforce, together.



Our Local Skills Improvement Plan for Cheshire and Warrington

That's what the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is for. Built on direct engagement with employers and businesses, it sets out key sectors in Cheshire and Warrington and what employers need from training and skills provision. It outlines the practical changes and collaboration which will make a difference over the next three years.

Figure 01:
Cheshire & Warrington
Local Skills Improvement Plan



Living, ongoing interface

This plan isn't the outcome – it's the blueprint for the next **three years** of how we work together to shape our workforce for today and tomorrow, and will evolve through a shared focus on partnership and delivery, as set out in Annex B. This is a live interface which will be kept regularly updated and used to track progress.



Email: LSIP@sccci.co.uk



LinkedIn: Cheshire & Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)



Read the report:
www.cheshireandwarringtonlsip.co.uk/

Cheshire and Warrington is the most productive economy in the North of England. We're home to world-class strengths in advanced manufacturing, life sciences, clean energy and business and professional services. But growth only works if our skills system and businesses operate in sync, and if everyone can share in the opportunities our economy creates. So the skills we build in our region are important for our future shared prosperity and sustained growth.



Six workstreams, one activity plan.

1. Strengthening employer voice
2. Simplifying navigation for SMEs
3. Scaling technical pathways
4. Embedding digital and sustainability skills
5. Connecting people to employment
6. Improving provider quality and teaching capacity



WEDNESDAY
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CONTACT LIZ FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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BOOKINGS NOW OPEN!

Format of the day:

- 10.00am - Breakfast and registration
- 11.00am - Clay Practice and refreshments
- 13.00pm - Clay competition
- 15.00pm - Dinner and awards presentation

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East Cheshire Chamber's Annual Golf Day 2026

The East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Day, proudly sponsored by IronMarket Risk Management, took place on Wednesday 17th June 2026 at Vale Royal Abbey Golf Club in Whitegate, bringing together members and guests for a well-supported day on the course.

The morning began with registration and a relaxed welcome, with bacon brioche rolls, tea and coffee setting the tone before players headed out. The Putting Competition followed, kindly sponsored by Reliance Medical, offering an early test of skill in a light but competitive atmosphere. Ryan Leese from Senior Aerospace Bird Bellows secured the win, taking home a beautiful glass trophy.

Once play got underway, the course was bathed in sunshine and a light breeze, providing ideal conditions throughout the day. Jackie Randles and Liz Longmore were positioned at Hole 10 to welcome teams and take photographs. Later in the day, refreshments and cookies were distributed around the course by Jackie on behalf of the Chamber, which were well received.

After play concluded, guests gathered in the Great Hall for a roast beef carvery, followed by chocolate brownie with caramel ice cream, tea and coffee. The prize-giving brought recognition across individual and team categories. Ed Brumpton from Talbots Law secured the Longest Drive on Hole 15, while Alex Parkes from Parx Mortgages & Insurance Services took Nearest the Pin on Hole 6.

In the team results, NowShip Team B finished in third place, Langricks in second, and The Bunker Dwellers from Reliance Medical claimed first place. A new award for 2026, Golfer of the Day, was also introduced and presented to Jack Higginbotham from Prism for the best individual score.

The day also supported our current Charity of the Year – North West Air Ambulance, who hosted a raffle with a range of prizes. A total of £635 was raised in support of their work, thanks to contributions from those attending.

Overall, the event delivered a steady mix of competition and connection, reflecting the Chamber's wider network in a practical and well-supported setting.



Charity of the Year, North West Air Ambulance



Golfer of the Day winner, Jack Higginbotham



Annual Golf Day Headline Sponsor, IronMarket Risk Management



Winning Team, Bunker Dwellers from Reliance Medical



Second Place Team, Langricks



Nearest the Pin winner, Alex Parkes



Longest Drive winner, Ed Brumpton



Putting Competition winner, Ryan Leese



Third Place Team, NowShip Team B



Putting Competition Sponsor, Reliance Medical



LUNCH AT PECKS

Pecks Restaurant provides an exceptional setting for corporate dining, offering a refined environment suitable for executive meetings, client engagements, and VIP hospitality.

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ANNUAL CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS — 2027 —

FRIDAY 19TH MARCH
6.30PM ONWARDS

De Vere Cranage Estate,
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IRONMARKET RISK

6 Years Of Doing Insurance Differently



As IronMarket Risk celebrates six years in business, Director Steve Burns reflects on why relationships will always matter more than policies, why insurance should never be a once-a-year conversation, and what business owners should really expect from their broker.

Looking back, what are you most proud of?

I'm most proud that we've stayed true to why we started. When Wes and I launched IronMarket Risk, we didn't want to become the biggest brokerage. We wanted to build one that genuinely put businesses first. Six years later, the thing I'm proudest of isn't the number of policies we've written, it's the relationships we've built.

Many of our members have been with us from the very beginning. We've grown alongside them, supported them through challenges, celebrated successes and become part of their journey.

You manage some significant and complex member accounts. What does it take to build and maintain trust with businesses operating at that level?

Trust isn't built in a meeting. It's built over time.

Business owners want advisers who listen, ask good questions and understand the commercial realities they face every day.

They also want honesty. Sometimes the right advice isn't the cheapest option, but if it provides the right protection when something goes wrong, it's the advice worth giving.

For us, trust comes from consistency. Doing what you say you'll do. Being available when people need you. Becoming a genuine part of their support network rather than just another supplier.



IRONMARKET RISK



CONNECT
WITH
STEPHEN
BURNS
-
DIRECTOR
OF RISK

For business owners reading this who feel their insurance is currently just a yearly transaction, what would you encourage them to think about?

Ask yourself one simple question.

Does your broker really understand your business?

If the answer is no, or if you only hear from them when your renewal is due, you're probably not getting the advice your business deserves.

Insurance shouldn't simply be about buying a policy. It should be about understanding your risks before they become problems and having someone in your corner when you need them most.

Businesses invest huge amounts of time building what they have. Protecting it deserves more than one conversation a year.

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Upcoming Thursday Thirty's in 2026 & 2027

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3rd September 2026
08.30am – 10.00am
Talbots Law

Circus Starr
the circus with a purpose.

14th January 2027
08.30am – 10.00am
Circus Starr

Petty Pool

24th September 2026
08.30am – 10.00am
Petty Pool Trust

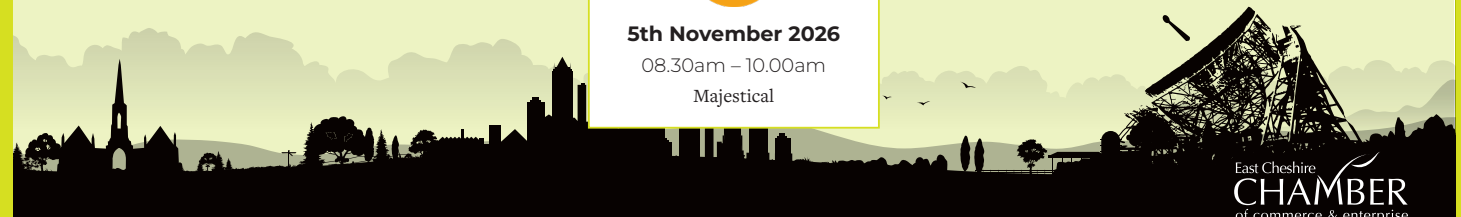
tmcxxx

10th December 2026
08.30am – 10.00am
East Cheshire Chamber & TMC

For further details please contact
liz.longmore@eastcheshirechamber.co.uk



5th November 2026
08.30am – 10.00am
Majestical



East Cheshire
CHAMBER
of commerce & enterprise



The Spine Space - Company Spotlight

Who is The Spine Space and where are they located?

The Spine Space is a Spinal Health Centre located at the Market Quarter in Congleton.

What services does The Spine Space offer and who are they primarily designed to support?

Our primary services are Chiropractic/Osteopathy treatment, massage therapy and clinical rehabilitation, and our services are designed to support anybody who is suffering from back and neck pain, other joint pain, people who are concerned with their posture, or anybody who wants to optimise their physical health and wellbeing.

What are the most common issues seen in patients today?

By far the most common issues we look after are neck and back pain, but we also help people with the management of headaches and a range of other joint and muscle injuries. We also help businesses with corporate wellbeing services and are always looking to build connections with local businesses who looking to improve the health and wellbeing of their teams.

What are the practice's future goals and plans for development?

After opening our doors in February 2026, the centre is going from strength to strength and will be looking to add another clinician later in the year. We are also looking to build on the success of the corporate wellbeing services offered by our flagship clinic, Stoke Chiro Spinal Health, and build strong relationships with businesses in and around the Congleton area and the East Cheshire region as a whole, helping leaders support the wellbeing of their employees in a supportive and proactive way.

If you could give any advice from your industry to our readers, what would it be?

The industry advice I would give to readers is that it's never too late to make a positive change when it comes to your health. Move often, sleep 7-9 hours each night, and make sure you're getting the right nutrition, and it's amazing how much of a transformation it can have on your life. And if you need further support, we will be here every step of the way!



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SJP Approved 07/08/2026



Why Experience Is Stronger When It Keeps Evolving

Rewind to even two years ago, and the skills that underpinned most agencies look wildly different to the attributes required today.

Technology has changed. Customer expectations have shifted. New regulations have reshaped the way organisations operate. In that context, 'on the job' experience still matters, but experience alone is not enough. Experience gives professionals the foundations to navigate change. Continued learning ensures those foundations remain relevant.

Nowhere is this more evident than in communications. Search behaviour is fragmenting and evolving, artificial intelligence is changing how content is created and discovered, and organisations are under increasing pressure to demonstrate the commercial contribution of their marketing and brand activity. Audiences expect communications to be more relevant, accessible and responsive, while specialist and regulated sectors require an increasingly sophisticated understanding of risk. There is a lot to juggle.

But keeping up does not mean reacting to every new trend. It means having the judgement to understand which changes matter, which do not and what they mean for the audiences they're intended for, before applying them intelligently.

At the other end of the spectrum, those who adopt the "we've always done it this way" mindset are fundamentally standing in the way of progress.

This is why continued professional development is central to TMC's culture. It strengthens the thinking behind our work, challenges established assumptions and helps ensure the advice we give remains informed, credible and commercially useful.

As of July 2026, six members of our team hold Chartered Marketer status through the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM). It is an achievement we believe is currently unmatched among UK agencies, and one that reflects both the depth of experience within our team and our commitment to continuing to develop it. The titles are hard earned. Chartered status is not awarded simply for completing a course or passing an examination. It recognises sustained professional capability, relevant experience and an ongoing commitment to learning and ethical practice. It is deliberately rigorous, and it must continue to be maintained.

Achieving Chartered status is not the end of the process – particularly as our wider team are also accredited with the CIPR, CIPD and the CMI to name but a few! For us it is just a step further in continuing to build knowledge, challenge our thinking and stay informed as the industry evolves.

For clients, the value goes beyond having a better-qualified team.

Organisations rarely appoint an agency just because they need additional capacity. They need informed perspectives, constructive challenge and recommendations they can trust. A team that continues to learn is better placed to understand the wider context behind a challenge and can distinguish meaningful change from industry noise.

That matters across the specialist healthcare, medical society and technology sectors in which TMC works, where audiences, regulations and governance needs can be complex. Continued development helps us understand how those environments are changing, while experience gives us the judgement to apply it well.

One without the other is incomplete.

Explore all insights from across the TMC team on the issues shaping communications, healthcare and technology.



tmc



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Thursday Thirty Report



July's Thursday Thirty began in the best possible way – with coffee, pastries, and plenty of meaningful networking. The team at Chaffinch welcomed attendees for another engaging morning of business connections and insightful discussion.

We heard from Alastair Machin, who shared the story behind Chaffinch, how the business has grown, and the specialist services they provide. It was a fascinating presentation that gave everyone a greater understanding of the expertise and passion behind the organisation.

A sincere thank you to Chaffinch for their warm hospitality and to everyone who attended and contributed to another successful event.

Thursday Thirty continues to grow because of the fantastic businesses and organisations that open their doors and share their stories with our community.

Providing a platform to support and showcase a wide range of outstanding charities and businesses, events like this highlight the real difference that fundraising, awareness, and local business connections can make.

We are now taking bookings for 2027, and dates are filling quickly. If your business or organisation would like to host a future Thursday Thirty event, please get in touch with Liz Longmore to secure your date.



We have been delighted to host two fantastic Thursday Thirty networking events throughout May and July, bringing businesses together to connect, learn, and support incredible local organisations.

In May, we were welcomed by North West Air Ambulance Charity at The Space in Congleton, where we heard from Volunteer Adrian Steinkamp and Senior Fundraiser Danny Daynes.

Their powerful presentation gave attendees a real insight into the vital, life-saving work carried out by the Air Ambulance crew every day. Hearing first-hand how donations directly support this essential service was both inspiring and a powerful reminder of the importance of community support.

A huge thank you to Adrian and Danny for sharing their time, knowledge, and experiences with us.

www.eastcheshirechamber.co.uk

CY Group unveiled as business enters its next phase of growth

Currie Young has unveiled its new identity as CY Group, marking the next stage in the evolution of the business as it continues to grow its team, broaden its services and strengthen its presence across Staffordshire, the North-West and West Midlands.



Steve Currie,
Managing Director



Nicky Harrop,
Head of Business Development

The new identity follows a record year and reflects how significantly the business has evolved in recent years.

Originally established as an insolvency and restructuring practice, CY Group has built its reputation through a relationship-led approach, working closely with business owners, lenders and professional advisers. Increasingly, those relationships have led to conversations much earlier in the business journey and an opportunity to provide a broader range of support.

The business now brings together four specialist areas: CY Insolvency & Restructuring, CY Advisory, CY Funding and CY Consultancy, supporting businesses through growth, funding and strategic planning as well as periods of change, challenge and restructuring.

A new CY Group website has also launched, bringing the expanded offering together in one place and providing a clearer picture of the support now available across the Group.

Despite its growth ambitions, maintaining the personal approach on which the business has been built remains central to the CY Group strategy.

Steve Currie, Managing Director of CY Group, said:

“This isn’t about changing who we are. It’s about becoming more of the business we’ve always wanted to build.

We believe there will always be a place for a boutique advisory business that puts relationships before transactions, gives straightforward commercial advice and genuinely understands what it’s like to own and grow a business.

The move to CY Group gives us the platform to continue growing and broadening our offering, without losing the personal relationships and entrepreneurial mindset that got us here.”

For Nicky Harrop, Head of Business Development at CY Group, the growth of the business is already translating into new opportunities across the regions in which it operates.

“It’s exciting to look at where we are now and recognise just how much the business has evolved. We’re growing our team, creating new roles and bringing in people with different areas of expertise, while also giving our existing team opportunities to develop as the Group grows.

The new identity reflects the business we have become, but it’s equally important that growth doesn’t change the way we work. We want to keep giving business owners and our professional network practical, honest advice, being straightforward about where we can help and maintaining the personal relationships that have always been such an important part of CY.”

For CY Group, the ambition is to continue building its presence across its key regions while remaining intentionally boutique, combining specialist expertise with the accessibility and senior-level involvement that have characterised the business from the outset.



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