

# LONDON

**Business Matters**



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Fabric of Freedom – Ukraine fashion show

Leaseholder reform becomes law

Mental health issues in the office

## Beth Horn at London Tech Week

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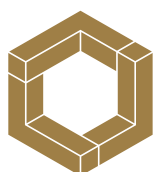


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Front cover image: Beth Horn of Pinterest with Karim Fatehi MBE



## Letter from the editor

**T**his issue's front cover features Beth Horn of Pinterest with Karim Fatehi MBE. Her address at LCCI's London Tech Week reception in which she shared her career highlights and spoke of the factors which put the capital at the forefront of the global tech industry is covered on page 12. As part of the week's activities, the Chamber visited O1 Founders, part of Capital City College Group, which includes a unique coding school (p 37).

### Sporting summer

It has been quite a sporting summer, with more to come. London hosted two big international tournament finals. Tottenham Hotspur's football ground was the venue for Toulouse v Leinster in the rugby union Investec Champions Cup while Wembley saw Real Madrid and Borussia Dortmund battle it out in the football equivalent (p 18). Paris was in the last stages of preparation for the 2024 Olympic Games when I visited at the end of May (p 26) and I am sure will serve up a dish as memorable as London's in 2012. Is abseiling a sport? It certainly requires skill and courage and on page 51 Elizabeth Skewes Castañeda demonstrates both those qualities as she made her way down the 'Cheesegrater' in the City of London to raise funds for the Lord Mayor's Appeal.

Sport is also a factor in the article on page 53 on how charity fundraising can have a positive effect in the office. A team from Unique Vacations, following

a favourable experience at the London Royal Parks half marathon, ran 100 kilometres around Antigua in the Caribbean to raise money for children with cancer and premature babies.

### Fashion

LBM has covered many London Fashion Shows in the past – the twice-yearly event is in the global calendar alongside those in Paris and New York and the industry makes a huge contribution to the UK economy. In this issue (p 10) we report on *Fabric of Freedom*, a unique initiative, run by LCCI with London Metropolitan University, to showcase the fashion collections of Ukrainian refugees. Early indications are that it has achieved its goal of providing new connections for designers and fostering relationships to shape the future of fashion.

### Arts

London have supplied two of the five museums shortlisted for the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2024 (p 17). The National Portrait Gallery (re-opened last year after a huge refurbishment) and East London's Young V&A both made the cut and one of them must have a great chance of landing the prize. The British Museum is, of course, a legend in its own right and was the venue for a special LCCI event (p21) which included a private viewing of *Michelangelo: the last decades*.

Staying with the arts, London is blessed with a large number of great theatres but not all of them are in the West End. The suburbs have their fair share too not least Kingston's Rose Theatre (p 19) which has been staging an outstanding production of *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams.

### Tailored solutions

By the time this issue of LBM comes out, the General Election will be upon us. Once a new government is in place, LCCI will be closely monitoring how business-centric their agendas turn out to be, having urged this in the run up to polling day (p 16) and just as it does for the London Mayoral Elections earlier this year (p 14). As the article on page 6 demonstrates London has many economic disparities and there is a need for tailored solutions and collaborative efforts.

**Peter Bishop**

editor@londonbusinessmatters.co.uk

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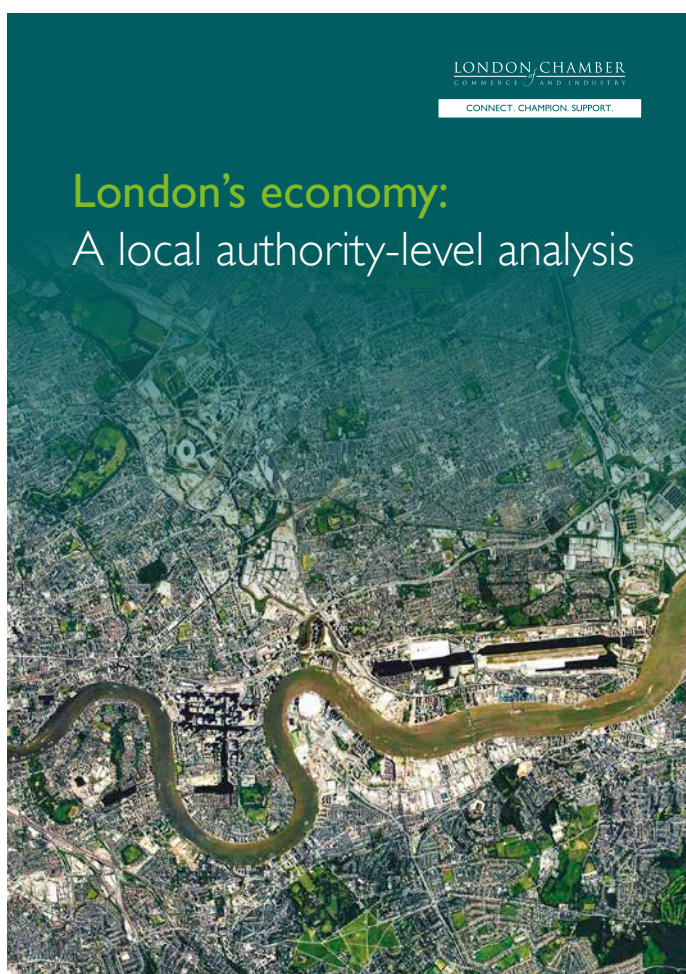
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# London's economic disparities revealed

LCCI, in collaboration with Centre for London, recently published a spatial analysis report which examined the economic landscape of each of the 32 boroughs across the capital, shedding light on their successes and challenges



## Crucial insights

The report reviews ten dimensions of London's economy to tell the story of the capital's economic successes and inequalities, uncovering crucial insights on what it means for a region to be successful.

While London stands as a beacon of economic prowess, boasting unparalleled productivity and hosting world-leading industries, the report

highlights significant disparities across different parts of the city and underscores the need for bespoke solutions enabled by strong devolved governance, especially in the face of evolving economic challenges.

### Key findings include:

- Barking and Dagenham has the highest levels of deprivation among all London boroughs,

pointing to localised challenges that require targeted interventions.

- London boroughs emerged as powerhouses, generating 66 per cent of London's gross value added (GVA) in 2021. Westminster, Tower Hamlets, and Camden stand out as the largest contributors to this economic output.
- While London remains the most productive region in the UK, the report reveals that productivity is concentrated in only four boroughs – Tower Hamlets, Hounslow, Westminster, and Camden. Alarming, productivity in most boroughs falls below the London average, signaling a need for concerted efforts to bolster economic output across the city.
- Excluding the City of London, the real estate sector emerged as a significant contributor, generating 17 per cent of London's GVA in 2021. This underscores the sector's pivotal role in driving economic activity within the capital.

## Roadmap

LCCI chief executive Karim Fatehi MBE said that the report provided "a roadmap for informed decision-making and collaborative action to ensure London's



Karim Fatehi

prosperity is inclusive and sustainable."

Antonia Jennings, chief executive of the Centre for London, commented: "London's success is underscored by its economic prowess and global significance and yet, the city's true prosperity hinges on ensuring a high quality of life for all its

residents. Despite its achievements, this paper highlights that disparities persist in areas such as child poverty, air pollution, and wealth inequality.

Regional success is complex and this paper sheds light on need for tailored solutions and collaborative efforts."

[www.londonchamber.co.uk/LCCI\\_Media/LCCI/Media/Reports/London-s-Economy-Summary.pdf](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/LCCI_Media/LCCI/Media/Reports/London-s-Economy-Summary.pdf)



Antonia Jennings





# Filling the skills gap

**The Planning Skills Fund is a new five-year industry programme aimed at increasing skills and capacity in Local Planning Authorities (LPA) across the UK. The programme fund is being led and managed by the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), with the training bursary process delivered by the Royal Town Planning Institute. Aviva, a founding partner of the programme, has already committed £500,000 to the fund.**

## Investment

In the Spring Budget, the government committed to match £3 million against the programme fund, demonstrating ongoing support to addressing the skills gap in LPA – something that has been identified as holding back much-needed investment in housing and infrastructure.

The fund will pay for at least 100 undergraduate

and masters' level qualifications. This will be for people entering the planning industry and will also support people already working in LPAs who need to upskill and gain further technical knowledge for more senior planning roles.

**The fund will pay for at least 100 undergraduate and masters' level qualifications.**

## Growth

As the BCC puts it: "The UK is renowned for being the best place to start and grow a business but a slow planning system, due to lack of resource and specialist skills, is holding firms, and the country, back and impacting economic growth."

## SPONSORED COLUMN

# Key financial planning steps to take before the UK general election

*By Andrew Tricker,  
Director at Lubbock Fine  
Wealth Management*



With the UK general election on 4 July, a Labour victory could bring potential changes to tax rates and allowances.

Ahead of the upcoming election, consider these four essential financial planning steps:

### 1. Capitalise on Annual and Lifetime Allowances for pensions

The annual allowance for pension contributions was increased from £40,000 to £60,000 for the 2023/24 tax year, which means that it's prudent to capitalise on the current 50% increase by contributing as much as you can afford to your pension.

The lifetime allowance (LTA) was abolished from April 6 2024 therefore, due to election uncertainty, the wisest course of action may be to bolster your pension while you can.

### 2. Make full use of your CGT allowance

The Capital Gains Tax (CGT) allowance was recently halved to £3,000. Investors should consider making full use of the current tax free allowance before potential Labour Government cuts.

There's speculation of a CGT rate increase, with higher rate taxpayers currently paying 40% on income above £50,271, but only 24% on property gains and 20% on shares, leading to concerns of CGT alignment with income tax rates.

### 3. Take advantage of the reduced top rate of CGT on Buy-to-Let properties or holiday homes

The sale of non-primary residence property in the UK incurs Capital Gains Tax, is broadly calculated by the difference between the sold property price and the original purchase price.

In the recent Spring Budget, the Chancellor reduced the top CGT rate for property sales from 28% to 24% which applies to higher and additional rate taxpayers. Property owners, especially higher rate taxpayers, should consider selling before potential election-driven changes to capitalise on the lower rate.

The Government plans to abolish the Furnished Holiday Lets regime for 2024/25, eliminating the 10% rate under business asset disposal relief.

Property and holiday lets owners, such as Airbnb properties, have less than a year to utilise the lower tax rate on property sales before potential rate increases post-election.

### 4. Utilise your full ISA allowance

The full ISA allowance for the 2024/25 tax year is £20,000. The Labour Party has stated that they intend to "simplify the ISA landscape", though they haven't yet provided details on their ISA policy.

ISAs provide another way for people to save tax-free. Married couples can contribute up to £40,000 a year. There are many different types of ISA so it's crucial to involve your financial advisers early and find the ISA that provides the best suits your investment objectives and your risk profile.

### How can we help

With potential changes on the horizon, proactive financial planning is essential and we are dedicated to helping you navigate these uncertain times and secure your financial future. Get in touch today with our Director, Andrew Tricker ([andrewtricker@lfwm.co.uk](mailto:andrewtricker@lfwm.co.uk)).

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## SPONSORED COLUMN

# Family Lawyer: A Special Relationship?

Our core values at Child & Child are trust, integrity and excellence.



## What does that look like in family law?

Family law in particular is a people business. Ensuring that it is easy for a client to communicate with their solicitor is a good place to start. That might be by phone, email, text, WhatsApp, Teams – whatever works for an individual client. It will include out of hours and weekend contact if necessary. In my experience clients will be respectful of a solicitor's personal time, there is no need to put barriers in place.

Having a genuine interest in every client and their situation is also key. Families are complex and diverse and the way in which they interact with each other can have an enormous impact on how a case progresses. Understanding that dynamic can be as important as considering the law, particularly as one strives to help families avoid court proceedings. Most people will feel vulnerable and exposed when having to involve third parties in their family life. Knowing that they have been heard and understood will help them to build confidence in the advice they receive.

The same approach applies to financial matters. Thorough understanding

a client's professional, business and tax needs ensures commercial realities are not overlooked. Family law should not operate in a vacuum. Innovative solutions can sometimes be found to tricky situations if solicitor and client work together as a team – involving corporate, trust and tax colleagues if needs be.

We must also recognise that our clients will often be experiencing varying degrees of emotional trauma and stress. Even the most seasoned professional is not immune. We must acknowledge this and always act with integrity. Our clients need to trust that the advice they receive is truly in their best interests; even when it does not reflect their original goals. We may need to protect them from their own, perhaps fleeting, worst instincts or explore when emotion might unduly impact decision making. Reflect on the wider needs of the whole family, look for solutions that will last, work hard to promote a constructive approach with our counterparts.

Excellence in a solicitor always requires an exceptional understanding of the law and an unwavering drive to continuously perform at a high level. In family law becoming a trusted advisor is an excellence all of its own.

### Susie Barter

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# CHILD & CHILD



## Football crazy

**Sport and diplomacy go together even though passions can sometimes run high. What a great initiative then for the German Embassy in London to host a live showing of the game between Germany and Hungary in Euro 24, inviting friends and colleagues of both countries.**

### Fun

The German House in Belgrave Square put on a good show – savoury pastries, bratwurst and, of course, the best of the country's beer and wine. To add to the fun, there was a draw for a Euro 24 football

and wristband giveaways.

And the game? Entertaining stuff with two teams evenly matched and Germany eventually coming out on top, winning 2-0.



## In harmony

**LCCI patron members were guests at a recent performance of Elgar's Enigma Variations by the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Santtu-Matias Rouvali at the Royal Festival Hall.**

The work, a tribute to the composer's closest friends, moves from the tender grace of the first variation, representing Elgar's much loved wife Alice, to the solemn grandeur of *Nimrod*.





# The Hidden Risks of Relying on AI

## “Building Catastrophe: Architects’ Reliance on AI-Chatbot Misinformation Leads to Disaster”

“In a shocking turn of events, a newly constructed building collapsed, claiming multiple lives, due to critical errors in adherence to building safety regulations. Investigations revealed that architects had relied on an AI-chatbot for guidance on safety standards, unaware that the information provided was incorrect in the specific context of their project. This tragic incident underscores the dangers of blind trust in AI technology without human oversight, prompting calls for stricter regulations and accountability in the architectural industry.”

If you hadn’t already guessed, that’s a fictional news story – written for me by ChatGPT, in fact. I’m sorry to say however, if I saw something similar in the news in a couple of years’ time, I wouldn’t be entirely surprised.

In an era where technology promises convenience and efficiency, the architectural industry stands at a crossroads, facing a critical question: How can we use artificial intelligence (AI) in our projects? While AI-powered chatbots offer quick access to information, especially regarding regulations and standards, a word of caution is essential: blind reliance on these systems could inadvertently lead us down the perilous path of another Grenfell disaster.

The Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017 is a stark reminder of the catastrophic consequences of overlooking building safety standards. A fire, fuelled by flammable cladding, engulfed the tower claiming 72 lives and leaving a scar on the construction sector. In its aftermath, the importance of rigorous adherence to safety regulations has been emphasised, yet the temptation to seek shortcuts persists, particularly with the advent of AI-driven solutions.



AI chatbots have found their way into various industries, promising swift responses to inquiries and streamlining processes. In architecture, these solutions offer convenient access to huge amounts of information however, the danger lies in the nuances and complexities inherent in building regulations, which AI may struggle to grasp fully.

You probably don’t need to be reminded, due to the Building Safety Act fully coming into force this month, that building regulations and safety standards are not static; they evolve in response to emerging risks, technological advancements, and lessons learned from past disasters. Interpreting these regulations requires contextual understanding, an ability to weigh different factors, and commonly, human judgment. AI, while adept at retrieving data, may lack the nuanced comprehension necessary to provide accurate, context-sensitive answers.

AI also poses a risk of oversimplification. Building safety is a multi-disciplinary concern encompassing structural integrity, fire safety, accessibility, and more. A one-size-fits-all approach, characteristic of many AI systems, may overlook crucial nuances and exceptions specific to each application. In the case of Grenfell, the combustible cladding used

was technically compliant with regulations but proved catastrophic in practice, highlighting the limitations of a checkbox mentality. It’s true that we have come a long way since Grenfell and the Building Safety Act helps to mitigate these risks by removing the ability for organisations to ‘mark their own homework’, but I don’t think we should be relying on everyone else in the chain doing their jobs correctly to maintain our safety – and ultimately that of the building users.

The accountability factor also cannot be ignored: in the event of a safety breach, who bears the responsibility? Can an AI chatbot be held liable for providing erroneous or incomplete information? In a recent case in Canada, Air Canada was forced to comply with information given to a customer by their customer service AI-chatbot, despite that information being contrary to its T&Cs – to my knowledge there hasn’t yet been a similar case in the UK, but it may be that UK courts also follow this logic. This argument obviously only focusses on the legal risks of such an outcome, the court of public opinion can’t be ignored, and the reputational damage to those involved would be significant.

So, where does this leave us? I’m not suggesting we abandon AI altogether – far

from it. There are countless opportunities to save time, gain insight and increase our productivity by using AI, which absolutely has the potential to transform our businesses for the better. We need to accept that we are only human, and we will inevitably take shortcuts wherever they are available; practices and consultancies should factor this into their decisions about where to deploy AI and crucially, where not to. AI enables us to free ourselves and our teams from the less valuable work, allowing us to spend more time on what’s really important.

The Grenfell disaster serves as a sobering reminder of the stakes involved in building safety. As technology marches forward, let’s be cognisant of where we are directing our own attention and ensuring new tech moves focus towards, and not away from the critical parts of our work. By embracing AI responsibly and acknowledging how it might be used in the real world, we can deliver the highest standards of safety and prevent the recurrence of tragedies like Grenfell.

As trusted partners, we value honest, open conversations about the use of technology and how – and where – you should use it.

**To find out more, contact Rob at [rob.colclough@waterstons.com](mailto:rob.colclough@waterstons.com)**





# Ukrainian refugees showcase their fashion collections

by Vittoria Zerbini

Earlier this summer, in the Great Hall of London Metropolitan University, *Fabric of Freedom* shone a spotlight on five talented Ukrainian refugee fashion designers. Led by LCCI with London Metropolitan University in collaboration with UA in UK Community, Creative Headshots London, and fashion professionals Nataliia Bartkiv and Olenka Martynyuk, the event gathered movers and shakers from the fashion world to champion Galushko, Mandyradzh, Selera, AG Studio, and Tetyana Palchinska.

## Lack of networks

*Fabric of Freedom* connects selected fashion designers with potential investors, buyers, journalists, and fashion enthusiasts. LCCI, having worked with Ukrainian businesses in the UK and Ukraine since the 2022 invasion of the country, knows the difficulties that entrepreneurs face when they need to relocate to a foreign country e.g. language barriers, differences in how the bureaucracy and laws work, a lack of networks and of community. Add the fact that the fashion industry is one of the hardest

to break into, hence the need to create *Fabric of Freedom*.

## Connections

The five designers were chosen by Martynyuk and Bartkiv to showcase distinct, modern styles based on Ukrainian roots. The show itself, attended by notable figures such as Helen Fielding, the author of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, achieved its goal of providing a bridge for new connections between designers and attendees, and fostering relationships to shape the future of fashion.

## The glorious ninth

On 29 July, the Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra – including LCCI's Ukraine project lead Igor Bartkiv (pictured) – will join the Royal Opera House's Songs for Ukraine Chorus in a historic one-night performance at St Paul's Cathedral including Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

## Acclaimed

In the 200th-anniversary year of the symphony, the orchestra's acclaimed Ukrainian-language version of the work will be performed to re-assert values of freedom, sovereignty, and resistance against Russia's invasion.



[www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2024/event/ukrainian-freedom-orchestra-beethovens-ninth](http://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2024/event/ukrainian-freedom-orchestra-beethovens-ninth)



**Selera**

Green Sky Photo,  
Alina Kaleniuk

Known for oversized shirts, blazers, and cut-out dresses, Selera emphasises high-quality natural fabrics like nettle and hemp fibres and embraces deadstock materials for limited edition capsules. **Selera** inspires conscious consumerism, championing a sustainable future in the fashion industry, promoting beauty and environmental awareness with every purchase.

Trevatt  
ography  
reative  
shots  
on

**Tetyana Palchinska**

**Tetyana Palchinska**

Her accessories are crafted with meticulous attention to detail, showcasing her skill and dedication. Her work embodies the spirit of Ukrainian creativity and craftsmanship, leaving a lasting impression with each beautifully crafted piece, showing her deep passion for Ukrainian craftsmanship.



**Tom Trevatt  
Photography and Creative  
Headshots  
London**

## Mandyradzhy

**Mandyradzhy**, a youthful brand founded by Ilona Mandyradzhy in 2023, epitomises deconstruction, detailing and uniqueness. Through her work she aims to spark meaningful conversations, challenge societal norms, and harness fashion's power for positive change.

**@mandyradzhy.official**

AG Studio

With a diverse colour palette, **AG Studio** collections empower women to express individuality and comfort. The clothes are stylish, practical and perfect for day-to-night. Embodying versatility, the pieces can be mixed and matched, allowing for a myriad of ensembles that capture the brand essence.

@ag\_\_studio\_

## Galushko

**Galushko's design** philosophy embraces the diversity of boundaries, marrying the old and the new for the unique, and inclusivity. Through intricate forms, recycled materials, and thoughtful draping, she captures the essence of a rich and diverse fashion narrative.

**@galushko\_brand**

**Ksenija Sokolenko**

Kseniya Sokolenko

# At the forefront of the global tech industry



**Beth Horn was the main speaker at this summer's LCCI London Tech Week reception**



**The incoming managing director of Pinterest – the successful image sharing and social media service – spoke of her career highlights to date and the factors which position London at the forefront of the global tech industry.**

Her journey in the industry began with Macys.com in New York, followed by years in search engine marketing. In 2011, Horn joined Meta (then Facebook) in Silicon Valley, where she grew the platform's retail business in the US. She moved with Meta to London in 2018, a city she praised for the concentration of opportunity which inspires growth and development.

## Transformed

Over the past decade London has been transformed into a dynamic



and thriving ecosystem, valued at over £600 billion, that fosters innovation, attracts foreign direct investment (FDI) and supports burgeoning entrepreneurial ventures. London's success, Horn noted, is a testament to the city's connectivity, talent-rich community and robust venture capital operation which fosters growth.

Location, argued Horn, is a key factor. London's status as a gateway to Europe and beyond makes the city an attractive destination for international investors and companies looking to expand their reach. This is why the UK capital is home to some of the largest and most influential companies in the world, such as Google and Meta, and Pinterest.

## Defining innovation

London has consistently been ranked as one of the top destinations for FDI in the tech sector – in 2023 alone, the city attracted billions in investment, and now reigns supreme in Europe, attracting more investment than Paris and Berlin combined. London has also created over 100 unicorns, and Horn touched on the inspiring story

of Gymshark – an example of a British company delivering incredible growth, challenging incumbents, and defining innovation.

**London's status as a gateway to Europe and beyond makes the city an attractive destination for international investors and companies looking to expand their reach.**

”

Beth Horn also praised the diverse ecosystem in London which spreads far beyond the tech sector into finance, government, arts and culture, and more. The variety in London adds to the city's appeal and, she argued, makes it the best city in the world to do business.

**The reception, held in partnership with London Tech Week, was attended by business and technology leaders from across the global technology community including delegations from India, the US and Turkey, and was sponsored by Crowe UK LLP**

[www.pinterest.co.uk](http://www.pinterest.co.uk)



# The Knowledge

LBM's test of what readers know about London

**1 Who was the first ever female Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police?**

**2 Which pub on the Thames used to be known as The Devil's Tavern?**

**3 Who is the editor of the London Evening Standard?**

**4 Which reggae star regularly played football with friends in Battersea Park in the 1970s?**

**5 Who is the only person buried upright in Westminster Abbey?**

**6 Which Saracens and England rugby union star was arrested in Majorca in April this year?**

**7 How many London Underground stations include the word 'market' in their names?**

**8 Which West End theatre started life as the Hicks Theatre in 1906 before becoming the Globe (1909), and getting its current name in 1994?**

**9 How many candidates stood to be Mayor of London on 2 May this year?**

**10 Which London venue hosted this year's Bafta awards for film and television?**



Find the answers on page 69

## SPONSORED COLUMN

# What does the Labour Party have in store for employers?

By Rhian Radia, Consultant Employment Lawyer  
**Bishop & Sewell**



## Fire and rehire

A commitment has been made to end fire and rehire practices. Three areas of change are proposed including a requirement for consultation periods and adapting unfair dismissal and redundancy legislation.

## Greater employment rights

The Labour Party would give the same basic rights and protections – sick pay, holiday pay, parental leave and protection against unfair dismissal – to all workers. This would mean those currently considered 'workers' would gain significant additional rights. Additionally, all workers would have a right not to be unfairly dismissed from the first day of employment, scrapping the two-year qualifying rule.

The proposals represent a significant change to employment law. Election promises do not always make the statute books meaning businesses must wait both for the result of the general election and for the new government to set out its legislative agenda. But change is coming and now is the time to prepare.

Rhian Radia is a Consultant Employment Lawyer at Bishop & Sewell. She can be reached by email: [rradia@bishopandsewell.co.uk](mailto:rradia@bishopandsewell.co.uk) or telephone: **+44 (0)20 7631 4141**.

Visit [bishopandsewell.co.uk](http://bishopandsewell.co.uk) or follow on social media.

**When writing this in early June, campaigning for the general election is well under way and its result may well be known when this article is published. But what, asks Rhian Radia at Bishop & Sewell, might a Labour government mean for London's employers?**

The Labour Party's proposals are wide-ranging and quite possibly represent the biggest shift in employment law in almost two decades. Of course, they are at this stage just proposals and if elected will take time to implement.

Headlining Labour's proposed policies are a focus on family-friendly rights, zero hours contracts, extending employment rights generally and restricting fire and rehire practices.

## Family first

Proposals include a new right to switch off, restricting the ability of employers to contact staff outside of normal working hours. Parental leave will be a right from the first day of employment, together with the introduction of bereavement and paid family and carer's leave.

## Zero hours

The Labour Party believes zero hours contracts are being abused. Its original proposal was an outright ban, but that has been dropped. We can expect changes to include more predictable hours and a new right to a contract that reflects the hours worked.

**Bishop  
& Sewell**

**Monro Wright  
& Wasbrough**

# The London Mayoral and GLA Elections 2024

**Alexa Michael reports on the seventh set of elections for the Mayor of London and the 25-member Greater London Authority (GLA) since their creation in 2000, which took place in May**

The sitting Labour Mayor, Sadiq Khan, was re-elected to City Hall with 1,088,225 votes and 43.8 per cent of the popular vote, while his nearest rival, Conservative GLA member Susan Hall, received 812,397 votes and 32.7 per cent of the vote. The London-wide share of the Labour vote rose by 3.8 per cent while that of the Conservatives fell by 2.6 per cent. Turnout was 40.5 per cent.

## First-past-the-post

For the first time, the Mayoral contest was held under first-past-the-post and not the supplementary vote where voters previously had a first and second choice of candidate. The electorate also had to present photo ID at the polling station in order to vote.

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During the campaign, Khan pledged to extend the night tube service to four more lines, to put 1,300 more Metropolitan Police officers on the beat and to increase police budgets by £88 million from higher Council tax and increased central government funding. Khan also promised to build 40,000 new

Council houses by 2030 and to end rough sleeping in the capital by the same date. On the environment, Khan reaffirmed his target for all Greater London Authority operations to have net zero emissions by 2030. His proposed steps to tackle climate change included making all buses carbon-free and setting up a fund to put solar panels on school roofs. However, he said he would not introduce road pricing.

## Opposition

Hall's campaign was dominated by opposition to extending the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) to Outer London. She pledged to scrap it on day one of her Mayoralty if she won. Hall intended to remove all 20mph speed limits on London's main roads. She also wanted to increase Metropolitan Police budgets by £200 million, which would have paid for 1,500 additional police officers and two police bases in every London Borough. These would have been funded by cutting staff numbers at City Hall. She also promised to build more high-quality, low-rise homes for families even if they had to be at higher densities.

A total of 13 candidates stood for London Mayor in 2024, including Liberal Democrat Rob Blackie, Zoe Garbett for the Green Party and Howard Cox for Reform UK. Of the 13, only the Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Green Party candidates saved their deposits by winning more than 5 per cent of the vote.

## London-wide

Elections to the GLA, which holds the Mayor to account by examining Mayoral decisions and actions, were held on the same day. This poll resulted in 11 Labour, eight Conservatives, three Green, two Liberal Democrats and one Reform

UK candidate elected to serve. Of these, 10 Labour candidates, 3 Conservatives and one Liberal Democrat were elected under first-past-the-post to represent the 14 single member GLA constituencies around the capital. The remaining 11 members (one Labour, five Conservatives, three

Green, one Liberal Democrat and one Reform UK) were elected as London-wide additional members from party lists using the D'Hondt method to allocate seats according to the number of votes cast for each party.

There was little change in the number of GLA seats won by each party since the last election in 2021. The Conservatives lost the West Central and South West constituency seats to Labour and the Liberal Democrats respectively but gained an additional list seat, a net loss of one Conservative seat. Reform UK gained one seat. For the first time ever, the Liberal Democrats won a constituency seat on the GLA.

The next set of London Mayoral and GLA elections will be held in May 2028.

**Alexa Michael is information executive at LCCI**



Sadiq Khan  
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## SPONSORED COLUMN

# RELEGATION FOR A REGULATOR?



**It is a pleasure to be writing my first column for London Business Matters, taking over the reins from my colleague Simon Underwood.**

Despite being a Welshman, a place close to my heart is Southend and many may have noticed that recent headlines have become the talk of the town. No, this is not rumours of another fire at the world's longest pleasure pier. This is in fact, Southend United Football Club.

In 2006, Southend were playing in the Championship and beat Manchester United in the League Cup, a golden moment for the club. Unfortunately, defeating football's titans was not meant to last. Poor performances were not kept strictly to the pitch - the club was suffering financially which led to numerous winding up petitions issued by HMRC over unpaid debts. The club slipped down the leagues and eventually dropped out of the Football League entirely to the National League where they remain today.

A deal is now agreed to sell the club, however, ongoing delays resulted in a further winding up petition meaning the club's existence is again under threat. After 14 years, it's a story that continues to roll on, one as drawn out as the never-ending Fast and Furious film franchise.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time a historic football club has endured a similar fate. Clubs such as Derby County, Portsmouth FC and, most recently, Torquay United, have all

struggled and ended up in administration. While these clubs survived, in the worst-case scenario, clubs can be expelled and fall out of existence, such as Bury FC and Macclesfield Town.

Why does this keep happening you ask or for those non-football fans, Gareth – get to the point. Owners of clubs are under huge pressure with increased demands for success, competitive leagues, and over-inflated player wages. Success can lead to higher reward, however, more clubs are taking risks to reach their goals, over-extending themselves financially meaning we may see in the future more clubs in trouble.

There was hope for fans when the government announced plans for a Football Regulator - meaning bad owners could be forced to sell clubs. Frustratingly, this has been placed on hold.

As you read this column, we'll know the outcome of Southend's latest winding up petition. The hope is Southend United lives another day. If it's the alternative, it further cements the need for a regulator to prevent further losses of our old, traditional football clubs.

**Gareth Rees is a Senior Manager in the Menzies Business Recovery team based in the London office.**

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**MENZIES**  
BRIGHTER THINKING



## Inspiring the City community

**Paternoster Square in the City has been providing the backdrop for some stunning wildlife sculptures fashioned by Gillie and Marc, creators of hybrid characters Rabbitwoman and Dogman.**

### Front and centre

The creators say that their mission is to "fill the world with inspiring public art that spreads messages of love, equality, conservation and hope. As public sculpture artists and wildlife activists, our method is to put wildlife front and centre in cities across the planet, making unforgettable experiences and recreating connections with the wild world. We aim to inspire a community that passionately works for change and unity so we can all live in a better world tomorrow."

**www.  
gillieandmarc.  
com**



# Promoting the business agenda

by Vittoria Zerbini

LCCI's quarterly *Capital 500* and *London's Economy: A Local Authority-Level Analysis* reports shed light on the economic landscape of the city. SMEs, already concerned about inflation, find themselves amidst prevailing disparities among boroughs. The unforeseen announcement of an early General Election prompted LCCI to unveil its manifesto, urging political parties to adopt a business-centric agenda.

The unforeseen announcement of an early General Election prompted LCCI to unveil its manifesto, urging political parties to adopt a business-centric agenda.

## Business focus

LCCI chief executive Karim Fatehi MBE urged political parties to prioritise business concerns. Key issues, he said, included skills shortages, unfair business rates, infrastructure planning, and high crime rates. Fatehi emphasised



that London's business success was crucial for the UK's prosperity. He expressed LCCI's intention to engage with parties to address these concerns and develop a strategic plan for enhancing productivity and economic growth.



## Inflation

London businesses cite inflation as their top concern ahead of the mayoral election, according to the Capital 500 survey for Q2. Despite an improved inflation outlook, 60 per cent of firms are more worried about it compared to last year. Cashflow has declined, with high business and energy costs persisting. Firms remain optimistic, with 35 per cent expecting improvement and 30 per cent anticipating economic growth over the next year.

## Pedicab regulation

Karim Fatehi welcomed the Royal Assent of the Pedicabs (London) Bill. He expressed the need for regulation to curb rogue operators, ensuring visitor safety and fair pricing. Fatehi praised the government for addressing the issue and showed support for TfL's role in maintaining London's transport standards.



## Economic disparities

A report by LCCI and Centre for London underscores significant economic disparities across the city's boroughs. While central London drives the majority of economic activity and productivity, outer London faces challenges with lower-paying jobs and educational attainment. Key findings include sluggish productivity growth and high levels of deprivation in certain areas like Barking & Dagenham. Policymakers are urged to address these discrepancies through tailored solutions and greater devolution to boroughs, aiming for inclusive and sustainable growth citywide.

Vittoria Zerbini is media assistant at LCCI



# On display

**Two of the five museums shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2024 are in the capital.**

The National Portrait Gallery reopened last June after a huge refurbishment and a massive increase in the number of portraits on display. There has also been an effort to better represent the diversity of the UK's history: 48 per cent of portraits in the post-1900 galleries are of women and 11 per cent of the works on display are of ethnic minorities.

## Interactive

East London's Young V&A opened last July. The building underwent a £13 million restoration and has been transformed into an interactive space centred around children. There are three permanent galleries called Play, Imagine and Design as well as more than 2,000 toys, characters and artworks.

Also on the shortlist are Craven Museum in Skipton, North Yorkshire, Dundee Contemporary Arts and Manchester Museum.



Images, top left to right: Craven Museum © Hydar Dewachi / Art Fund 2024; Dundee Contemporary Arts © Erika Stevenson; Manchester Museum © Jason Lock; The National Portrait Gallery © David Parry; Victoria and Albert Museum, London © David Parry.

## SPONSORED COLUMN

# New Tax Year Planning – Start Early

This new tax year starting on 6 April, brings a range of changes that could affect your financial planning.



Mike Hardy

## The start of the new tax year will see many allowances and tax bands frozen once again.

In reality these freezes are tax increases as the government has effectively allowed inflation to determine how much greater a proportion of your income and estate should pass to the Treasury. Had the allowances and bands all been increased in line with inflation, then they would be rising by 6.7% for 2024/25, using the standard yardstick of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation to the previous September.

## However, not all elements of the tax system are frozen:

- The dividend allowance will halve again to just £500, a tenth of the level at which it started life in 2016/17.
- The capital gains tax (CGT) annual exemption will also halve, to £3,000, the same level as in 1981/82.
- If you are self-employed, you will pay income tax on the profits you make in the tax year rather than across your financial year. You may also be paying an element of extra income tax because of the spreading of profits in the 2023/24 transitional year.

would reinstate the lifetime allowance if it formed the new government.

- If you live in Scotland, some of your income tax bands will widen, but others will shrink. You will also gain a sixth income tax band, the 45% advanced rate band, covering non-savings, non-dividend taxable income between £62,430 and £125,140. Above that figure, the top rate will rise to 48%.

Tax planning is often focused on the end of the tax year, however, there is a case to be made for 'year beginning planning'. For example, you may be able to save tax over the year by rearranging ownership of investments with your spouse or civil partner in April. Similarly, if you place funds in an Individual Savings Account (ISA) or a pension at the start of the tax year, you will avoid having to consider any income or CGT on that element of your investments for the rest of 2024/25.

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- The pensions lifetime allowance (£1,073,100 generally) will disappear from 6 April 2024. However, you could be forgiven for thinking it has continued because of new restrictions on tax-free lump sum payments.
- In any case, the Labour Party said in 2023 that it

# Creating an environment for SMEs to thrive

by Chris Hayward

**“The City of London Corporation’s growth and development plan for the Square Mile – City Plan 2024 – will help to secure continued prosperity for local businesses, as well as its residents and visitors, for the decades to come.**

Central to the plan is the creation of an environment where SMEs can thrive. LCCI and the City of London Chamber, who support the initiative, are right to point to the importance of business incubation centres for SMEs which “have been shown to be critical for sustainable business growth” and support “new entrants to the markets.”

## Growth

As the political leader of the City of London Corporation, I couldn’t agree more. More than 21,600 SMEs call the City of London their home and last year has seen growth in SMEs with more in the City than at any other point in the last five years. Whilst our financial and legal service sectors remain strong, tech is the fastest growing sector over the last year, with the highest jobs growth and 130 additional firms joining us here.

It is, therefore, critical that our SMEs have the support they need in order to grow, whether it be access to space, finance, data, networks, or expertise. This is something the City Corporation will deliver on, which is why the LCCI’s letter of support for City Plan 2040, is so timely.

## Actions

I recently launched our first SME Strategy at the Guildhall, through which we are committing to a number of actions, alongside LCCI, Federation

of Small Businesses, Company of Entrepreneurs and others:

- First, de-silo our operations and increase visibility of our business-facing support so we can explain to businesses what support is available in a way that is clear, comprehensive, and accessible.
- Second, increase our partnership working to add value to the existing SME offer – joining up what is generally a confusing and fragmented support environment, and adding value where we can. This recommendation seeks to provide a front door to the business support available across the City, from LCCI to London Universities and our Livery.
- And most importantly, develop a new, targeted support offer aimed at early growth companies and under-represented groups in line with our wider economic goals as a Corporation.

## Support

As a result, local SMEs can expect support from us in five key ways:

- The first is through access to finance, working closely with institutions such as the British Business Bank and High Street banks, to help City businesses navigate what finance options are open to them.
- Access to data, supporting SME’s access to the City Corporation’s wide range of business databases, to

empower them with valuable data-driven insights and helping them mitigate risks and capitalise on growth opportunities.

- Then there is access to space, supporting growing firms to locate and expand in the City through activation of empty units and meanwhile use.

- Through access to expertise, we will build on existing in-house knowledge to strengthen the City’s offer and work more closely with City organisations such as the Company of Entrepreneurs, as well as offer free mentoring in partnership with the Association of Business Mentors.

- Furthermore, through access to networks, we will create a vibrant business environment by supporting networking opportunities and enhancing our existing events programme.

In the City, total employment over the period 2016 - 2051 is projected to increase from 557,000 to 731,000, an increase of 31.2 per cent, so it is crucial that our commitment to SMEs remains unwavering. This strategy will ensure they have the support needed to thrive long into the future. ”

**Chris Hayward is chair of the policy and resources committee of the City of London Corporation**

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/supporting-businesses/city-corporations-sme-strategy>



# Championing London

**No London (or even UK) teams were involved but the capital did have the honour of hosting two big-ticket sporting finals earlier this summer.**

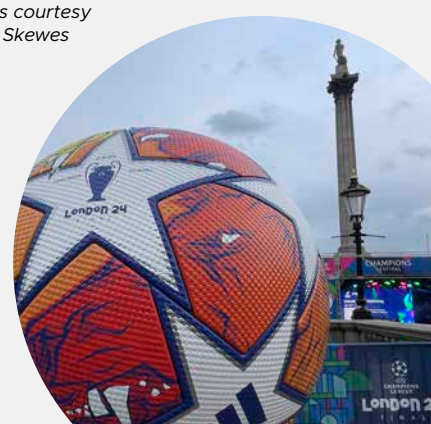
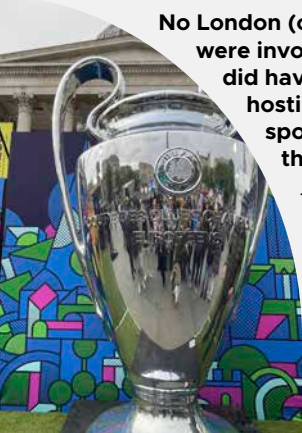
Tottenham Hotspur Stadium was the venue for Toulouse and Leinster battling it out for

the rugby union Investec Champions Cup – the French side shaded it in a game that went to extra time.

## Prolific

In the equivalent football tournament final, Real Madrid beat Borussia Dortmund at Wembley, extending their record as the most prolific winners of the Champions League. The cup is pictured on display before the final at an event at Trafalgar Square.

*Photographs courtesy of Elizabeth Skewes Castañeda*





## SPONSORED COLUMN

## Anna Bose of ADBH Advisory

**Globally, more voters than ever in history will head to the polls, as at least 64 countries elect a new government, which is creating a unique economic climate – companies looking to new countries to safeguard businesses.**

The UK, despite the uncertainty of an election in July, is still attracting new business opportunities and with near to full employment, vacancies are attracting workers from overseas.

### **What do I need to think about, when employing a non-UK national?**

Firstly, where is your prospective employee? If they are in the UK, how are they in the UK? If they are overseas, where are they?

There are a number of immigration categories where a non-UK national is able to work for you in the UK without you needing to sponsor them. For instance:

- Holders of Ancestry visas
- Holders of dependant status: where their partner is in the UK under one of the work categories
- Holders of spouse visas

If none of the above apply, then are you an UK trading entity or thinking about establishing an UK trading entity, then you may be able to obtain a sponsor licence. With a sponsor licence you can sponsor non-UK nationals either:

1. In a full-time permanent capacity
2. Temporary employment role
3. Temporary contractual role.

### **What is a Sponsor Licence and how hard can it be to get one?**

A Sponsor Licence is a trusted relationship between the UK employer and the UK immigration Department. When the Licence is granted, the UK Government has a number of expectations of the UK employer, known as sponsorship obligations. These obligations don't just relate to immigration, but compliance with all areas of UK law and practice.

Before deciding on the type of sponsor licence, assess the following:

- The type of contract you are offering individuals: will they be remote working, contractors, full-time/ permanent or temporarily in the UK
- The type of jobs you are looking to fill
- Who would be managing the compliance and obligations of holding the sponsor licence – would it be an UK employee with or without assistance of an immigration provider
- The cost, as it would depends on the following:
- Whether you are considered a small/ medium or large company.
- The duration of the permission: less or more than 3 years.
- The job type: is it considered a shortage occupation, STEM or is it a PhD occupation.
- How old is your candidate?
- If the above apply, there could be discounts to the overall costs.

The main complexity with the sponsor licence application is that, if an application is refused, you are unable to reapply for 6 months. The rules surrounding which entities can apply, the evidence required to be submitted and whether a licence is required for each related entity in the UK is the challenge.

To make sure you get it right or to discuss alternative UK immigration options, please contact Anna Bose of [anna@adbhadvictory.com](mailto:anna@adbhadvictory.com)



# Coming up roses

**The capital is blessed not only with West End and central London theatres but also with a chain of superb venues in the outer boroughs. Rose Theatre in Kingston is one of those and has established a reputation as one of the most exciting in the UK since opening in 2008.**

### **Uplifting**

Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* played there for a two-week run in the spring. It deserved a bigger audience for its superb take on Tennessee Williams' memory play around an evening when a mother, son and daughter host a potential suitor at dinner. It is one of Williams' early plays in a prolific output. He described it as the saddest he had ever

written and "full of pain." It was certainly sad – and uplifting too.

### **Outstanding**

The staging was spare but imaginative and effective, and the four-person cast was outstanding – Kasper Hilton-Hille (narrator and son), Geraldine Somerville (mother), Natalie Kimmerling (daughter) and Zacchaeus Kayode (suitor). Kimmerling and Kayode's dance sequences were particularly effecting.

Forthcoming Rose productions include an adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go*, Mike Leigh's *Abigail's Party* and (in the run-up to Christmas), a new version of *Robin Hood* by Chris Bush.

[www.rosetheatre.org](http://www.rosetheatre.org)

@ Marc Brenner, production photographer







# Keeping the City safe

by Tijs Broeke

“The City of London is the world’s safest business district and a leading destination for workers, residents, and visitors alike.

While it is a small geographical area, we are home to 615,000 workers and over 8,000 people who live here.

In recent years, the City has also developed into a major tourist destination with a busy night time economy with nearly 1,000 licensed premises, attracting millions of visitors a year.

## Unique

Having a first-class, dedicated police force that serves one of the most densely populated areas in London is a unique selling point for our City.

As the newly elected chair of the City of London Police Authority Board, I am committed to working hard with colleagues from the City of London Police to ensure crime victims are at the heart of everything we do. Together we will accelerate our work to support business and make the force the most inclusive police service in the country.

## Value for money

The Police Authority Board plays an important role in keeping the City safe. We are responsible for holding the Commissioner of the City of London Police to account in running an effective and efficient service: ensuring value for money in the way the force is run; and setting policing priorities considering the views of the local community.

Together we organise regular events to support our businesses and residents and listen to their views on what our policing priorities should be.

Through this process, we produce a Policing Plan that details our clear focus on public trust and community policing, finances, counter-terrorism and the fight against fraud, economic and cyber-crime.

These are vital components in keeping our City workers, residents, visitors and the country safe, and despite the national challenges policing faces, I believe that the City Police is well placed to meet them.

## Connections

Over the past year, the City Police has focused on strengthening connections with business and our wider communities, which is vital to effective policing. We are tackling violence against women and girls, keeping the City’s night time economy safe and combatting anti-social behaviour.

As the National Lead Force for fraud, economic, cyber and business crime, the City of London Police works hard to strengthen the UK’s economic security. It investigates some of the country’s most complex cases of fraud, sets the national strategy and co-ordinates the operational response. However, we know that policing has its challenges and that is why the government, and the private and public sectors, must work together to support the UK’s overall response.

## Cyber-crime

One of the ways in which the City of London Police works with businesses



Tijs Broeke @London Metropolitan University

is through its Cyber Griffin programme which supports business and individuals in the Square Mile to protect themselves from cyber-crime.

The service also hosts Action Fraud, the national reporting centre for fraud and cyber-crime. This year will see its replacement with a new £150 million platform. The enhanced system will streamline victim reporting and empower swift police intervention for law enforcement to catch more fraudsters.

With 38 per cent of all UK crime being fraud-related, the City of London Police serves a crucial role in the co-ordination of the policing response: identifying, disrupting and prosecuting fraud and economic crime across the country.

The City of London Corporation itself is investing £596 million to construct a new civic hub on Fleet Street. The Salisbury Square Development will house a flagship legal facility for His Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service and a new state-of-the-art headquarters for the City of London Police, which will equip officers with the latest technology and facilities, supporting them in their role as lead force combatting economic crime and fraud across the UK. ”

Tijs Broeke is chair of the City of London Police Authority Board

[www.cityoflondon.police.uk](http://www.cityoflondon.police.uk)





Sarah Vowles, Karim Fatehi MBE and Amy Lamé

# A night at the museum

**Guests of LCCI were recently transported back through 3,000 years of Egyptian history at a prestige reception at the British Museum.**

## Reunited

The event included a private viewing of *Michelangelo: the last decades* – an exhibition which looks at the last 30 years of Michelangelo's remarkable life when his return to Rome – having been summoned by Pope Clement VII to paint a fresco of the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel – brought him new commissions and reunited him with some of his closest friends.

## Crucial link

London as a 24-hour economy, the capital's world-renowned cultural and hospitality offering, and entrepreneurship were key themes of the evening, highlighting the crucial link between business and the arts.

LCCI chief executive Karim

**London as a 24-hour economy, the capital's world-renowned cultural and hospitality offering and entrepreneurship were key themes of the evening, highlighting the crucial link between business and the arts.**



Fatehi MBE hosted the evening. Amy Lamé, night czar at the Greater London Authority and Sarah Vowles, Smirnov Family curator of Italian and French prints and drawings were guest speakers.

**The British Museum are offering LCCI members a complimentary opportunity to view the *Michelangelo: the last decades* exhibition until Sunday 28 July 2024**

**To take up this offer visit [https://lnkd.in/em74n\\_hA](https://lnkd.in/em74n_hA)**

## SPONSORED COLUMN

## Unlock Global Potential with Qrispy: The Smart Phone Number Communication Platform

*Get business phone numbers and advanced communication features from Qrispy to bridge local presence and global reach for impactful business growth.*



In today's fast-paced business landscape, effective communication is paramount to success. With the ever-increasing demand for streamlined operations, businesses are turning to innovative solutions to meet their needs. Multiple phone number systems offer global reach and enhanced functionality.

At the forefront of this revolution is Qrispy, a provider of multiple phone number solutions. Whether it is toll-free, national, local, or mobile numbers, Qrispy empowers businesses with the flexibility to tailor their communication strategy to meet specific requirements. By incorporating a cloud number into their workflow, business owners can strike the perfect balance between work and personal life, ensuring uninterrupted communication without compromising privacy.

### Unpacking the Features of the Cloud Phone Number System

In an increasingly globalized world, language barriers can hinder effective communication. Qrispy addresses this challenge by offering transcription and translation services for call recordings, messages, voicemails, ensuring that nothing gets lost in translation. This invaluable feature empowers businesses to bridge linguistic divides and foster meaningful connections with clients and partners worldwide.

### AI's Impressive Role in Communication

What sets it apart is its array of advanced features, powered

by cutting-edge AI technology. The AI voicemail feature allows users to customize their voicemail greetings, infusing personality and professionalism into every interaction. The call recording feature enables businesses to capture vital information and glean insights from past conversations. With AI voice-to-text and text-to-voice features, you can convert your vocalizations into text and text into speech, making communication faster and more efficient. To facilitate solutions on a global scale, the AI translation feature allows for seamless translation in any desired language.

### Revolutionizing Team Management Practices

Qrispy smart communication platform facilitates seamless operation and efficiency within teams. With dedicated inboxes for each number, teams can manage messages and calls, staying focused. Qrispy's intuitive interface allows users to set customized business hours, automatically managing call routing and message responses based on their availability.

Embracing smart communication platforms with multiple phone numbers is not just a matter of convenience; it is a strategic imperative for modern businesses. Organizations can elevate their communication capabilities, strengthen client relationships, and drive sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

[www.qrispy.com](https://www.qrispy.com)

# Forty years of the Thames Barrier

**The Thames Barrier has been safeguarding London from the perils of flooding for four decades**

Officially opened by HM Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh in 1984, the barrier has become one of the largest moveable flood barriers in the world. Previously floods had been of epic proportions as recorded, for example, by Samuel Pepys in 1663. More recently, flooding in 1928 and 1953 caused the loss of life of hundreds of people.

## Disaster risk

Since it opened, the Thames Barrier has shielded London from rising tides. It has reduced disaster risk and ensured the city's prosperity.

The barrier, naturally, is much appreciated by professionals such as the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) and they have spoken of its "legacy of protection" and how it "propels us towards a future of resilience and adaptation. It serves as a cornerstone in our commitment to navigating London's flood challenges with innovation and foresight".

## Extreme weather

ICE points out that London's flood management faces tougher challenges. "Climate change worsens extreme weather, especially for low-lying areas. Also, rising sea levels, old infrastructure, and rapid urban growth add to the complexity. These need innovative solutions and united efforts."

ICE maintains that although the Thames Barrier remains at the forefront of flood-defining strategies, it cannot stand alone.

## Strategy

The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan, produced by the Environment Agency, is a comprehensive strategy devised to address these challenges and outlines various options for strengthening flood defences and mitigating risks.

The plan identifies critical thresholds that necessitate decisive action: from the point where current defences become inadequate to the scenario where even an improved Thames

Barrier, coupled with enhanced upstream and downstream defences, may not suffice to hold back the floods.

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency)

[www.ice.org.uk](http://www.ice.org.uk)



# Taking off in green skies



LCCI's aviation programme – *Green Skies* – has been especially active this year. In the spring, Natasha

Robinson, deputy director at the Department for Transport spoke at a roundtable session which covered the

development of sustainable aviation fuels and government and industry priorities in decarbonisation.

## Major role

Subsequently London's airports joined a panel session to discuss supply chains and explore the major role that the aviation sector plays in supporting the UK's economy and its millions of businesses.

The panel – chaired by LCCI's James Watkins – comprised Andy Hayes, head of procurement, airport services, London Stansted Airport, Christopher Howe, capital procurement lead, London Gatwick, Fiona McGlone, consultant, Luton Rising, Isabelle Liu, supply chain manager, Heathrow, and Vic Chetty, senior stakeholder engagement manager, Heathrow.



# Women go for gold

**The first Women's International and British Games (also called the 'Women's Olympiad') was held at Stamford Bridge in South West London on 4 August 1924. At that time, only men could participate in track and field events at the Summer Olympics**

The early 1920s saw a growing interest in women's sport, following the success of the 1922 Women's World Games in Paris and the Women's Olympiads held yearly in Monaco between 1921 and 1923. The Women's Amateur Athletic Association (WAAA), established in 1922, organised the first official British women's championships in track and field events in 1923 in Downham, South East London.

## Pioneer

National newspapers Sporting Life, News of the World and the Daily Mirror joined forces with WAAA and Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale to organise the 1924 Women's Olympiad. The event was chaired by Alice Milliat, a pioneer of women's sport.

Women from eight nations (Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Switzerland, UK and USA) competed in the games but the Canadian and US women only participated in exhibition events like cycling, netball and gymnastics.

**Women from eight nations (Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Switzerland, UK and USA) competed in the games**

The female athletes participated in 12 track and field events, including various track races, four different relay races, race walking (a foot race where one foot must stay in contact with the ground), high jump, long jump, discus throw, shot put and javelin. There were 25,000 spectators.

Nearly all the gold and silver medals were awarded to French or UK

athletes. Of the 12 gold medals awarded, only two went to a French or Swiss athlete, while just two silver medals were won by Czechs. However, seven out of 12 bronze medals were awarded to women from Czechoslovakia, Belgium and Switzerland.

## World records

Seven new world records were set at the 1924 women's games, namely double winner Mary Lines (UK) in 120 yard hurdling which she completed in 18.2 seconds and 250 metre running (34.6 seconds), Edith Trickey (UK) in 1,000 metre running (3.08.2 minutes), Albertine Regel (France) in 1,000 metre race walking (5.14 minutes), Elise van Truyen (Belgium) in high jump (1.51 metres / 4 ft 11½ inches), Violette Morris (France) in both discus (30.12 metres / 98.82 ft) and shot put (19.95 metre / 65.4 ft) and Louise Groslimond (Switzerland) in javelin 47.65 metres / 156 ft ¼ inch).

Some women went on to greater sporting achievements. Silver medalist Eileen Edwards won gold in the 250 metre race at the 1926 Women's World Games in Gothenburg, while her fellow 1924 silver medalist Vera Searle again took silver in the same race. Elise van Truyen competed in the 4 x 100 metre relay race at the 1928 Summer Olympics in Amsterdam, the first Olympiad where women could participate in gymnastics and athletics.

## Guest of honour

Sadly, not all the women covered themselves in glory. Double gold medalist Violette Morris was a Nazi supporter who was later banned from participating in sporting competitions.

Adolf Hitler invited her to the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin where she was a guest of honour. During the Second World War, she collaborated with the Nazis and Vichy France and was killed by the French Resistance in April 1944.

## Boost

The 1924 Women's Olympiad gave a huge boost to women's sports. The event was repeated in 1925 at the same venue.

The second Women's World Games in Gothenburg took place in 1926 – they were held four times between 1922 and 1934. At the 1928 Olympics, American Betty Robinson became the first female 100 metre winner while Canadian Ethel Catherwood won the first female Olympic high jump. Polish athlete Halina Konopacka won discus while German Lina Radke took gold in the 800 metre race. Women were truly established in Olympic sports.

**100 years ago in London is researched and written by Alexa Michael**



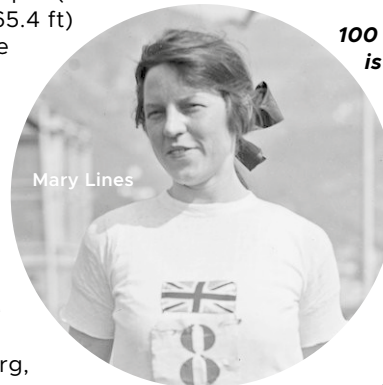
Hilda Hatt



Violette Morris



Marguerite Radideau



Mary Lines



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# Gearing up for the Olympics

Peter Bishop's Paris diary

There were two months to go before the start of the Paris Olympics when I visited the French capital in May and there was no escaping from the event, the third time the city has hosted it – 1900 and 1924 were the other occasions. It was, of course, on the 2012 shortlist and to the surprise of many was piped by London.

At Gare du Nord, the Eurostar terminal, Paris 2024 merchandise greets travellers while banners on the boulevards and displays in shops are constant reminders. Most of all though, a large number of grandstands, in various stages of completion, are in evidence.

## Ambitious

This is because, for the first time in modern Olympic history, the opening ceremony will not involve a parade around the main stadium. Instead, in a very ambitious innovation, the 10,500 athletes will be transported along a six-kilometre route in a flotilla from the Austerlitz bridge to Trocadéro, situated immediately across the Seine from the Eiffel Tower.

The viewing platforms along the river have been installed to accommodate up to 300,000 spectators – revised



down from 600,000 for security reasons. The Eiffel Tower grandstand will also be used as the vantage point

for the beach volleyball while other installations along the river will be the venues for archery, skateboarding and BMX freestyle. Outside the central area, Versailles will host the equestrian and modern pentathlon events, and Roland Garros the tennis tournament. Even further out, the sailing medals will be competed for in Versailles, while the surfing – yes it features in these Olympics – is in Tahiti!

## Legacy

As with the London games, Paris is aiming for an Olympic legacy which will help re-shape the capital, providing a legacy of urban renewal and greater participation in sport. The French Stratford is Seine-Saint-Denis, a northern Paris suburb, the location for the Olympic village housing the athletes while the local stadium – Stade de France – will be the focal point for the athletics, for many the high point of the games.

It is France so the food is expected to be of a high order. But if the British competitors (and visitors – over half a million Brits have bought tickets) feel an urgent need for more familiar fare, there is a solution. Londoner Calum Franklin runs *Public House*, just north of the Tuilleries, a spacious restaurant

which serves scotch eggs, braised beef pie, fish and chips and sticky toffee pudding. It was doing good business when I looked in.

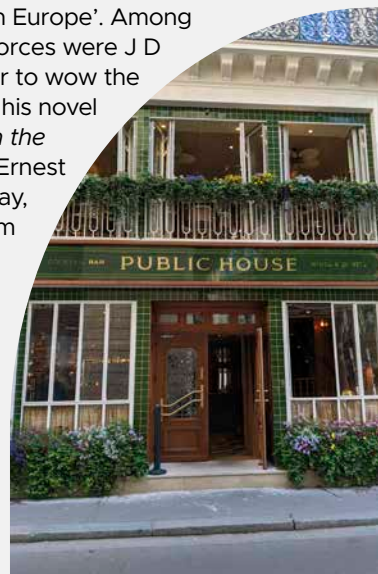
I was on the way to the Ritz Hotel in Place Vendome. Why? Because this summer marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Paris, an amazing time called by one historian 'the biggest party in Europe'. Among the American forces were J D

Saling, later to wow the world with his novel *Catcher in the Rye*, and Ernest Hemingway, after whom the hotel

bar is named. The walls are adorned with Hemingway memorabilia – including letters written on hotel notepaper and front covers of Time and Life magazines featuring the daredevil writer.

## Losing out

There have been reports that London has been losing out to Paris because of the post-Brexit rules on VAT with not only foreign tourists but Brits crossing the Channel for shopping. The number of English accents in *Galleries Lafayette* supported that and indeed an estimated £780 million was spent by UK residents in France last year. This is something LCCI is on to; the need for changes to the VAT rules is featured in the Chamber's UK election manifesto. Better news for London though with reports that the UK capital had resumed its position (overtaking Paris) as Europe's largest equity market. Let's see how we get on in the Olympics.





# International partnerships are fuelling green energy growth in Africa

**Yinka Oyegoke explores how key players like the UK and Denmark are advancing Africa's green energy initiatives, aligning with global sustainability goals while fostering economic growth and social equity**

**Africa's renewable energy potential is immense. The continent could generate over 300 GW of renewable energy by 2030, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency. This transformation can address energy poverty and catalyse economic development. However, achieving this requires significant investment and expertise - areas where international partnerships play a crucial role.**

## Transformative

The UK's investment in solar energy across Africa highlights the transformative power of international partnerships. Initiatives like the Solar Nigeria programme have brought solar power to schools, hospitals and homes, providing reliable electricity to underserved communities. These projects reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create jobs and improve living standards, demonstrating the benefits of renewable energy investment. Additionally, the UK's involvement in Ethiopia's solar power projects showcases their commitment to expanding clean energy access

and fostering sustainable development.

## Benefits

Denmark, a global leader in wind energy, exemplifies successful international collaboration. Danish company Vestas has spearheaded the development of wind farms in Kenya and South Africa. The Lake Turkana Wind Power project in Kenya, Africa's largest wind farm, supplies 310 MW of clean energy to the national grid, showcasing how Danish expertise and funding can drive substantial environmental and economic benefits.

## Social and economic impact

International partnerships in green energy foster economic growth and social development. The Africa Sustainable Trade Consortium underscores the transformative effects of these initiatives on local communities. Clean energy projects



generate employment, enhance educational and health services and promote inclusive economic growth. Solar projects in Nigeria have created thousands of jobs and improved educational outcomes by providing reliable electricity to schools.

## Opportunities

For the business community, Africa's green energy sector presents significant investment opportunities. By supporting these initiatives, businesses can contribute to global climate goals while tapping into one of the fastest-growing markets in the energy sector.

## Strategic partnerships

The role of international partnerships in advancing Africa's green energy initiatives is pivotal. Leveraging global expertise, funding and technology, these collaborations unlock Africa's renewable energy potential, drive sustainable development and contribute to global climate goals. Business leaders and investors are encouraged to explore these opportunities, contributing to a sustainable future and reaping economic benefits. They are also invited to engage with Africa's renewable energy initiatives through strategic partnerships and innovative solutions. By investing in this promising sector, they can drive meaningful change, create a legacy of sustainability and capitalise on new market opportunities.

**Yinka Oyegoke is chief executive of Africa Sustainable Trade**

[www.africasustainabletrade.com](http://www.africasustainabletrade.com)

"Wind farm, Lake Turkana, Kenya" © DFID/Will Crowne (Licensed under CC BY 4.0)







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# SME exports in the doldrums

**The percentage of SME exporters reporting increased exports has been static since the pandemic and has weakened slightly since the end of 2023. SMEs are less likely to report increased exports compared to before the pandemic and Brexit. These are the disappointing top lines from the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Trade Conference Outlook conducted in the first quarter of this year.**

In Q4 2018, 28 per cent of SME exporters reported an increase in overseas sales (4 points higher than Q1 2024) and 16 per cent reported a decrease (7 points lower than Q1 2024).

By contrast, domestic demand for SME exporters remains consistently more buoyant, with 35 per cent reporting an increase in domestic sales in Q1 2024, against just 24 per cent for overseas sales.

## Volatile

The proportion of businesses reporting decreased overseas sales began to rise

in the run-up to Brexit and has remained stubbornly higher ever since.

The situation remains more volatile for SME manufacturers than other sectors, with 27 per cent reporting an increase in exports, 46 per cent no change and 27 per cent a decrease.

This compares to SME services exporters supplying end customers where 22 per cent saw an increase, 51 per cent remained constant and 27 per cent saw a decrease. Firms supplying services to other businesses saw the most stable performance – with 22 per cent reporting an increase in exports, 59 per cent seeing no change and only 18 per cent reporting a decrease.

## Fragile

BCC head of trade policy William Bain said that the outlook remained fragile for 2024 “notwithstanding forecasts of stronger global trade growth, due to ongoing geo-political uncertainty and growing concerns about the resilience of supply chains.

“There is also the spectre of further trade barriers with the EU, as the UK’s regulatory divergence increases.

“But the UK’s brand and competitiveness remain strong, so we must lean more heavily into the advantages we possess. We are already a world-leader when it comes to digital trade, and we must continue to push for its wider uptake.

## Incentives

“Business needs to work with government to put in place a framework that makes use of all the advantages the UK has, to keep us at the top table, and to access incentives for our exports overseas.

“We must also look again at fixing some of the growing trade barriers with the EU. It is still our biggest trading partner, but firms continue to express huge frustration with the complexity and costs involved.”

[www.britishchambers.org.uk](http://www.britishchambers.org.uk)

# Packing them in

**ATA Carnet issuing body Business West in Bristol went above and beyond to highlight Peru’s entry into the global scheme for temporary imports and exports earlier this year**



**Peruvian food prepared by Epic Caterers, a quiz (first prize – a much-coveted Paddington toy), and a couple of alpacas featured in the celebrations.**

## Streamline

ATA Carnets streamline the temporary export process for goods and equipment, allowing businesses, musicians, film productions and other organisations to trade internationally with reduced customs complications.

Peru’s inclusion in the scheme

expands its availability to 79 territories worldwide, enhancing global trade opportunities.

## Excitement

Saudi Arabia, the Philippines and Georgia are the next three countries lined up to join the scheme, later this year or early next. UKNATACO, the body which oversees the issue of ATA Carnets in the UK, is waiting with some excitement to discover what Bristol will cook up for those accessions.

[www.uknataco.co.uk](http://www.uknataco.co.uk)



# Overseas business opportunities

A selection of business co-operation offers made by companies wishing to work with UK firms taken from the Enterprise Europe Network Partnership Opportunities Database. To find out more about these and similar opportunities contact Innovate UK Business Growth at [contact@innovateukedge.ukri.org](mailto:contact@innovateukedge.ukri.org)

## **Austria**

This business has created a robust project management tool for the construction industry, aiding in project planning, resource allocation, budget management, and real-time tracking. It enhances efficiency, communication, and cost control, ideal for construction companies, project managers, and contractors. The company is looking for strategic partnerships, reseller agreements, joint ventures, and distribution deals..

REF: BOAT20240610006

## **Romania**

A producer of cold-pressed oils made from sunflower seeds, armor seeds, flax seeds, rapeseed, soybeans or sea buckthorn fruits, without additives or preservatives and not processed with chemicals, is looking for partners to conclude distribution services agreements.

REF: BORO20240612001

## **Greece**

A pioneering digital twin platform designed to create a decentralised ecosystem that enables seamless mobility for passengers. By facilitating the exchange of data between operators and passengers, it enhances information accessibility and service optimisation in mass transit systems.

REF: BOGR20240611015

## **Poland**

SME produces lift components, including overspeed governors and electromagnetic safety gears. Their products, suitable for cargo and passenger lifts (300kg to 20t), are safety-tested and European-certified. The company employs highly trained personnel and has its own design office, ensuring custom solutions and top-quality products. They seek

international partners for supplier and outsourcing agreements.

REF: BOPL20240607021

## **Germany**

This innovative biotech company has developed a fermentation process to convert industrial carbon dioxide emissions (CO2) into valuable natural biopolymers that can be used to manufacture products from biodegradable plastics. In this way, the company contributes to the reduction of CO2 emissions and plastic pollution. They seek partnerships with companies that wish to develop products from bioplastics.

REF: TODE20240610022

## **France**

A university spin-off which develops revolutionary autonomous, wireless, and battery-free microsystems for a more sustainable future. It is developing a phygital material, a multipurpose technology based on the collaboration of autonomous micro-robots to generate interactive "phygital" forms. The company is seeking an industrialisable technology to manufacture low-roughness 3D quasi-sphere shells.

REF: TRFR20240611023

## **Malta**

Company offers customised product development, design and 3D printing services using a wide variety of materials, colours, textures, and mechanical properties. The company is specialised in design for additive manufacturing services at scale, including fused deposition modelling, digital light processing and selective laser sintering. They are seeking international clients who require their services.

REF: BOMT20240609003

## **Spain**

Manufacturer of garden and forest machinery, spare parts, and consumables. It offers a wide catalogue and provides quality service worldwide. The company offers a diverse selection of forest and garden machinery under its own specialised brand, providing a wide range of high-quality products. They are looking for importers or large distributors/dealers to establish a long-term partnership.

REF: BOES20240607020

## **Sweden**

This company handles everything from small to large industrial customer requests. Expert co-ordination of complex logistics networks simplifies the transport process for clients, offering a seamless service experience. The company has long experience in the industry and therefore a robust network of trusted partners across Europe that ensures high-quality service and the ability to quickly handle unexpected challenges.

REF: BOSE20240604009

## **Lithuania**

Specialist manufacturer in wood processing activities produces a wide range of products, from furniture components to building structures: garden cabins, summer houses of glued wood, timber, frame panel and module houses. The company is experienced in managing export projects across the EU and other markets for over 10 years. They are interested in any type of partnership agreement.

REF: BOLT20240611008

## **Italy**

An ICT company has led the exploitation of a solution that provides accurate information of the user's position, including environments where typical commercial solutions fail e.g. outdoor-indoor transitions. The company seeks investors to support further development. This technology stems from an EU project on DRS-02-Technologies for first responders.

REF: TOIT20240611024

## **Netherlands**

Company utilises 'mixed reality' glasses that project holograms around individuals while allowing them to see the real world. This technology provides targeted therapy for specific patient groups. Through interactive therapy sessions, 3D informational modules, and scenario training for healthcare professionals, the company intensifies the therapeutic experience.

REF: BRNL20240606007

To obtain details of these and similar overseas business opportunities, contact Innovate UK EDGE London at [innovateukedge@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:innovateukedge@londonchamber.co.uk)



# Selling to the world

**Adan Omar argues that collaboration between the UK government and freight firms is key to accelerating the Made in the UK, Sold to the World initiative**

“Economists are optimistic that the ‘race to a trillion’ could be won earlier than the projected 2035, provided the government and businesses collaborate effectively. This collaboration is crucial for the aspiration’s success, whether resolving market access barriers, enhancing trade diplomacy or providing critical support and finance.

## Competitive edge

The ‘Made in Britain’ logo has long been synonymous with quality, representing the UK’s reputation for exporting world-class services, culture, manufactured goods, and agricultural produce. This indicates that UK-made goods and services already possess a competitive edge in the global market.

The ‘Made in the UK, Sold to the World’ policy paper emphasises the importance of working with all stakeholders, including exporters of digital, artificial intelligence, shipbuilding, and green goods and services, among others, to expedite the realisation of these ambitions.

## Pivotal

Integral to achieving the UK’s export goals are freight companies and forwarders, which play a pivotal role in ensuring the efficient and reliable transport of goods to international markets. The sector contributes an estimated 10 per cent to the UK’s non-financial business economy and £127 billion gross value added through more than 200,000 enterprises.

A recent World Bank Logistics Performance Index ranks the UK highly,

considering various indicators such as the quality of infrastructure, efficiency of clearance processes, competence of logistics services, and the timeliness of shipments reaching their destination.

## Backbone

Freight firms manage logistics from UK manufacturers to global customers, navigating complex trade regulations to ensure compliance. They are the backbone of international trade, offering knowledge and expertise that businesses can leverage to navigate the complexities of global trade. By optimising supply chains, they enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and improve reliability, thereby helping UK businesses stay competitive.

Their expertise in customs processes and sourcing advice further streamline import operations, reducing delays and costs. This support enables UK exporters to meet international demand, scale operations, and enter new markets. Freight firms act as a bridge between the UK’s small businesses, which may lack specialist exporting knowledge, and the resources they need, including how to develop an export plan, where to go for finance, how to complete the necessary paperwork, and how to comply with standards and regulations.

## Barriers

According to a 2021 government analytical paper on the economic rationale and evidence to support the export plan,

removing barriers to trade opens up new business opportunities in international markets and associated supply chains. The paper acknowledges that there is still a solid and diverse body of evidence on the barriers constraining trade from reaching its economic potential. Thus, government intervention is clearly needed to address these barriers.

Among the barriers identified are differences in regulations, product standards, and customs controls that occur unintentionally and naturally due to differences in institutional norms between countries. Yet, they directly restrict trade or discourage firms from entering the international marketplace.

## Global reach

The government should collaborate with freight companies to achieve the initiative’s goals by streamlining customs and regulatory processes. Simplified procedures will reduce administrative burdens and expedite goods movement, benefiting freight companies and UK trade. This partnership is essential for enhancing UK exports’ competitiveness and global reach. ”

**Adan Omar is director of Bramex Limited**

[www.bramex.co.uk](http://www.bramex.co.uk)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/export-strategy-made-in-the-uk-sold-to-the-world/made-in-the-uk-sold-to-the-world-web-version>



# Soft landings in Pennsylvania

**Bilateral trade opportunities between Pennsylvania and London was the subject of a recent breakfast briefing at LCCI’s City HQ**

The event explored opportunities for bilateral trade and how businesses can achieve market entry effectively and efficiently. Soft landing experts Littus were joined by senior representatives from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s international development team and the City of Philadelphia.

## Practical

Delegates also heard the practical experience of two founders of UK tech businesses that are cracking the US market – Ori Biotech and Relative Insight. The British Consul General, New York was also in attendance.

[www.littus.us](http://www.littus.us)





# Multi-talented

LCCI's chief executive, Kepp recently hosted an event in the Chamber's members lounge – *Grow your company globally from Dubai's leading free zone* – which showcased the role of DMCC, the Dubai Multi Commodities Centre



Ahmed Bin Sulayem



Hamad Buamim, Julia Onslow-Cole and Karim Fatehi MBE

## World class

The commodities exchange and free zone was created in 2002 and is home to over 24,000 companies ranging from multinational corporations to start-ups. There is a strong British business presence which benefits from DMCC's world class infrastructure.

Speakers at the event included DMCC

chief executive Ahmed Bin Sulayem, LCCI chair Julia Onslow-Cole who is a partner at Fragomen LLP and Dr Hamad Buamim, chair of DMCC board of directors, someone who has strong connections with LCCI following his 16 years as president and chief executive of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce.

[www.dmcc.ae](http://www.dmcc.ae)

# Asia-Pacific trade bloc deal

Karim Fatehi MBE, LCCI chief executive welcomed the UK's recent ratification of the deal to join the Comprehensive and Progressive agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). He commented:

**"International collaboration is vital to achieving greater shared prosperity and today's announcement is an important milestone which will provide a much-needed boost to enterprise by enabling businesses to trade more freely and unlock opportunities for expansion overseas."**

"With London as its economic engine, the UK has always been a trading nation at heart, and we are pleased that the government has seized this opportunity to create the conditions for growth."

## Straightforward

William Bain of the British Chambers of Commerce said: "There are few multi-national trade agreements like

this one. The UK's addition to this bloc will open up new opportunities for both inward and outward investment.

"Trade rules will be more favourable for manufacturers looking to sell products to other member countries and data transfers for firms in the services sector will also be more straightforward.

"Crucially, it will also give the UK a say in the bloc's future development, making it a deal that will work for our traders both now and in the future."

## Vibrant

Chambers in CPTPP current signatories also hailed this latest step forward. British Chamber of Commerce Singapore executive director David Kelly, said that being on 'on the ground', he saw every day "how vibrant and alive with opportunity the British business community is within Southeast Asia, and we look forward to championing the UK's interests alongside our colleagues throughout the CPTPP trading bloc."

## Achievement

British Chamber of Commerce in Japan executive director, Sarah Backley, said: "The UK's ratification of the CPTPP signifies an important achievement for the business world, presenting a valuable opportunity for the UK, Japan, and the other 11 member countries to come together in setting the benchmarks for global trade standards."

British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce chief executive Jennifer Lopez said the agreement was a pivotal milestone and symbolised the first free trade agreement between the UK and Malaysia. "This historic agreement not only fosters trade liberalisation but also offers expanded market access, boosts to GDP, and strategic influence, particularly benefiting sectors such as services and digital trade for both British and Malaysian enterprises. This also promises enhanced options and affordability for consumers and businesses alike, heralding a new era of economic dynamism and collaboration."



# Slovenia – gateway to central and southeast Europe

by Barbara Uranjek

**Slovenia, strategically located in central Europe, offers trade opportunities for businesses and investors. Its robust economy and business-friendly environment make it an attractive destination for trade and investment. It also boasts an export-oriented economy, sustained growth rates, and optimistic forecasts.**



## Embedded

Slovenia's export-oriented economy is deeply embedded in global supply

chains and provides instant access to EU markets, central and eastern Europe, and southeast Europe, reaching over 700 million consumers. The country's linguistic skills, cultural knowledge, and customs make it ideal for business across the Balkan region.

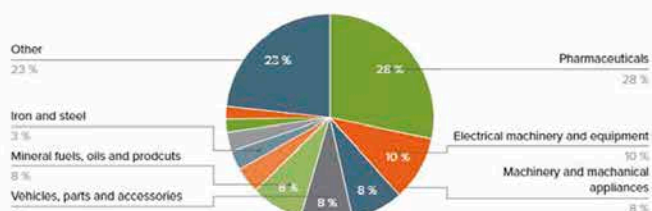
External trade represents nearly 148 per cent of Slovenia's GDP in 2022, with a merchandise trade ratio among the highest in the region. In 2022, the trade surplus was €1.3 billion, with exports accounting for 91 per cent of GDP. Slovenia's main



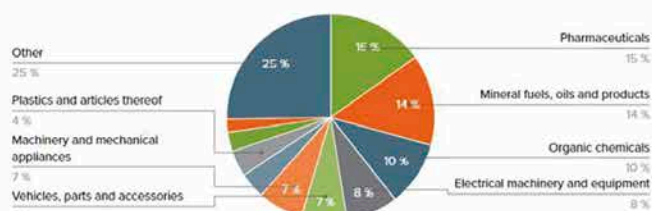
Geographical position of Slovenia

exporting partners are Germany, Italy, Croatia, Austria, and France, and it

Top 10 export products, 2022



Top 10 import products, 2022







Pixabay Lake Bled and the Julian Alps in the background

transport chain and diversifying tourist products and services. Renowned for its macroeconomic stability, Slovenia ranked 37th among 190 world economies in the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 indicators. The country's stable and diversified economy, low inflation, current account surplus, fiscal surplus, and declining sovereign debt create a low-risk environment for investors.

### Projects

Slovenia, with a GDP of €63 billion and a GDP per capita of over \$29,000 in 2023, is a prime investment destination. Its highly educated and skilled workforce, high proficiency in English, and robust R&D capabilities contribute to its competitive edge. In 2022, the UK was the 9th largest source of foreign direct investment in Slovenia.

Key infrastructure projects like the *Second Track* rail project between the port of Koper and Divača aim to enhance cargo transport efficiency, strengthening

Slovenia's position as a logistics hub connecting central and southeast Europe with the Mediterranean Sea and Far East. Additionally, Slovenia is advancing in renewable energy, including hydrogen technology and plans for constructing a second nuclear power plant in Krško, enhancing its energy security and sustainability efforts.

**According to a regular annual survey among German investors in central and Eastern Europe, Slovenia was found to be the most attractive location for R&D investments in the region.**

”

### Innovation

Slovenia's ICT sector is rapidly advancing in innovation and digital transformation, supported by government initiatives in smart cities, cybersecurity, and AI development. Start-ups and tech companies benefit from funding, incubators, and accelerators. Slovenia stands out for R&D, attracting significant investment, especially in pharmaceuticals. According to a regular annual survey among German investors in central and Eastern Europe, Slovenia was found to be the most attractive location for R&D investments in the region. The business sector contributes about 75 per cent of R&D investments, leading to advanced products and solutions.

**Barbara Uranjek is chief executive of the British-Slovenian Chamber of Commerce. Information for her article was sourced from SPIRIT Slovenia Business Development Agency.**

[www.sloveniabusiness.eu/business-environment](http://www.sloveniabusiness.eu/business-environment)

**To find out more about opportunities or future events focusing on Slovenia, contact [Internationalbusiness@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:Internationalbusiness@londonchamber.co.uk)**



Port of Koper

has seen growing trade ties with former Yugoslav republics since the 2000s. Major import partners include Germany, Italy, and Austria. Slovenia ranks 9th globally in economic complexity, comparable to Finland, the US, the UK, and Italy.

The services sector significantly contributes to the economy, enhancing the competitiveness of the Slovenian



GEN Group, 2022, a visual depiction of the Second Nuclear Power Plant in Krško

# Embracing technological innovation in international business strategy

by Richard Moir

**In the fast-paced and interconnected world of international business, technological innovation plays a pivotal role in shaping strategies and driving sustainable growth. With advancements in digitalisation, data analytics, and communication technologies, businesses are leveraging these tools to gain a competitive edge in global markets.**



## Key steps

Working on technological innovation in international business strategy involves several key steps:

- Begin by conducting a thorough analysis of the global business environment, including technological trends, market dynamics, competitive landscape, and regulatory factors. Identify emerging technologies with the potential to disrupt industries and create new opportunities for international business.
- Define clear strategic objectives for integrating technological innovation into your international business strategy. Determine whether your goals involve expanding market presence, improving operational efficiency, enhancing customer experience, or fostering product innovation
- Evaluate your organisation's technological capabilities, resources, and readiness for innovation. Determine whether you have the necessary infrastructure, talent, and expertise to leverage emerging technologies effectively in the international arena.
- Identify target markets and segments where technological innovation can provide a competitive advantage. Consider factors such as market size, growth potential, regulatory environment, and cultural nuances when selecting international markets for expansion.
- Develop a technology roadmap outlining the steps and timeline for implementing innovative technologies in your international business operations. Prioritise initiatives based on their potential impact and alignment with strategic objectives.
- Allocate resources to research and development efforts aimed at creating or adopting new technologies that enhance your international business capabilities. Explore partnerships, collaborations, and acquisitions to access cutting-edge technologies and expertise.
- Adapt your business processes and workflows to leverage technological innovations effectively. Streamline operations, automate repetitive tasks, and enhance decision-making through the integration of data analytics, artificial intelligence, and other advanced technologies.
- Recognise and address cultural and regulatory challenges associated with technological innovation in international business. Adapt your strategies and approaches to comply with local regulations, respect cultural norms, and navigate geopolitical risks.
- Foster strategic partnerships and alliances with technology firms, research institutions, and local stakeholders in target markets. Collaborate with external partners to access new markets, share knowledge, and co- create innovative solutions.
- Key performance indicators to measure the impact of technological innovation on your international business strategy. Monitor progress regularly, analyse performance data, and adjust your approach as needed to optimise outcomes and achieve strategic objectives.

By following these steps, you can effectively integrate technological innovation into your international business strategy, enabling your organisation to capitalise on emerging opportunities, gain competitive advantage, and drive sustainable growth in global markets.

Technological innovation is reshaping the landscape of international business strategy, offering new opportunities for growth and expansion in global markets. By harnessing the power of digitalisation, data analytics, and communication technologies, businesses can gain a competitive edge, enhance cross-border collaborations, and drive sustainable growth on a global scale. As technology continues to evolve, embracing innovation will be essential for businesses seeking to thrive in the ever-changing landscape of international commerce.

**Richard Moir is special advisor to Harod Ltd and a member of the LCCI board of directors**

[www.harodassociates.com](http://www.harodassociates.com)

**A long version of this article first appeared in Entrepreneurial Edge magazine**

[www.theentrepreneur.studio](http://www.theentrepreneur.studio)



## SPONSORED COLUMN

# The need for a common framework to tackle information security threats

**Standardisation is not a new concept. It raised decades ago from the need for a common framework to tackle technical incompatibilities across nations.**

Similarly, nowadays, a harmonised system to tackle information security threats is needed. These are becoming increasingly sophisticated and may arise from seemingly unrelated circumstances.

An elegant way to overcome that challenge and ensure robust resilience would be implementing ISO-compliant management systems.

ISO/IEC 27001 is widely known for providing requirements for implementing efficient information security management systems, which enables organisations to manage the security of assets such as financial information, intellectual property, employee details or information that might have been entrusted by third parties.

Ideally, ISO 27001 would be integrated into a broader system and would also include ISO 22301 to give reassurance regarding Business Continuity to the extent defined. And it could be parts of the organisation, locations, size, nature and complexity, and products and services.

Resolving information security and cybersecurity-related issues is frequently perceived as a technical challenge rather than a management responsibility.

Traditionally, we have been worried about computer-assisted fraud, espionage, sabotage, vandalism, fire, flood, etc. We have recently, merely several years ago, started

worrying about malicious code, computer hacking and denial of service attacks.

Implementing a management system within a common framework is essential to tackle the threats. Industry leaders are already working towards improving their defence mechanisms.

To be successful, organisations should ensure that: information can flow within the market and across sectors; common rules and ethical values are protected and respected, especially regarding personal data protection and consumer protection; fair access to and use of information are guaranteed.

Another frequent issue that organisations worldwide face is the need for information and cybersecurity professionals to fill in the ever-increasing number of openings. The industry continues to suffer across all sectors from an acute shortage of experts.

This raises particular concerns about how quickly organisations will be able to react and adhere to efficient information security management systems and, most importantly, how efficient the information flows designed will be.

The ISO approach helps organisations be more innovative and agile thanks to planning on business transformation initiatives as part of a solid, long-term digital transformation.

As a result, organisations with integrated management systems effectively reduce technological, legal and financial exposure, direct and indirect costs of disruptions as well as address operational vulnerabilities.

## Driving solutions

**London Tech Week champions London as a global tech hub and the role of the capital's vibrant tech ecosystem in driving innovative solutions to complex global challenges**

In the course of the week's activities, LCCI visited 01 Founders, part of Capital City College Group (CCCG), the largest further education provider in London and the third largest in the UK. The group's training provider, Capital City College Training, delivers apprenticeships and courses for employers.

### Unique

01 Founders, a unique coding school, received the Positive Impact Award at the LCCI SME London Business Awards

2024, recognising their commitment to diverse tech education since 2021. CCCG helped found Visionnaires, a social enterprise

designed to help new businesses and entrepreneurs succeed.

### Diverse

Today, CCCG trains over 25,000 students every year,

equipping them with the academic

and vocational skills and knowledge they need to progress into employment or higher education. CCCG's diverse alumni include household names such as renowned chefs Jamie Oliver, Ainsley Harriott and Anthony Worrall Thompson as well as Paloma Faith, Jessie Wallace, and Reggie Yates.

After a tour of the site, LCCI chief executive Karim Fatehi MBE met with students and staff.



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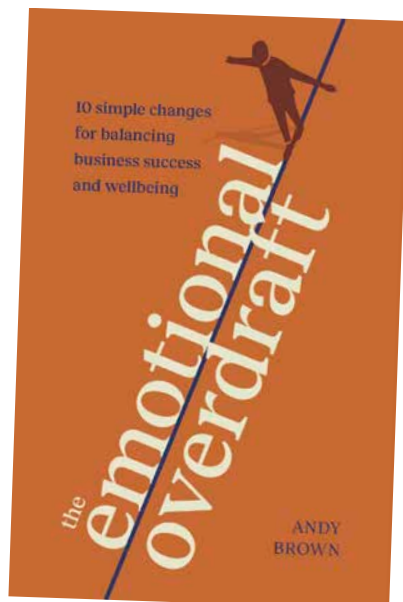
# The hidden costs of business leadership

Leadership burn-out and overwhelm is a rising problem. Many leaders habitually overcome their company's challenges at the cost of their own mental and physical health – running up an emotional overdraft. The hidden cost line in a business's P&L, constantly dipping into your emotional overdraft is not only unsustainable, it can also mask issues that need to be resolved in your business.

In his new book – *The Emotional Overdraft* – leadership coach Andy Brown explores why such overdrafts are run up, how to spot the warning signs, the problems they cause and what can be done to alleviate the situation.

## Behaviour changes

Identifying the key drivers of the issue –



from putting your teams' needs ahead of your own to not trusting others to lack of resources – the book reveals how to tackle each. Brown shares ten simple, actionable, practical behaviour changes leaders can make to reduce their emotional overdraft.

This is a valuable guide for business leaders, managers, HR teams and anyone looking for a way to balance success and wellbeing, the book reveals how to build a healthier relationship with your business, yourself and your loved ones.

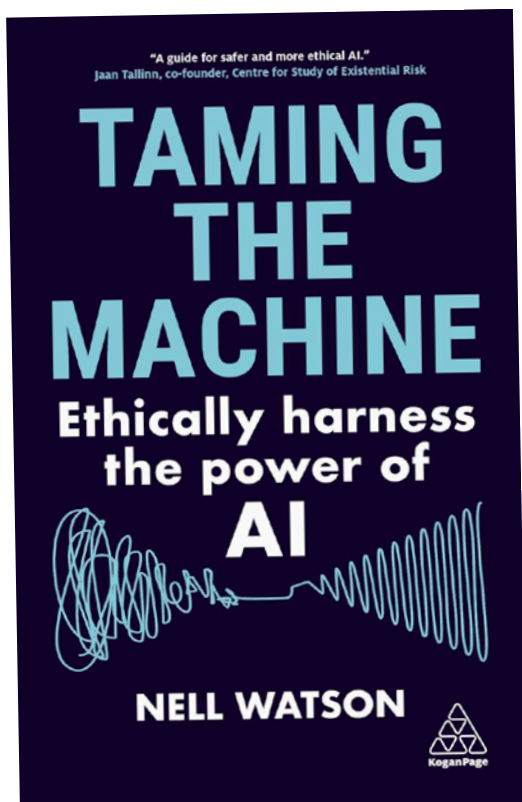
***The Emotional Overdraft: 10 Simple Changes for Balancing Business Success and Wellbeing***

**Author: Andy Brown. Published by Practical Inspiration Publishing**

[www.practicalinspiration.com](http://www.practicalinspiration.com)

# Taming the AI machine

AI ethics expert Nell Watson gets straight to the point to with the subtitle of her new book: *Will AI be your dream assistant or the nightmare boss you didn't ask for?*



The claims for the artificial intelligence phenomenon include its ability to transform our world, supercharge productivity and drive new innovations. At more specific levels, it has the potential to become a personal assistant, a creative partner, an editor and a research tool all at once. Yet it also represents a threat to livelihoods, data and privacy.

## Unbridled

In her book, Watson aims to help the reader uncover how they can “responsibly harness the power of AI” and provides insights as to how it can be used for practical innovation. She delves into the ethical issues of unbridled AI, highlighting the challenges that it will bring to society and business unless we fortify cybersecurity, safeguard our data, and

understand the dangerous potential of artificial intelligence.

***Taming the machine by Nell Watson***

**Published by Kogan Page**

[www.koganpage.com](http://www.koganpage.com)

She delves into the ethical issues of unbridled AI, highlighting the challenges that it will bring to society and business unless we fortify cybersecurity, safeguard our data, and understand the dangerous potential of artificial intelligence.

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# It's not like it's a motor car, it's more valuable than that

by John McLoughlin

**Nobody will want to target us; we have nothing to steal; we are not important enough; we are in the cloud, so we are ok. These are some of the excuses we hear from SMEs about the cyber risk associated with their email systems. Yet they all know how to protect physical company assets, like a motor vehicle.**

## Cyber-attacks

Research shows that there are ransomware attacks every 11 seconds and losses to cyber-crime are estimated to exceed \$6 trillion. More than 60 per cent of global cyber-attacks are targeted at SMEs and up to 92 per cent of all cyber-attacks can be traced back to email compromise.



John McLoughlin

Why so little is done comes down to a lack of understanding and a false sense of security. SME business owners think that because their email is in the cloud, their IT provider has everything covered. This is often not true. Fewer than 28 per cent of businesses have basic security controls in place and even fewer register their devices correctly. Along with a lack of visibility, this makes it simple for your environment to be compromised.

Email, and the attached collaboration services, contains all of your business' confidential information including sales data, strategies, processes, pricing matrices and financial information. Why not treat this the same way you treat your car?

## Digital assets

How can your email be like your car? Let's unpack this.

When you invest in a motor vehicle you understand its value. You take active steps to keep the car in the best

possible condition. The same should be done with digital assets.

1. You get the car registered and it has its own licence and identifiers.
2. You check that remote works and that when you push the button, the car locks and unlocks. Park it securely when not in use.
3. You take many photos of your car and maintain a living image of this investment.
4. You may even put on a steering wheel lock, adding an additional layer of protection.
5. Many people make use of CCTV or home security cameras, keeping an eye on your property to alert you to the danger of an intruder.
6. You also need insurance on your car because even if you do everything mentioned above, there is a possibility that there will be an accident, something could still happen and in the worst case scenario, your insurance reduces your losses.
7. You keep the car clean and service it regularly. You top up oil and rotate the tyres. You do this to make sure that the car continues to perform as it should.

## Seven actions

So, to protect your email and information, let's treat it like your car.

1. You have email domain and addresses; the registration process mimics the effective management of your DMARC compliance to take active steps to prevent impersonation and spoofing of your domain.
2. Layer your security by adding a secure gateway that compliments your email platform. Using effective encryption options keeps the doors locked.

3. Automatic and secure archiving of all email should be in place to ensure compliance, provide business continuity and give you immediate access with forensic search capabilities.

**Why so little is done comes down to a lack of understanding and a false sense of security. SME business owners think that because their email is in the cloud, their IT provider has everything covered. This is often not true.**

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4. Multi-factor-authentication must be implemented and devices correctly registered to prevent rogue access.

5. The visibility provided by a security monitoring service will alert you to an intruder and gives you the ability to repel attacks.

6. Cyber insurance covers the last gaps in resilience. Following these steps reduces your risk and will lead to reduced premiums.

7. Use a reputable and proven service provider to continually service your email and connected systems. Trusting proven experts will give you the comfort that everything is secure and you can focus on driving your business forward.

Email is not the same as a motor car; or is it?

**John McLoughlin is group chief executive of J2 Software Group**  
[www.j2software.co.uk](http://www.j2software.co.uk)

# AI in cyber security – opportunities and threats

by Tim Robinson

As technology advances so does the threat of cyber-crime. Criminals adapt to new methods that exploit increasing dependence on technology. In 2020, malware attacks increased by 358 per cent compared to 2019, as criminals took advantage of businesses moving to remote work environments. The unique and evolving threats of cyber-crime have resulted in traditional cybersecurity methods being unable to keep up, leading to an increased reliance on artificial intelligence (AI), defined as intelligence demonstrated by machines, presents unique opportunities for businesses to protect, detect and respond to cybercrime.

This isn't going unnoticed by organisations, the majority of whom now favour security methods that use AI. Examples of AI in cybersecurity include the following.

## Faster network threat identification

An AI-powered network security system presents the opportunity to monitor all outgoing and incoming calls and detect any suspicious patterns in traffic information at a much more accurate and faster rate than it would take humans. Darktrace, a platform that uses AI network security to detect and respond to threats faster than humans, is an example of this. It runs



Tim Robinson

24/7 and is continuously learning from real-time data to prevent insider threats, detect attacks, and identify zero-day strains of malware and ransomware.

## Predicting cyber-attacks

Predictive AI in cybersecurity can help estimate when a breach will occur, predicted cost of losses, and what makes up those costs. Being able to predict and quantify the likelihood of a breach enables an organisation to implement the relevant steps to prevent it, while also using the information to help configure and enhance controls and processes to improve an organisation's cyber resilience.

## Data recovery

As the mass and value of data that organisations hold only appears to be growing, AI can assist in backing up and securing data in new, more reliable ways. AI in data management usually adopts a preventative rather than reactive approach, with the focus on identifying the issue before the data is lost and relying on AI-driven automated backups to protect it. AI is, however, also providing solutions to complex data recovery problems, making decision making easier in the event of a disaster and assisting incident-response teams in automated accident recovery.

## Is AI a one-size-fits-all solution for cyber-crime?

Despite the growing use of AI in cybersecurity and the unique benefits it offers, the simple answer to the above question is most definitely not. AI has not only transformed the cybersecurity industry but has helped cybercriminals launch more sophisticated attacks and create new methods of attack. 'Deepfakes', a type of AI used to create convincing images, audio and video hoaxes are becoming much more widespread. These can be used to impersonate a chief executive, for example, and getting company funds diverted into a criminal's bank account.

## Strategies

As AI technology continues to advance, it's crucial to develop strategies for detecting and mitigating the harmful effects of manipulated media. It's essential for individuals and organisations to:

- raise awareness about the existence and potential impact of deepfakes
- develop strategies for detecting and verifying the authenticity of media content
- implement security controls and measures to protect against social engineering attacks
- proceed with caution and verify any unusual request.

Tim Robinson is partner, forensic services at Crowe UK

[www.crowe.co.uk](http://www.crowe.co.uk)

## Case study: Employee sends £20 million to cyber attacker impersonating boss

A recent cautionary tale highlights how cyber criminals are using deepfakes for social engineering attacks. An organisation based in Hong Kong fell victim when a finance team member was tricked into sending £20 million at the request of a deepfake impersonating the company's chief financial officer (CFO). The deepfake was delivered via a video conference

call. Initially suspicious of the CFO's request to deposit 15 transactions into five local bank accounts, the employee was reassured when other colleagues joined the call and supported the request.

## Deepfake

The fraud was only uncovered when the employee later checked in with other colleagues. It was revealed that everyone the individual had talked to

on the video call was generated by AI, which had learned from previously public images, video, and audio footage of the colleagues. The deepfake call was also supported by additional phishing and social engineering techniques via WhatsApp and email.

This case provides a particularly sophisticated and sobering insight into what cyber criminals can achieve relatively easily with the use of AI.





# Securing a fair and inclusive transition to a net-zero future

by Kieron Boyle

**London's commitment to becoming a net-zero carbon city by 2030 is ambitious and inspiring. The journey ahead presents both challenges and opportunities. We must navigate two crucial questions: Will the transition to a net zero future be fair and inclusive? Can we achieve it quickly enough?**

Both businesses and investors are seeking solutions to those questions. The future we envision for our children, for communities and workers requires thoughtful consideration and action.

## Global hub

The City of London has always been a global hub for innovation and change. Our achievements in greening the economy and finance have often set global standards. Yet if you ask people around the world about the net-zero transition, many will have concerns about how much good helping the planet will do for them, their families, and their everyday livelihoods. The risk is that the transition comes to be seen as the problem rather than the necessary solution — and that's a dangerous place to be.

The first lesson is clear: a net-zero transition must show people and communities what's in it for them. Fortunately, more and more businesses and investors are eager to advance a fair and inclusive transition. That means designing products for longevity, reparability, and recyclability, and

ensuring fair labour practices and sourcing materials responsibly. It means developing green skills for those whose jobs are disrupted by the changing economy. It also means ensuring local communities benefit from cheaper and more reliable energy.

## Risks

Many see this as the right thing to do but there's also a strong financial case. Investors increasingly recognise that companies ignoring these factors face significant risks, including consumer backlash, reputational harm, legal challenges and, ultimately, business disruption.

So, the opportunities are clear. The next question is: how do we make this happen quickly enough? Science tells us we need to make considerable progress by 2030. That's just over 2,000 days away.

## Practical solutions

The Impact Investing Institute has been working with global financial institutions to find practical solutions to this issue.

Investors who deploy capital at scale are increasingly keen to tackle both environmental and social issues and understand the need to put people and communities at the heart of the transition. But they are often not clear on the steps they need to take to get there.

To address this, the institute launched the Just Transition Criteria, a pioneering

approach to help financial markets actors align their investments with the three key elements of a "just transition" — advancing climate actions, improving social distribution and increasing community voice.

## Renewable

Applying these criteria helps manage financial risks and seizes new economic opportunities. For example, they guide investors to create decent jobs in decarbonised industries, provide access to affordable renewable energy, and support equal participation in greener supply chains for developing economies.

Developed by 22 of the world's largest financial actors — including global asset managers, public development finance institutions and NGOs like the International Labour Organization — these criteria are now being used by investors managing more than £5 trillion worldwide.

## Foundation

It is clear that a just transition is likely to be the only transition that works at the pace and scale required. And it's also clear that London is well-positioned to lead the way in this transition. Its diverse and skilled workforce, along with a thriving financial sector and established research institutions, provide a strong foundation for the opportunities ahead of us.

**Keiron Boyle is chief executive of the Impact Investing Institute**

[www.impactinvest.org.uk](http://www.impactinvest.org.uk)



Kieron Boyle



# The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act – implications for landlords

| by Leo Mineo

**The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act has now become law. It was introduced to bring substantial change for Leaseholders, which also means that it will impact Landlords (or Freeholders) who own the piece of land on which the Leasehold properties were built.**

The reform addresses imbalances and aims to target injustices relating to the Leasehold system, sometimes seen as archaic, but they also impose limitations on Landlords and new regulations for them to comply with. This article intends to give an overview of the meaning of such reform for Freeholders.

## 1. The abolition of ground rent

The biggest impact is the abolition of ground rent for newly entered long residential leases. Freeholders were relying on ground rent as a steady income, and this reform directly impacts it. As to the existing Leases, the ground rent cannot be abolished

retrospectively. However, the ground rents will remain under scrutiny and potentially additional regulations to prevent abusive practices.

Freeholders will lose substantial income from ground rents, which means there might be less investment in Freeholds in the future as it will be less financially attractive.



## 2. The fate of service charges

Service charges must now be more transparent than ever. They must also be reasonable and justifiable.

Leaseholders have more power to challenge unreasonable and excessive charges as well as the right to request a breakdown of these costs.

Historically, Freeholders have had a wild discretion over service charges. However, their accountability is now increased, and they will face scrutiny over how much they charge for service charges. They will need to provide detailed explanations for all charges. It might mean more administrative

work for them and less power to increase high fees but also potentially more disputes in Court over the reasonableness of the service charge.

**They will need to provide detailed explanations for all charges. It might mean more administrative work for them and less power to increase high fees but also potentially more disputes...**

”

## 3. Lease extension, a simpler way

This new piece of legislation allows for the extension of Leases by up to 999 years with no ground rent payable. High premiums for Lease extensions will therefore disappear, especially for shorter Leases.

As above, there might be a financial impact on Landlords and therefore on freehold investment. However, it also means a more Leaseholder-friendly process with a reduction in costs for extensions.





encouraged by the government. Commonholds are a form of ownership for multi-occupancy developments. The unitholder owns the Freehold of their home, and a commonhold or residents' association owns and manages the common parts of the property.

**Freeholders will need to adapt and find strategies to maintain their income and their compliance with the reform.**

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The above means Freeholders will have less properties to manage and therefore fewer Leaseholds' charges and fees.

#### 5. Right to Manage

Leaseholders will have more opportunities to take over the management of their buildings, even in cases where there is no mismanagement from the Freeholders.

As mentioned above, there might be fewer fees to manage for the Freeholders but also a loss of control over the maintenance of the properties. There might potentially be more disputes too.

#### 6. What can Freeholders do?

Freeholders will need to adapt and find strategies to maintain their income and their compliance with the reform. The following are possible:

**a.** Landlords may wish to **diversify** their portfolios of property, targeting freeholders that are not impacted by the new law.

**b.** Improving and **maintaining good relationships with the Leaseholders** might help mitigate conflictual situations. It may also help effective management of the properties and defuse challenges with them.

**c.** Freeholders can also try to **explore commonholds** and manage common areas instead of the more traditional roles over Leaseholds.

#### New environment

The reform substantially impacts the UK property market and the position of Freeholders. These changes aim to create a better system for Leaseholders but present financial and operational challenges for Landlords. It will require adaptation, adjustments, better management, and strategies. Freeholders will need to be proactive and address these changes to thrive in this new environment.

**Leo Mineo is a solicitor at TV Edwards**

[www.tvedwards.com](http://www.tvedwards.com)

#### 4. Commonhold

Commonhold are now being

# LCCI's SME London Business Awards are back

**LCCI has announced the return of the SME London Business Awards which raise the profile of industrious, hardworking and enterprising SMEs in the capital.**

There are 23 awards, ranging from best employer of the year to best new business and recognition for high growth, social responsibility and sustainability. Businesses can enter up to three different categories.

#### Spotlight

If you want your business to shine, this is an ideal way to hit the spotlight. The awards not only offer exceptional marketing and PR opportunities but also increase credibility and standing in the eyes of peers and customers.

[www.londonchamber.co.uk](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk)



# Asset sales v. share sales

In sectors which see a significant number of sales and acquisitions, there are generally two primary methods: asset sales and share sales. While both avenues aim to achieve similar outcomes of transferring ownership in the underlying business, they vary significantly in their structure, implications, and legal considerations.



**By Seamus Clifford, Partner in Birketts' Corporate Team**

In an asset sale, the Buyer purchases specific assets and liabilities of the target company rather than acquiring its shares. These assets can encompass tangible properties such as real estate, equipment, inventory, and intangible assets like intellectual property or goodwill. The transaction typically involves negotiating individual asset values and liabilities, which allows for greater flexibility in tailoring the deal to suit the Buyer's needs because it can, to an extent, 'cherry pick' assets and liabilities which will transfer.

On the other hand, a share sale involves the purchase of the target company's shares, thereby acquiring ownership of the entire business entity, including

all its assets, liabilities, contracts, and obligations. From the Buyer's perspective, this approach offers simplicity and comprehensive control over the acquired entity but entails assuming all existing legal and financial commitments.

## **Advantages of Asset Sale:**

**Selective Acquisition:** Buyers have the freedom to cherry-pick assets and liabilities, enabling them to acquire only desirable components while excluding liabilities or assets deemed unfavourable.

**Risk Mitigation:** By acquiring assets rather than shares, Buyers can often limit their exposure to unknown or contingent liabilities, reducing the risk inherent in the transaction.

**Tax Benefits:** Asset sales can offer potential tax advantages for both the Buyer and the seller, such as the ability to depreciate acquired assets or offset gains against losses.

**Operational Control:** Buyers gain direct ownership and control over specific assets, allowing for seamless integration into their existing operations or strategic expansion plans.

## **Advantages of Share Sale:**

**Simplified Acquisition:** Share sales streamline the acquisition process by transferring ownership of the entire business entity, eliminating the need to negotiate individual asset values and liabilities.

**Continuity of Operations:** As the Buyer inherits the target company's

legal entity, contracts, and relationships, business operations can continue without interruption, ensuring seamless transition for employees, customers, and suppliers.

## **Preservation of Brand and Reputation:**

Maintaining the target company's identity and reputation can be easier in a share sale, as there is no disruption to branding or customer relationships. Customers in the hospitality & leisure sector often affiliate strongly with a brand so this can be beneficial to a Buyer.

**Tax:** A key commercial driver for structuring the acquisition as a share sale is tax. Sellers may be entitled to certain reliefs and the consideration will be paid directly to shareholders of the target company. Conversely, on an asset sale the consideration will be paid to the target company itself, which often results in a lengthier process requiring distribution of the cash or a winding up of the target company post completion. Additionally, on a share sale no stamp duty land tax will be incurred because the properties remain with the target company. In contrast, on an asset sale the properties e.g. pubs or hotels which often carry a significant proportion of the value of the business will be transferred and the Buyer will need to pay stamp duty land tax. The Buyer will pay stamp duty on the purchase of shares at a rate of 0.05% (subject to certain thresholds) which is generally significantly lower than stamp duty land tax if the transaction was carried out as an asset purchase.

Understanding the nuances between these two approaches is crucial for stakeholders navigating the complex landscape of business transactions. Thorough due diligence, thoughtful negotiation, and strategic planning are essential for navigating any transaction successfully. Engaging lawyers as well as financial and tax advisors early on will help to make sure the best option is chosen for both parties.



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# Equity incentives reward and retain talent

| by Jonathan Harvey



Jonathan Harvey is senior tax manager at MHA

[www.mha.co.uk](http://www.mha.co.uk)

**Equity incentives, particularly share options, serve as powerful tools for fostering employee engagement and driving business growth, especially in the dynamic landscape of the tech sector. Whether you are a start-up or an established player, navigating the complexities of share options requires careful consideration, particularly concerning tax implications.**

## Attractive

At the heart of share options lies the aim to reward and retain talent without immediate financial strain. During the initial stages of business, where cash flow may be tight which could restrict the ability to pay high cash salaries, share options can be an attractive addition to help incentivise the right talent to join or stay with the business.

However, the tax landscape surrounding share options is multifaceted. Understanding the nuances can be pivotal to ensure that there are no unexpected tax liabilities. Among the tax-favoured share option plans, the Enterprise Management Incentive (EMI) is a discretionary plan which is often used due to its significant tax advantages for both employers and employees.

## Preferential

Unlike unapproved, or non-tax favoured options, with EMI options there are no income tax or National Insurance contribution liabilities on the exercise of an EMI option that was granted with an

exercise price equal to the share market value on the grant date. This means that any growth in the value of the shares from the grant date would be subject to the preferential capital gains tax rates whilst still retaining the corporation tax deduction for the company.

## Expert guidance

Navigating these options demands meticulous attention to detail and compliance. For instance, ensuring that the company meets the necessary conditions and maintains its qualifying EMI status requires adherence to specific criteria, failure of which could lead to unexpected tax liabilities. It is essential to have expert guidance to ensure seamless implementation and ongoing compliance.

Within the tech sector, where intellectual property often plays a central role, additional considerations arise. The receipt of royalties or licence fees on third-party software or intellectual property could inadvertently jeopardise EMI qualification, emphasising the importance of getting the right tax advice.

The key takeaway for tech businesses exploring equity incentives and EMI options is clear: getting it right from the outset is paramount. While the potential benefits are substantial, the pitfalls of non-compliance can be costly and challenging to rectify down the line.





# Navigating key employer pain points



**Neil Pickering is senior manager of HR innovation at UKG**

[www.ukg.co.uk](http://www.ukg.co.uk)

**As organisations battle skills shortages, shifting employee preferences and constantly evolving regulations around safeguarding and wellbeing, providing staff with the platform to reach their full potential has never been more important for business leaders.**

*Neil Pickering* outlines the four most pressing pain points facing modern businesses, and identifies the strategies organisations can adopt to overcome these challenges.

## 1. Managing employee turnover

Despite a slight decrease in the volume of unfilled jobs last quarter, in the UK there are still almost one million vacancies businesses are unable to find candidates for.

With skills shortages presenting as an ongoing problem for businesses nationally, it's time for organisations to recognise the true value of retention. The best way to manage employee turnover is to prevent it altogether and cultivate an environment where employees can see a long-term future with the company.

This begins by developing a positive business culture, where all employees feel valued and appreciated. Organisations can adopt a range of strategies to achieve this, from financial incentives such as fair pay and bonuses, to progress initiatives that clearly define career paths.

Work-life balance is now a top priority for employees across sectors, so this should be a key consideration for companies thinking about how best to attract and retain staff. Allowing staff the autonomy to choose when they work and find cover without consulting a manager can deliver the necessary flexibility here.

## 2. Optimising employee performance

Business leaders should find ways to motivate their staff and create a work environment where they genuinely want to succeed.

Poor employee performance can have a severe impact on business growth, limiting productivity and often reducing the overall quality of goods or services the business produces. However, this isn't an issue business leaders can solve alone – they must work with staff to win their support for company objectives.

Extensive training programmes, greater flexibility, two-way channels of communication and better knowledge access are all easily actionable measures that will earn employee buy-in. Ultimately, employers that invest in the development of their staff are far more likely to have a motivated and productive workforce.

## 3. Labour and data compliance

Businesses have both a moral and legal duty to go above and beyond when it comes to supporting employees.

Employers have a responsibility to improve health, safety and wellbeing measures for all staff, which means creating a work environment where employees feel comfortable, both mentally and physically.

Some organisations may have unintentionally fallen foul of labour scheduling conditions in recent years. Leveraging labour scheduling technology that automates the provision of accurate pay and working time compliance, while managing burnout through safe scheduling, is a reliable safeguarding tool for a business and its staff to prevent such incidents from happening.

Complying with data protection legislation, such as GDPR, is another hurdle modern businesses must overcome. Storing all records digitally in a secure manner provides the organisational structure needed to remain compliant. Similarly, adhering to National Living Wage legislation should be front of mind for business leaders, which can be achieved with a fair pay structure.

## 4. Adapting to change

A business cannot be flexible without an engaged and responsive workforce.

With a myriad of challenges facing today's businesses that show little sign of abating, employers must be able to rely on their workforce for continuity and sustained growth. Ensuring any changes are clearly communicated to all staff will help win their trust and support for innovation within the company.

Building a healthy culture and achieving revenue, compliance or brand-oriented goals don't have to be mutually exclusive objectives – intuitive and advanced HR technology can drive both if organisations understand its potential and deploy it correctly.

# Filling the skills gaps in the financial sector

| by Mandy Gill

“In September I will celebrate my one-year anniversary with the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment (CISI). It's a joy and a privilege to be working with an educational charity which is also a global professional body and I feel that as executive director of global learning I have one of the best jobs within the education universe. I attended my first CISI Awards ceremony at Mansion House in April. It is humbling to reflect on the achievements of our 143 award winners this year. Their dedication to excellence, tenacity and hard work is remarkable.

We don't achieve such excellence in isolation. There is a community of friends, family and circles of influence which are critical in supporting candidates to excel in their learning. The businesses they work in and other important financial and education sector stakeholders are also integral in their support of our award winners. Those who combined work with study have shown they will and are bringing enormous value and commitment to their current and future employers, along with a rich diversity of backgrounds.

## Evolving sector

Skills and lifelong learning are fundamental to UK business and financial services. In April, the Financial Services Skills Commission published their 3rd Future Skills report, *Bridging the skills gap in a rapidly evolving sector*. This could be deemed a pivotal moment for the UK financial services sector in terms of a heads-up.

Data from the FSSC member survey included research which showed that skills gaps remain prevalent across our industry despite easing recruitment pressures and that demand for all future skills is growing faster than

supply except for data analytics and insights. One of the gaps that the report highlights is empathy – a skill which is unlikely to have featured in equivalent reports of 20 years ago and which tells all of us something about the need to continually develop our skills and behaviours.

## Progress

Despite these challenges, the industry is making progress in some areas, including that 71 per cent of FSSC members are actively reskilling in the UK, compared to 50 per cent last year.

However, the FSSC report also shows that there is a decline in the number of graduates entering the financial services sector. This is alarming, given the importance of young talent and the fact that financial services accounts for almost 12 per cent of the UK's GDP.

## Financial literacy

As I write this, a general election has been announced for 4th July with all parties now in campaign mode. In March of this year Shadow City Minister Tulip Siddiq was a guest speaker at an International Women's Day Association of British Insurers event. She focused on issues including improving the gender pensions gap, ensuring there are women in the room when investment decisions are made, addressing the disproportionate levels of financial exclusion facing women in society and recognising there are significant discrepancies in the experience of women from different ethnic backgrounds. Financial literacy, a fundamental life skill, is a high priority

for CISI's educational development team, and the Shadow Minister highlighted the work we do with schools and with GAIN UK.

## Education curriculum

We support the promotion of greater financial literacy within the UK education curriculum and submitted written evidence to the Education Committee financial education inquiry in

January 2024. Many of our members around the UK speak with schools on an annual basis to provide career insights to students. This is well received by schools who often feel they lack the internal expertise to guide students. We believe that it is essential to engage the finance sector and financial practitioners to help support teachers and schools in the delivery of financial education. This can also be aligned with guidance about pursuing careers in finance where relevant. Professional and trade bodies can support in this area, offering access to a pool of qualified professionals who are often keen to 'give something back'. That's good for the skills talent pipeline and good for UK business. ”

**Mandy Gill is executive director of global learning at CISI**

**CISI**  
 CHARTERED INSTITUTE FOR  
 SECURITIES & INVESTMENT







# How to strengthen external business relationships

**Strengthening business relations can be done in many ways, with some people exploring quality communications or even experiences to bring people together. Some businesses look to gift giving to help further their connection. *Katy Baxter* considers the options**

## Corporate gifting

Gift giving is a powerful tool for fostering connections and nurturing relationships. In fact, it has been used for centuries to establish stronger bonds in many different aspects of our lives. One area not untouched by this is corporate life.

Whether you're onboarding a client or simply thanking them for a year of partnership, gifting is a great way to build those external relationships. In fact, over half of businesses claim to do work with another company after receiving a corporate gift. This isn't about forcing their hand but instead catching their attention and proving your passion and understanding for their business through tailored gifts.

It is important to remember the reasons behind your gifting. It isn't to force business but to encourage and strengthen your relationships. Corporate relationships can be beneficial for more than just work contracts; they can also be a great way of improving networking and partnerships with like-minded businesses.

## What to gift

Finding the right gift means truly understanding who you're working, or want to work, with. Personalisation can go a long way when strengthening relationships and representing your company.

One thing that can go down well for both clients and employees is food hampers.

Depending on your chosen hamper, you can personalise them to make them specific for your receiver and add that extra special touch to highlight your relationship.

Over three quarters of employees said they prefer gifts they can share with their family or teams, which makes hampers a perfect solution. This works across businesses, too. Being able to share the gift means you are treating a whole team of people rather than the one connection point you have. This also helps you to strengthen your connection with the business, even if the person you're in communication with leaves.

## Be responsible

When building your business relationships, it's important to avoid forcing gifts on a business. This is an approach that should be considered carefully and used for building those close relationships, rather than enforcing anything. There are plenty of legal rules around corporate gift giving, including avoiding bribery.

## Business policies

It is best to consult with your legal team before giving or receiving gifts to ensure it complies with your business policies. It is also important to note that business gifts cannot be deducted from business expenditures as they're seen in the same way as entertainment experiences. Your business cannot claim fewer taxes by

discounting your business gifts on your books. It is best to run these expenses past your in-house finance team first. Invest in shared experiences.

## Open communication

Another way to build the best, and right, relationships is by having open communication from the beginning. A good partnership is built on communication, so ensure you're providing this from the start, whether this is the usual meetings, sending updates regularly, or even letting the other business have their preferred ways of contacting you.

Not every business will have the same communication style or timeline as you, so if you're looking to impress or build on those relationships, ensuring you're investing in communication that works for both you and the other company is crucial.

Starting, strengthening, and maintaining good business relationships is all about connection. You need to see the people behind the brand identity and make a genuine connection. This can be from gift giving, a popular form of relationship management, sharing time together, or simply encouraging good communication and open channels for a better rapport.

**Katy Baxter is corporate affairs director at Baxters of Scotland**

[www.baxtersofscotland.com](http://www.baxtersofscotland.com)





## The Glasshouse – the inside story

**The Glasshouse is a groundbreaking social enterprise which provides a second chance to women reaching the end of their sentence in UK prisons, aiming to reduce reoffending through horticultural training and improved employment opportunities.**

### Nurture

Earlier this year Kali Hamerton Stove, the company's co-founder and managing director, gave an inspiring address to LCCI members covering her personal business journey and The Glasshouse's

work with women in prison to grow and nurture house plants.

The company provides horticultural training, employment and resettlement support with the aim to reduce reoffending – clearly highly effective as there is a nought per cent reoffending rate while all women completing the programme are believed to find stable housing and employment or education within one month of release.

### Award-winning

The plants grown by The Glasshouse team are primarily sold through their

award-winning interior landscaping service. The team of women in prison design, install and maintain indoor plants in offices, hospitality, and retail spaces. The Glasshouse also sells its special plants, shipping across the UK through its webshop and bespoke corporate gifting service.

Every plant represents a second chance for women in prison, and as a community interest company, all profits are reinvested to expand and grow its programmes in prisons.

[www.theglasshouse.co.uk](http://www.theglasshouse.co.uk)





## SPONSORED COLUMN

# Recent Changes to the Immigration Rules

**On the 14th of March 2024, the UK Government published a Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules, including various significant amendments which came into effect on the 4th of April 2024.**

We feel that many of these changes have been introduced in a frantic and tokenistic manner, in order for the government to emphasise a newly 'tough' approach to inbound immigration. This article will briefly explore the inadequacies of the changes to the Skilled Worker Visa and Partner Visa, and the implications these will subsequently have on prospective visa applicants.

## Changes to Skilled Worker visa

Social Care workers under the Skilled Worker visa route will no longer be allowed to bring their dependents (partners and children) to the UK. This requirement seems unintuitive and irrational, as the change does not apply to all dependants under the Skilled Worker route. For example, an architect under the Skilled Worker route may bring his/her dependents, whilst a social care worker cannot.

Such changes are likely to deter people from applying for the Care Worker visa, which is especially concerning given the industry's current chronic struggle to employ from within the resident labour force.

The baseline minimum salary required by Skilled Workers (excluding Health and Care Workers and Education Workers on national pay scales) will also rise drastically from £26,200 to £38,700. It is plain that this

rule will have a significant negative impact on various sectors and industries within the UK economy. The Social Care Sector is predominantly made of up migrant workers, and UK employers may now be unable to afford the huge increase in the minimum salary. Further, the startup industry (which relies heavily on growing talent) will be unable to afford the individuals that they headhunt for specific roles. Finally, professional service firms who employ foreign graduates from UK Universities will also struggle to justify the large salaries required for their intakes.

## Changes to partner (family visa) sponsorship

There has also been an increase in the minimum income requirement for a sponsor to support a family application under Appendix FM. As of this month, the relevant sum rose from £18,600 to £29,000, and later this year it is projected to increase further to £34,500. By 2025, it will be £38,700. The UK Government is placing an unwarranted financial burden on people who simply happen to have a relationship with a non-British or settled person.

Ultimately, in our opinion, the above changes represent a lack of government understanding in relation to the significant contributions made by migrant workers to our economy. The effects of the changes will likely be significant and burdensome for many, and the impact will certainly be something to keep a close eye on over the coming months, as we continue to evaluate the Home Office's UK immigration policies.

# We are abseiling

**LCCI's international trade specialist Elizabeth Skewes Castañeda joined the Mayor of London Michael Mainelli and a host of other intrepid City folk to abseil 215 metres down the Leadenhall Building – known as the 'Cheesegrater'.**

## Solutions

Why? Not just to achieve

an adrenaline rush but also to raise funds for The Lord Mayor's Appeal supporting causes to find solutions to some of London's most pressing societal issues including homelessness, low numeracy, financial inclusion and ending the stigma of mental health in the workplace.

[www.thelordmayorsappeal.org](http://www.thelordmayorsappeal.org)



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# The perimenopause and menopause in the workplace

by Dr Theodora Kalentzi

*"This is not me."*

*"I've lost my confidence."*

*"I never used to be emotional and now I cry easily but I know I'm not depressed."*

*"I feel scared and embarrassed to talk about it with my manager."*

These words are typical of what women tell me, a menopause specialist, when they come for help with their menopause symptoms. Women going through a 'troublesome menopause' often find it has detrimental effects on their work. Surveys on the impact of menopausal symptoms consistently find that over a third of women say the symptoms have affected their work-life. Research also shows that up to a third of women will experience severe menopausal symptoms and right now it is estimated that more than 1.5 million working women are affected in this way.

## Taboo

Fortunately, in recent years we have become more aware of how this physical change can affect women

in the workplace and increasingly, organisations are taking steps to support women in this situation.

However, there is still a long way to go in terms of giving women the support they need.

The topic remains a taboo area for many women and they can find it difficult to talk about openly.

A 2021 survey of over 2,000 women working in the UK's finance sector found that eight in ten women did not disclose their menopause status. Forty seven per cent of these women were less likely to apply for promotion in their organisations and twenty five per cent were more likely to leave the workforce before retirement. Clearly, there is still a culture of silence and the finance sector is losing talent due to the effect of menopausal symptoms. The positive aspect was that, given the right support, women said they wanted to remain and progress in financial services.

## Transition

The menopause is a natural change for most women and is the ceasing of the menstrual cycle, usually in midlife but sometimes much earlier. This change doesn't usually happen abruptly and there is a transition stage known as the perimenopause which can go on for years. The perimenopause and menopause can cause symptoms, which can continue even after the periods have stopped, sometimes for life.

Medical literature lists at least 30 menopausal symptoms. Hot flushes and sweats are well-known complaints but there are other common symptoms including fatigue, disturbed sleep and emotional changes ranging from low mood to anxiety and panic

attacks. Many women also complain of brain fog and poor memory, which can lead to difficulty in coping.

The fact is that regardless of their severity, symptoms can be manageable and in due course, reversible. Women may lose confidence but not their ability. With the right medical treatment and with support in the workplace, women can get back on track.

## Facilities

In practical terms, support in the workplace involves both the workplace environment and working conditions. A risk assessment of the work area can be carried out and the right facilities provided, with good ventilation, access to changing facilities and proximity to lavatories.

Regarding working conditions, a pragmatic working programme tailored to the individual is very effective. For example, an employee may need to start later or earlier depending on when their symptoms affect them. It can help those with poor sleep to start work after 10.00 a.m. and to have afternoon rather than breakfast meetings. Breaks between meetings should be considered particularly when having back-to-back video meetings.

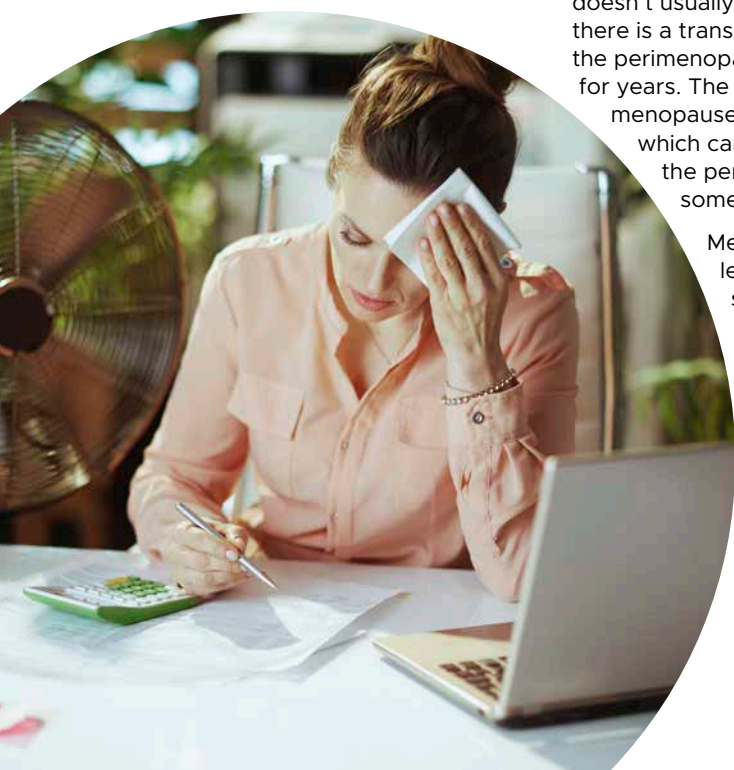
## Support

Employers can consider having either a wellbeing policy that encompasses the menopause or an additional stand-alone menopause policy. They can also offer access to menopause support groups and menopause champions, and funding for medical management.

Menopausal symptoms need not interfere with a woman's work-life. With the right support, both medically and in the workplace, women can flourish and move up the career ladder, while organisations can benefit from talent retention and progression, two factors that ultimately drive performance and innovation.

**Dr Kalentzi is founder and clinical lead of Medical Prime**

[www.medicalprime.co.uk](http://www.medicalprime.co.uk)







# How charity fundraising can have a positive effect on a team

by Karl Thompson

**“In spring last year, after completing the London Royal Parks half marathon in October 2022 with some colleagues, we came up with a crazy idea ... to run 100 kilometres round Antigua to raise money for children with cancer and premature babies in the Caribbean. We were a few pints deep at the time but even the following day we knew the idea had legs.**

Our company represents Sandals Resorts and Beaches Resorts, a group of luxury all-inclusive hotels in the Caribbean. The business has its own charitable arm, the Sandals Foundation, which was set up in 2009 to give back to the communities where the hotels operate but we struggled for years to get support from the UK market. We wanted to do something bold to encourage our staff and partners to get onboard, so we came up with the Island Run – Antigua 2023, a 100 k race in the blistering Caribbean heat over four consecutive days, with the goal of raising £100,000 for charity.

## Emergency care

We decided that the money raised would be donated to two of the Sandals Foundation's beneficiaries, the SickKids Caribbean Initiative which helps children with cancer and other

serious illnesses, and the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre which is the only facility in Antigua providing emergency care for premature babies.



The build up to the event took a lot of work – from calls with the local police force to close roads around the island, to organising emergency medical care for runners taking part. We all banded together to train hard for the challenge, sharing tips and advice, and shamelessly begged colleagues, friends, family members and acquaintances to sponsor us to help us reach our ambitious fundraising goal.

## Mammoth task

In October 2023, a team of runners from the UK – including me, a handful of other team members and some of our partners, touched down in Antigua. The reception was incredible, word had clearly spread about the mammoth task we were about to embark on. We were taken straight to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre to meet some of the doctors working there and families whose children would benefit from the medical equipment that the money raised would fund.

The first day of the run was certainly a wake-up call. The heat and humidity made

it more difficult than we'd expected, even though we set off at 4 a.m. Yet the fact that we were all there to achieve the same goal gave us a sense of camaraderie. There were some extremely challenging elements, including on day three when I sustained an injury and had to cut a hole in my trainer to be able to walk, but together we all helped each other through it. On the final day, we held each other up – quite literally in some cases – and hobbled over the finish line together.

## Life-changing

We were delighted that we collectively managed to raise a total of £102,000 for the Sandals Foundation's beneficiaries. This life-changing sum of money has already been put to good use and we've seen firsthand the impact it has had on families in the Caribbean.

This year, to coincide with the Sandals Foundation's 15th anniversary, we're in the middle of planning our next fundraising event, the Island Challenge – Saint Vincent 2024. This will include running, kayaking and hiking across Saint Vincent, and even climbing up the island's active volcano to raise another £100,000. Wish us luck! ”

**Karl Thompson is managing director of Unique Vacations UK Ltd. – sales and marketing representatives of Sandals and Beaches Resorts**

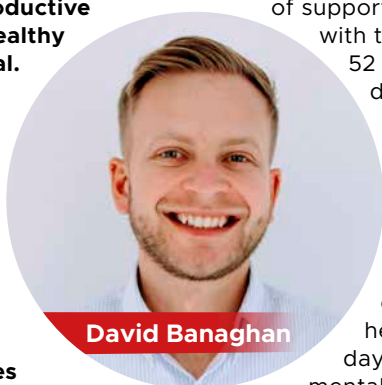
[www.sandals.co.uk](http://www.sandals.co.uk)





# Mental health days can help your business support employee wellbeing

**When it comes to a productive business, happy and healthy employees are essential. Whether it is physical safety or mental wellbeing, maintaining a good working environment is the responsibility of any business. Following Mental Health Awareness Week earlier this summer, David Banaghan argues that caring for your employees' wellbeing is more than just focusing on initiatives and free resources. Some companies are taking it as far as offering mental health days to help their employees recuperate and rest when they need it most. The benefits can range from improved productivity to more successful recruitment.**



## Mental health days in business

Mental health days are only one way

of supporting your workforces with their wellbeing. Some 52 per cent of employees don't feel they get adequate support when it comes to addressing their mental health at work.

Over one-third of companies celebrate mental health awareness days. However, with mental health days not being a legal requirement, many companies don't offer this as part of their wellbeing packages. Mental health days can be a good way of reducing the stigma and shame around taking a day for yourself as an employee, as well as being open and transparent with HR about the reasons one needs more time off.

Addressing mental health concerns deserves a holistic approach. Your workforce should be happy and

comfortable coming to work. Both personal and professional settings can cause problems with mental health, so being able to offer your staff the right support is necessary for ensuring they're happier and more productive in the workplace. Mental health days are only one of the many ways you can offer your workforce the additional support they need.

It is important to note that mental health days shouldn't be a replacement for mental health support. It is important that, as a business, you're offering comprehensive strategies for caring for your employees' wellbeing. Additional support can include assessing burnout rates and addressing the causes of mental health issues in the workplace.

## The cost of absenteeism

Untreated mental wellbeing concerns can lead to further absences than one day. Mental health days are important to offer your employees



a shame-free option for caring for their wellbeing. In the UK, sick leave hit a 10-year high, with more employees taking absences in 2023 than in previous years. This comes from a number of factors, including burnout and mental health issues.

Companies are seeing higher levels of absenteeism than ever before. With the average person taking 7.8 days of sick leave and the number being considerably higher in the public sector, companies are now having to reconsider their approach to health and wellbeing in the workplace.

Repeated sick leaves not only have an impact on your business but also on the comfort and confidence of your employees, so finding ways of approaching mental wellbeing and supported return to work is important.

Not only is absenteeism costing your business, but presenteeism is also a leading factor in costs. In fact, businesses are forking out between £33 and £42 billion a year due to this phenomenon. Whether it is from the stigma of taking time off work or believing taking time off causes more stress, there are plenty of reasons your employees won't be taking their mental wellbeing seriously enough. Instead of allowing them to struggle at work alone, opening up the discussions, recognising the signs of burnout, and offering the right support are crucial for the success of your business and workforce.

### The benefits of mental health days

#### Improves productivity

There is no doubt that mental health has a significant impact on your employee's productivity. Not only does absenteeism cause a drop in task completion, but even working employees struggling with their mental health can find it difficult to complete tasks. In fact, mental health issues such as anxiety can cause issues with concentration and even make meeting deadlines difficult.

Mental health days can ensure your employees have the space to step away from the day-to-day stress. This can help improve productivity as it eases the burden on your workforce.

#### Company culture and morale

Companies that don't offer mental health days might find their productivity slipping during stressful times of the year. If you're not offering mental health days or opening the conversation on mental health enough,

you could be contributing to the stigma around poor mental health in the workplace.

Some 12.7 per cent of all sick leave stems from mental health issues, making it more important than ever to consider your own approach to the mental health dialogue. If your employees don't feel comfortable opening up about their mental wellbeing, it can lead to further absences which aren't recorded as mental health – making it more difficult for you to offer the right support. Ensuring you're presenting your company in the right light is vital for your occupational health.

**The right mental health wellbeing packages can also make your company more attractive to job seekers who value this as an incentive. By investing in your employees, you'll be able to build a workforce that values and supports your business in return.**

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The right mental health wellbeing packages can also make your company more attractive to job seekers who value this as an incentive. By investing in your employees, you'll be able to build a workforce that values and supports your business in return.

### Avoid 'wellbeing washing'

Some companies might be 'wellbeing washing' without offering the right resources. 'Wellbeing washing' can come from companies celebrating awareness days without actively contributing to the wellbeing of their employees. As companies grow and branding becomes more important to the public, your social responsibilities become crucial to your business identity.

Mental health days can be a good way to allow your employees to take the days they need to support their mental health without causing shame or embarrassment around the time off.

### Cost-saving

Mental health days can also be a great way for your business to save money. It might sound counter-intuitive, but by allowing your employees to take more time off when they truly need it, they're more likely to be productive when they are at work. This provides you with better quality work, happier employees, and hopefully a reduction in sick leave going forward.

Mental wellbeing is only one social responsibility that you should be considering but it is an important one. As the average sick leave continues to grow, being able to care for your employees' wellbeing is vital. Mental health days are another way you can support your staff and give them the time they need to recover without adding to the stigma around this area.

**David Banaghan is interim chief executive of Occupop, a provider of industry-leading recruitment software**

[www.occupop.com](http://www.occupop.com)





# Corporate Video Packages

What Can

## WE OFFER?

### Promotional Video

- One shoot day at a location of your choice
- 1 x 30-60 second promotional video to showcase your business
- 1 x 10 second social media edit

### Premium Brand

- 2 x shoot days at locations of your choice
- 1 x main brand video, up to 1 minute in length
- 1 x social media edit up to 30 seconds
- Drone footage included

### Bespoke Video

- 3 x shoot days at locations of your choice
- 1 x main brand video, up to 5 mins in length
- 5 x 10-30 second social media edits
- Drone footage included



**Please contact Gina Forshaw on**  
**Telephone: 020 7846 4809**  
**[gina.forshaw@crosbyassociates.co.uk](mailto:gina.forshaw@crosbyassociates.co.uk)**





# LCCI Member News



## Baxter Freight

DHL Freight grows the UK partnership with Baxter Freight

Globally renowned DHL, and their logistics arm DHL Freight continues to grow its partnership with Nottingham-based freight forwarder, Baxter Freight. This partnership will support companies who are moving goods from the UK to Europe with more routes and options to reach their customers and stay competitive in the European marketplace.

Baxter Freight was initially named the UK partner for DHL Freight in 2020. With four years of steady sales growth, within pallet and groupage freight, the partnership has strengthened to offer UK businesses the opportunity to move any volume of shipment with a globally recognised brand, receiving the localised dedicated service from the Baxter Freight team.

"Since Brexit, our partnership with Baxter Freight has grown step by step. Baxter Freight provides a strong commercial team which stands for a personal and "local" service, facilitating smoother beginnings, operations, and expansions in international shipping." Thomas Vogel, COO DHL Freight.



## Invest Barbados

Trade and Investment Mission UK to Barbados

18-22 November 2024

Register here: <https://www.investbarbados.org/events/trade-investment-mission-uk-2024/>

### Why Barbados?

- Welcoming investment climate
- Availability of business hubs with support
- Strong human capital
- Sound and transparent regulatory framework
- High-quality infrastructure and technological readiness
- Expanding treaty network
- Envious lifestyle

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[stthomas@investbarbados.org](mailto:stthomas@investbarbados.org)



[ajproducts.co.uk](http://ajproducts.co.uk)

## AJ Products Ltd

AJ Products, a leading Swedish workspace furniture brand, renowned for its commitment to employee wellbeing and sustainability, proudly announces its UK operation's 25th anniversary.

The UK is a pivotal market for AJ Products, serving as a cornerstone for collaboration and growth between the two countries. From its inception, AJ Products has prioritised employee wellbeing, believing that a workplace designed with employees at its core fosters productivity and happiness.

To mark this milestone anniversary and core commitments, AJ Products has launched its most ambitious campaign to date: Happiness at Work. This initiative encapsulates AJ Product's commitment to excellence in every aspect of its business, from workspace design to customer service.

Happiness at Work will impact everyone in the workspace; ergonomic furniture that promotes movement and comfort, practical equipment enhancing efficiency without compromising wellbeing, and innovative flexible workspaces fostering collaboration in a digital age.



## Mindshift Digital

Mindshift Digital, a London boutique digital marketing start-up launched in October 2023, is introducing its Virtual Marketing Department Service for UK companies, offering access to a team of marketing professionals for the price of one. This service is specifically designed for start-ups, SMEs, and businesses that do not have an internal marketing team or need help executing their strategy.

Our service provides an integrated solution combining digital and traditional marketing strategies. Our remote team of specialists offers a comprehensive range of marketing services, customized to meet each client's unique needs and budget. The Virtual Marketing Department Service (VMD) manages all aspects of daily marketing operations.

Our dedicated creative team is a key component of our service, capable of meeting all your company's design needs. Our team is equipped to fulfill every requirement of a traditional marketing department. Let us elevate your marketing efforts with expertise and dedication.

Learn more by visiting  
[www.mindshiftdigital.co.uk](http://www.mindshiftdigital.co.uk)



## Capital City College Group

### 01F Internships

Introducing our exclusive internship programme connecting forward-thinking companies with top-tier talent for short, impactful project work.

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- **Flexibility:** Benefit from the agility of short-term internships – perfect for projects requiring focused, dynamic contributions.
- **Talent Pipeline:** Identify and nurture potential future apprentices while infusing your team with diverse skill sets and ideas.
- **Cost Effective:** Depending on the individual experience we only request £150-350 per day fee.

### Contact Us:

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[www.01founders.co/internships](http://www.01founders.co/internships)



## Brain Tumour Research

A dance teacher whose uncle was a renowned pianist and music producer has hosted a fundraiser in his memory to help raise vital funds for research into the disease that took his life.

Georgina Parkinson, a franchisee of The Little Dance Academy, teaches classes in Kensington, London, and in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, where she lives.

On Sunday 14 April, in recognition of what would have been her uncle Guy Dearden's 68th birthday, she taught ballet at the Parsonage Lane Community Centre in Bishop's Stortford using only songs that he produced and, instead of charging for her classes, she encouraged donations to the charity Brain Tumour Research.

Brain Tumour Research funds sustainable research at dedicated centres in the UK. It also campaigns for the Government and larger cancer charities to invest more in research into brain tumours in order to speed up new treatments for patients and, ultimately, to find a cure.

<https://braintumourresearch.org/>



## Specialist Risk Group

Specialist Risk Group ("SRG"), the fast-growing, people and culture focussed, specialist insurance intermediary has today announced that it has signed a definitive agreement to be acquired by Warburg Pincus, the global growth investor, and Temasek, the global investor. Closing is subject to customary closing conditions, including regulatory approvals. SRG's management team will invest alongside Warburg Pincus and Temasek and will continue to hold a significant stake in the business.

SRG was launched in January 2020 under the leadership of Group CEO Warren Downey and Group Deputy CEO Lee Anderson and currently employs over 600 people and places premiums of more than £1 billion. A combination of strong organic growth and a series of strategic investments and acquisitions has seen SRG grow dramatically into the natural home for specialist people and businesses since its inception.

Warburg Pincus and Temasek are both world class investors in their own right who will support the realisation of SRG's growth ambitions and its strategy.



## Hyatt Place London City East

Experience Sicily, Stay Local  
New Restaurant Launch Sotto Cucina & Bar at Hyatt Place London City East

We are thrilled to announce the grand opening of Sotto Cucina & Bar, a contemporary Sicilian kitchen and bar, at Hyatt Place London City East in Whitechapel on 14th May 2024. Led by Sicilian executive chef Alfio Laudani, Sotto Cucina & Bar offers a unique menu of Sicilian dishes crafted from quality British ingredients, with select imports like Etna olive oil and lemons. The restaurant, with its rustic elegance and contemporary art, features a 70-seater dining area, deli bar, and outdoor 'terrazza'.

Join us to experience the charm of Sicilian trattorias with dishes like Timballo alla Norma and vegan options. Enjoy exclusive cocktails and Mediterranean wines.

Book now to be among the first to dine at this exquisite venue. For more information, visit [sottorestaurant.london](http://sottorestaurant.london).

# Coming up...



## JULY

■ **Implementing a Green HR Strategy for Sustainable Businesses**  
Monday 1 July, 1.45pm – 2.30pm

■ **Classifying your goods and customs procedure codes**  
Tuesday 2 July, 10.00am – 10.45am

■ **Go Connect Lunchtime Networking at Crystal Palace Football Club**  
Wednesday 3 July, 12.00pm – 2.30pm

■ **Asian Business Association Summer Reception, in collaboration with India Week at Royal Lancaster Hotel**  
Friday 5 July, 6.30pm – 9.00pm  
Programme Partner: University of Westminster

■ **LCCI Quarterly Economic Survey Report Launch with Vicky Pryce, Chief Economic Advisor and Board Member, Cebr, James Rentoul, Director at Savanta ComRes and Ian Daniels, Property Partner at Haysmacintyre**  
Tuesday 9 July, 2.30pm – 4.00pm  
Sponsored by Haysmacintyre

## LCCI Annual Summer Party

**Thursday 11 July, 6.30pm – 8.30pm**  
Westminster Abbey Garden

Join up to 150 members and guests at Westminster Abbey Gardens for the annual Summer Party taking place on Thursday 11 July. This prestigious event brings together key industry leaders, MPs and members for an evening of networking in this stunning venue boasting views of Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. Tickets start at £118.80 inc VAT for Patron and Premier Plus members.

**Sponsored by Fragomen LLP**

■ **Understanding Incoterms**  
Tuesday 16 July, 10.00am – 11.00am

■ **LCCI EA Club Summer Party at Sandals**  
Tuesday 16 July, 6.00pm – 8.00pm

■ **LCCI Cricket Day at the Kia Oval - Surrey v Yorkshire in the One Day Cup**  
Thursday 25 July, 10.30am onwards



■ **Leadership in International Trade**  
Tuesday 30 July, 10.00am – 11.00am

■ **Going for Gold: Celebrating the Summer Olympic Games networking at LCCI**  
Wednesday 31 July, 4.00pm – 6.00pm

## AUGUST Go Connect Networking

**Tuesday 6 August, 5.00pm – 7.00pm**  
Fazenda Rodizio Bar & Grill Bishopsgate

We are delighted to be hosted by Fazenda Rodizio Bar & Grill Bishopsgate on Tuesday 6 August for the summer edition of Go Connect, our monthly free networking event exclusively for LCCI Patron and Premier Plus members.

## SEPTEMBER

■ **Overseas supply chain management**  
Tuesday 3 September, 10.00am – 11.00am

■ **Mind the Gap - Your business reputation and financial well-being**  
Thursday 5 September, 10.00am – 10.45am

■ **Building a Culture of Trust in Small Business Team**  
Monday 9 September, 1.45pm – 2.30pm

■ **How can using AI improve your international communications and boost your exports?**  
Thursday 12 September, 2.00pm – 3.00pm

■ **Maximise Your Membership at LCCI**  
Thursday 12 September, 3.00pm – 5.00pm

■ **Go Connect Networking at Quilter Cheviot**  
Thursday 12 September, 5.30pm – 7.30pm

## Cyber Security Escape Room

**Wednesday 25 September, 10.00am – 12.00pm**  
LCCI

Members are invited to attend a unique and engaging Cyber Security training event with the London MET Police Cyber Protect Team on Wednesday 25 September at LCCI. This interactive session features a Cyber-Security Escape Room designed to teach good online security behaviours through fun and challenging problem-solving tasks. Participants will tackle key topics like phishing, data leakage, and creating strong passwords while competing to escape in the quickest time. Once everyone has 'escaped' and the winning team is declared, there will be a debrief where the Cyber Protect Team will explain each topic and its impact on your business's cyber security. Tickets are just £12 inc VAT for LCCI Members.

■ **Building a Culture of Innovation Through Employee Hackathons**  
Monday 30 September, 1.45pm – 2.30pm

Visit <https://www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/events/see-all-events/> to book events





## Thameside

Vicinity at The Tower Hotel hosted LCCI's Business Owners Club summer reception on the banks of the Thames, with guests enjoying views over St Katherine's Dock, Tower Bridge, The Shard and Tower of London.

Nick Charles, head of LCCI membership team, welcomed guests and oversaw the prize draw.

The Business Club Owners' programme partner is LenovoPRO

[www.lenovopro.com](http://www.lenovopro.com)





# Two minute interview

Hamza Basyouni of HRB Group Limited

## Who are you?

I am the founder and principal of HRB Group which I describe as an innovative futurist venture builder, strategic management practice and advocacy. We focus on changes to people, processes, products and platforms.

## What was your first job in London?

I grew up working with my father in our family-owned business. It was special and unique and provided me with early invaluable experiences beyond just business. It was based in a vibrant Notting Hill/ Bayswater area and I learned a lot. I started working weekends at the age of 13 for pocket money and progressed to become a manager and eventually a senior director at the tender age of 20.

After graduating in 2009, I went into finance and trading and became one of the youngest commodities

futures traders on the Intercontinental Exchange as a part of subsidiary business for one of the oldest and largest brokerages in London.

## Which one business achievement over the last 12 months are you most proud of, and why?

The main one is navigating my first year as a sole founder. With that journey came a number of projects that gave me recognition for my work as an ambassador for technology at Davos 2024, a London Advocate and a top 100 international thought leader in finance, fintech, AI and digital assets.

## If you were advising a young entrepreneur which business person would you suggest as a model?

I suggest looking at a number of people from of all ages, walks of life and periods of time. Integrity is paramount but in order to understand that, we must learn from all types of people. I don't believe one should model oneself on any one individual – that way you wouldn't be disappointed, but rather inspired.

## How do you think the transport system in London can be improved?

I have direct access to the Central and Elizabeth lines. The Elizabeth Line has been transformative; significantly improving access to Canary Wharf. However, from my experience, the rail journey time metric and costs can be improved for everybody and within locations with lower foot traffic.

## What is your favourite and least favourite thing about London?

I'm a Londoner born and bred and probably too biased to answer this objectively. What I will say is that London always surprises me in its diversity, innovation resilience, social aspects and change although it might not always appear that way on the surface.

## If you were Mayor of London for the day which one thing would you change?

I'm a strategist at heart and there is too much happening to change. Any change for me is like figuring out a Rubik's cube that's connected to hundreds of other cubes – one day is not enough.

## Who would you consider an appropriate person to play you in a movie of your life?

Tom Hardy

## What is your favourite quotation?

"The world's greatest achievers have been those who have always stayed focused on their goals and have been consistent in their efforts." Dr Roopleen, a motivational writer and personal development coach.

[www.hrbgroup.co.uk](http://www.hrbgroup.co.uk)





# A strong case for leaving bird proofing to professionals

Cleankill Pest Control surveyors visit many different types of premises every day and are often shocked at what they find.



This was certainly the case when Surveyor Sam Boylett visited a building in Hove, East Sussex. He was specifically asked to look at an emergency fire escape that had been 'proofed' by the building manager.

The building manager had received a quote for bird proofing from a competitor they thought was excessive and so decided to take matters into their own hands.

Poorly installed netting had not stopped birds entering and there was excrement everywhere. In addition, there was evidence of birds getting tangled in the netting.

The "door" that was installed using CDs as a ballast weight

is against regulations as it may cause people to get caught in it in the event of a fire. A door opening both ways should be installed.

Pigeons take advantage of the warmer weather to sit on ledges and pipework while their foulings fall to the floor below. In this case, the foulings have created a dangerously slippery surface on the fire escape and bird spikes have been installed on hand rails which could cause injuries to users if there is a fire.

*Cleankill Pest Control Managing Director Paul Bates said:* "It's important for building managers and owners to consider the consequences of not using a professional service in order to save money. In this case,

there could have been a danger to life and the person responsible could find themselves in hot water."

**"It's important for building managers and owners to consider the consequences of not using a professional service in order to save money."**

If a building has been netted to prevent birds nesting the following season, the birds will look for the tiniest gap and will be back in residence if the netting has not been fitted properly. Legally, once they have started nesting, birds cannot be disturbed without a licence and a good reason.

The only sure way to deter pest birds is with expertly fitted and maintained netting. Professionally fitted netting should barely be visible and can be combined with tools like bird spikes which don't harm the birds but prevent them from landing.

As registered waste carriers, Cleankill can carry out removal of bird fouling, as well as contaminated items, from infested properties.

Cleankill has been solving pest problems for commercial and domestic customers since 2005. For a free quote or cost comparison go to [www.cleankill.co.uk](http://www.cleankill.co.uk)



pest control

**0800 056 5477**

[CLEANKILL.CO.UK](http://CLEANKILL.CO.UK)

CONTACT CLEANKILL FOR

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NO HIDDEN COSTS  
EXPERT ADVICE**






**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE**

We invest in people Gold





@cleankilluk

# Two minute interview

## Matt Monette of Deel

### Who are you?

I am the country lead and head of expansion for the UK and Ireland team at Deel. My role is to work across our client-facing teams to help them expand our client base, grow partner relationships and drive revenue growth. Deel is an all-in-one HR platform that allows companies to simplify every aspect of managing an international workforce – from culture and onboarding to local payroll and compliance. We also offer additional tools to help teams manage their complete HR infrastructure through our easy-to-use platform.

### What was your first job in London?

I was as an enterprise account executive with a Canadian company expanding into the UK. I was the first hire moved from HQ to help build out their UK footprint and team. It was great exposure and I learned the ins and outs of building remote teams in new regions.

### Which one business achievement over the last 12 months are you most proud of, and why?

Deel has been recognised as one of the fastest growing SaaS (software as a service) companies of all time. Our unique value proposition and ability to solve complex business problems has led us to scale and grow at a crazy pace, while driving \$500 million ARR in 2024. Being only a five-year old company,

this is something we are incredibly proud of.

### If you were advising a young entrepreneur which business person would you suggest as a model?

Alex Bouaziz, our chief executive and co-founder at Deel. He has built an amazing company in a short amount of time by leveraging the power of remote work and hiring the best people, no matter where they live. The impact has been incredible, improving the quality of life of many of our employees, while giving them the flexibility to work anywhere they want. The impacts to diversity, equity and inclusion of our global team have been a phenomenal by-product of this.

### How do you think the transport system in London can be improved?

Although the transport system is pretty good, it can be better. I would look to revamp every tube line like the Elizabeth Line to include air-con and wifi.

### Which piece of red tape causes most problems for your company and why?

We have a team that is firing all cylinders at all times. We often future proof a lot of our processes to ensure we do not run into delays and issues that may obstruct our clients' success. One area that I feel could be

improved is the speed of the visa process when we are looking at helping a company relocate talent or sponsor a new employee.

### What is your favourite and least favourite thing about London?

My favourite is the food scene; it is impossible to get bored of the amazing food options available in the city. My least favourite is the lack of summers that seem to occur these days – why so much rain?!

### If you were Mayor of London for the day which one thing would you change?

I would create a subsidy for companies that promote remote work. With the rising concern for global warming and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, remote work is a proven way to reduce in-city travel leading to higher emissions. Using some of the potential empty buildings to combat the cost of

living crisis to make housing more affordable for those that need it the most.

### Who would you consider an appropriate person to play you in a movie of your life?

Chris Evans; I mean who doesn't want Captain America to play them in a movie? Also, once someone said I resembled him, so I'm running with it.

### What is your favourite quotation?

"Great things in business are never done by one person; they're done by a team of people." Steve Jobs

[www.deel.com](http://www.deel.com)







# LCCI Member Offers



Jack Russell Debt Collection  
& Legal Process Servers

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We have been proud members of this great Chamber for many years now and have assisted many fellow members in recovering thousands and thousands of pounds quickly.

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### Contact

Please contact us at +44 0800 246 5958 or via email at [info@counter-ransomware.com](mailto:info@counter-ransomware.com), quoting the code 'LCCI24FS'. When you do, we'll be happy to send you a copy of our **C-RW Dos & Don'ts Guide on Ransomware Attacks**.

### OFFER

LCCI Members can get a free Cyber Security FractalScan audit to identify online vulnerabilities. This audit could qualify you for a £500,000 ransomware reimbursement through an affordable warranty program, covering loss of earnings and legal fees.



## ■ TRUSTED TECHNOLOGY NETWORK (TTN)

**Independent technical expertise for IP.** LCCI Members within the tech space with over £1million in annual revenues can receive a complimentary one-hour consultation on their business's intellectual property (IP) from TTN. Should this progress to a first project, such as the development of an IP strategy to underpin protection and commercialisation of their inventions and support investment rounds, TTN is happy to offer members a further 10% fee reduction.

### Contact

**Learn more at <https://www.trustedtn.com> or contact us at [info@trustedtn.com](mailto:info@trustedtn.com).**

### OFFER

**Complimentary one-hour consultation on their business's intellectual property (IP) from TTN and a further 10% fee reduction should this progress to a first project.**



## ■ ACE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

ACE / ATG UK excels in personalised travel solutions, optimising corporate travel experiences. Partnering with ATG enhances their capabilities, offering global reach, advanced technology, and comprehensive support. This collaboration ensures efficient booking, cost savings, and seamless travel experiences. Clients benefit from innovative tools, expert advice, and a reliable network, streamlining travel management and improving overall satisfaction. Find out how you can trace Co2 emissions for your corporate travel using specific tools and methodologies and incorporate sustainability into your travel policy.

### Contact

**[www.acetravel.co.uk](http://www.acetravel.co.uk)**

### OFFER

**ACE Travel Management would like to offer LCCI members a free of charge travel Policy review and advise on how you can integrate sustainability goals and tracking to meet your objectives.**



# New Members



**Who has joined the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the last two months?**

## **4Ward Communications Ltd**

T: 03443 916400

myservices@4ward-comms.co.uk

[www.4ward-communications.co.uk](http://www.4ward-communications.co.uk)

Technology and communications

## **Activate Trade Training Ltd**

[www.activate-training.co.uk](http://www.activate-training.co.uk)

Vocational training services

## **Adaptavis Ltd**

[www.adaptavis.com](http://www.adaptavis.com)

Business performance consultancy

## **Alex Jovanovic**

services@altuslearning.co.uk

[www.altuslearning.co.uk](http://www.altuslearning.co.uk)

Learning and development consultancy

## **All World Foods Ltd**

gelsys@allworldfoods.co.uk

Foods

## **At Cause Ltd**

[www.soniampnamara.com](http://www.soniampnamara.com)

Comms consulting and leadership training

## **Attanz Research**

[www.attanz.com](http://www.attanz.com)

ICT consultancy

## **Bolt Burdon**

T: 020 7288 4700

info@boltburdon.co.uk

[www.boltburdon.co.uk](http://www.boltburdon.co.uk)

Legal services

## **Capital Business Mentors**

[www.capitalbusinessmentors.com](http://www.capitalbusinessmentors.com)

Business mentors

## **Cibertsai Ltd**

T: 07387 804757

vmadala@cibertsai.ai

[www.cibertsai.ai](http://www.cibertsai.ai)

Cyber security AI transformation

## **CIKNOW Ltd**

T: 07718 341346

info@ciknow.com

[www.ciknow.com](http://www.ciknow.com)

Technology consultancy

## **Codepresso**

T: 07774 011781

growth@codepresso.kr

[www.codepresso.io](http://www.codepresso.io)

Global IT hiring

## **CodeXtra Ltd**

hello@codextra.co.uk

[www.codextra.co.uk](http://www.codextra.co.uk)

Custom software development

## **COFI Contracts**

info@coficontracts.com

[www.coficontracts.com](http://www.coficontracts.com)

Office fit out

## **Comfort Home Furnishing UK Ltd**

[www.comforthomefurnishing.co.uk](http://www.comforthomefurnishing.co.uk)

Wholesale of textiles

## **Corporate Coach Group Training**

T: 01452 856091

[www.corporatecoachgroup.com](http://www.corporatecoachgroup.com)

Training consultancy

## **Couture International Ltd**

[www.isabellkristensen.com](http://www.isabellkristensen.com)

Bespoke fashion design

## **Cubet Digital Ltd**

T: 07721 973710

cubet.uk@cubettech.com

[www.cubettech.com](http://www.cubettech.com)

AI digital transformation and consulting

## **DMR Training and Consultancy Ltd**

T: 01942 673047

dave@dmrltd.co.uk

[www.dmr-training.co.uk](http://www.dmr-training.co.uk)

Training provider

## **Dynamic Conferences and Events**

[www.dynamic-events.co.uk](http://www.dynamic-events.co.uk)

Conferences and events

## **Evenbreak**

T: 08456585717

info@evenbreak.co.uk

[www.evenbreak.co.uk](http://www.evenbreak.co.uk)

Specialist disability job board

## **Fetlock & Co Ltd**

T: 07510 139911

james@fetlock.co

[www.fetlock.co](http://www.fetlock.co)

International horse transport

## **Fettle UK**

T: 07853 109024

jordan@fettle.ie

[www.fettle-therapy.com](http://www.fettle-therapy.com)

Online therapy and wellness platform

## **Fitness First**

[www.fitnessfirst.com](http://www.fitnessfirst.com)

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## **Fluensys Ltd**

[www.fluensys.co.uk](http://www.fluensys.co.uk)

Engineering and innovation consultancy

## **Game Changer Training and Consulting Ltd**

T: 020 8144 1601

info@gamechangertac.co.uk

[www.gamechanger.com](http://www.gamechanger.com)

Training, coaching and consulting

## **Grangewood Corporation Ltd**

20 Tomswood Road, Chigwell, IG7 5QS

Property development

## **Greer Services Ltd**

[www.greer-services.com](http://www.greer-services.com)

Corporate strategy and transformation

## **Guavapay Ltd**

T: 020 4577 3333

info@guavapay.com

[www.guavapay.com](http://www.guavapay.com)

Financial services



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[www.hatching-dragons.com](http://www.hatching-dragons.com)  
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**Henx Europe UK Limited**

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 uk@henx.biz  
[www.henx.biz](http://www.henx.biz)  
 Logistics

**Hertfordshire Security Installations Ltd**

[www.hertssecurity.com](http://www.hertssecurity.com)  
 Locksmiths

**HyperionDev**

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 Andrewa@hyperiondev.com  
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[www.insight6.com](http://www.insight6.com)  
 Enhancing customer experience

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 praveen@insourceindia.com  
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[www.wifihire.co.uk](http://www.wifihire.co.uk)  
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[www.lsdigital.com](http://www.lsdigital.com)  
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**RAALC Law Firm**

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**Security Seal Technology Limited**

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[www.surecallcc.com](http://www.surecallcc.com)  
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 jlonngren@tcmcapital.co.uk  
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 Retail store

**The Minimalist**

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[www.theminimalist.in](http://www.theminimalist.in)  
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**Tolk**

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 hello@tolk.co.uk  
[www.tolk.co.uk](http://www.tolk.co.uk)  
 Language service provider

**Trade Flow Technology Limited**

[www.tradeflowtech.co.uk](http://www.tradeflowtech.co.uk)  
 Goods trade between UK and EU

**Umnai Ltd**

ken.cassar@umnai.com  
[www.umnai.com](http://www.umnai.com)  
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 administration@urbag.ws  
[www.urbag.ws](http://www.urbag.ws)  
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 jane@xysense.com  
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[www.zerengroup.com/en](http://www.zerengroup.com/en)  
 Business consultancy and investment

**Zeus Homes**

[www.zeushomes.co.uk](http://www.zeushomes.co.uk)  
 Property development

**ZR Consultants Ltd**

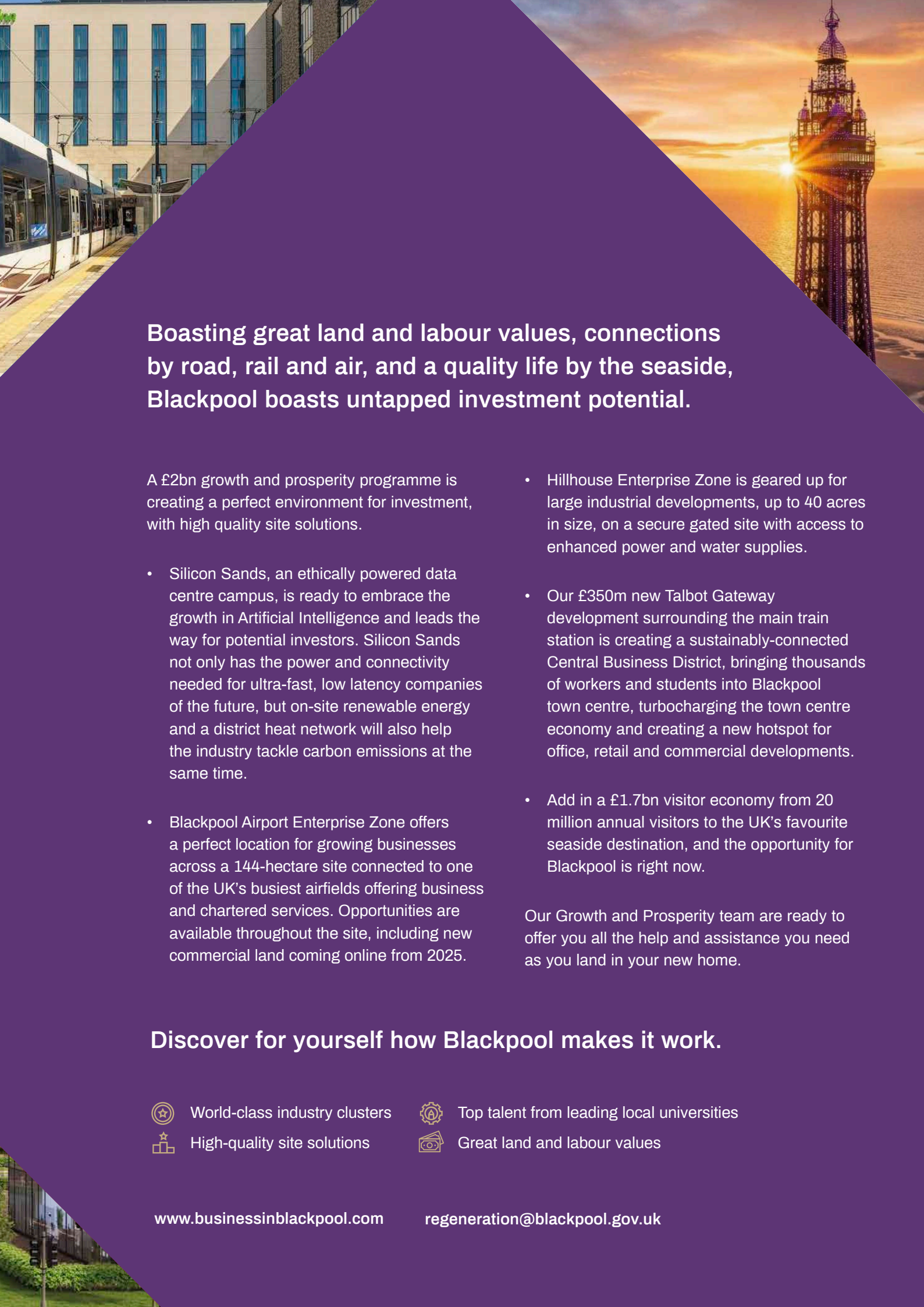
T: 020 8054 5033  
 jenny.dilworth@zrconsultants.co.uk  
[www.zrconsultants.co.uk](http://www.zrconsultants.co.uk)  
 Business consulting firm

# There are **two billion** reasons to invest in Blackpool.

A major regeneration is putting Blackpool on the map for investment and business growth.







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A £2bn growth and prosperity programme is creating a perfect environment for investment, with high quality site solutions.

- Silicon Sands, an ethically powered data centre campus, is ready to embrace the growth in Artificial Intelligence and leads the way for potential investors. Silicon Sands not only has the power and connectivity needed for ultra-fast, low latency companies of the future, but on-site renewable energy and a district heat network will also help the industry tackle carbon emissions at the same time.
- Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone offers a perfect location for growing businesses across a 144-hectare site connected to one of the UK's busiest airfields offering business and chartered services. Opportunities are available throughout the site, including new commercial land coming online from 2025.
- Hillhouse Enterprise Zone is geared up for large industrial developments, up to 40 acres in size, on a secure gated site with access to enhanced power and water supplies.
- Our £350m new Talbot Gateway development surrounding the main train station is creating a sustainably-connected Central Business District, bringing thousands of workers and students into Blackpool town centre, turbocharging the town centre economy and creating a new hotspot for office, retail and commercial developments.
- Add in a £1.7bn visitor economy from 20 million annual visitors to the UK's favourite seaside destination, and the opportunity for Blackpool is right now.

Our Growth and Prosperity team are ready to offer you all the help and assistance you need as you land in your new home.

## Discover for yourself how Blackpool makes it work.



World-class industry clusters



High-quality site solutions



Top talent from leading local universities



Great land and labour values

[www.businessinblackpool.com](http://www.businessinblackpool.com)

[regeneration@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@blackpool.gov.uk)

# Scott freedom

Cathy Scott, LCCI's stakeholder engagement manager, was awarded the Freedom of the City of London at a ceremony in the Chamberlain's Court in May.

In being so honoured, she joins the likes of Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher and Mary Berry.

Cathy Scott is pictured with Danny Herbert, Chamberlain's Court Beadle and a sheep, signifying the traditional Freeman's right to drive flocks of the animals over London Bridge.



# Being lucky

LCCI Executive Club members were able to show off their vocal skills at Lucky Voice's brand-new venue in Waterloo Station earlier this summer.

Guests enjoyed delicious canapes whilst networking and having a good sing-a-long.



# Honoured

**Congratulations to Subhash Thakrar who was awarded an OBE for services to British trade and investment in Africa in the King's Birthday Honours.**

A popular former chair of LCCI, Thakrar played a leading role in

setting up the Chamber's successful Asian Business Association. He has appeared in *London Business Matters* on a number of occasions writing on international trade matters as well as being featured for his impressive charity endeavours in Uganda.



## Powering scale-up businesses

ExCeL London hosted the Evening Standard SME XPO earlier this year. Billed as UK's "leading exhibition and conference dedicated to SME founders and decision makers who are looking to scale", it was logical that LCCI took a stand.

### Keynote

Other features of the event included 'meet the investor', speed networking, workshops and keynote speakers such as Rochelle Humes, Tim Martin and Theo Paphitis.

[www.smexpo.co.uk](http://www.smexpo.co.uk)



# Answers to The Knowledge

On page 13

1

Dame Cressida Dick. She held the position for six years from 2017.

Dame Cressida Dick. By UK Home Office, OGL 3



2

The Prospect of Whitby. It was once frequented by sellers of bodies washed up in the Thames to medical schools for anatomical research.

3

Dylan Jones was appointed in June 2023. He formerly edited GQ magazine.

4

Bob Marley. He lived just over the river from the park in Oakley Road, Chelsea.



Bob Marley

5

Ben Jonson (1572-1637). The dramatist (*The Alchemist*, *Bartholomew Fair* and *Volpone* for example) and poet was a friend and rival of Shakespeare.

6

Billy Vunipola. Born in Australia, he qualified for England on residency grounds. Vunipola was fined €240 for what he called an "unfortunate misunderstanding".

7

Just the one – Shepherd's Bush Market on the Circle and Hammersmith & City Lines.

8

The Gielgud Theatre. It was named as a tribute to Sir John Gielgud who had acted there many times, and to distinguish it from the newly-opened Shakespeare's Globe on the South Bank.

9

Thirteen. It was unlucky for 12 of them.

10

The Royal Festival Hall. It was built as part of the Festival of Britain and opened in May 1951.



By Ungry Young Man from Vienna, Austria - Royal Festival Hall, CC BY 2.0

# On the spot

**The Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce's flagship event, the Hillingdon Business Expo, took place in May. Celebrating its tenth anniversary, it attracted over 130 exhibitors and 1,200 visitors.**

It is the largest free business expo in London, funded through sponsorship from local businesses and stakeholders including Brunel University London, Heathrow Airport, The Beck Theatre, Moore Kingston Smith and Old Spot Pub Company.

## Business support

The expo took place in the Indoor Athletic Centre at Brunel, bringing local companies together to network. This created opportunities within the local supply chain, boosting brand awareness and business support for companies operating in and around the Hillingdon Borough.

Alongside the all-day networking, delegates were entertained with features such as golf simulator and flight simulators, VR headsets, 360 camera and a magician.



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COVER STORY

## London events sector booming

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# London events sector booming

**With the existential threat of the covid-19 pandemic thankfully becoming a distant memory, the events sector is once again booming and doing what it does best: bringing people together.**

Prior to the shock of the pandemic, the UK events industry was valued at around \$75bn in 2019, and is expected to grow to \$139.9bn by 2032, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of five per cent from 2023 to 2032. Among the most valuable events are corporate conferences and meetings, typically generating annual income in excess of £20 billion nationally, although other key earners include:

- **New product launches**
- **Celebration of religious or cultural festivals**
- **Sporting events**
- **Music events**
- **Celebrating personal achievements and milestones**

Among all the cities in the UK, London is biggest earner, and the trendsetter for event production, setting the bar for the industry as the sector adapts to the changing needs and expectations of the digital world and the growth of social media.

London, the world's largest cultural hub, is always leading innovation. Technology has brought huge transformations to the event industry, while factors like changing consumer behaviour and preferences, including those brought about by the pandemic, and sustainability are also playing their part in the evolution of the sector.

This era of advancements has seen event producers successfully harnessing the power of augmented reality, digital reality, and artificial intelligence to create immersive and interactive events and shows. From holographic shows to AI-driven chatbots improving attendee engagement, technology is pushing the limits of what is possible in event design and planning.

Event organisers are also embracing sustainable event practices, with eco-friendly events and pioneering green initiatives. From reducing harmful plastics to sourcing biodegradable products for catering, the city's events are increasingly

becoming environmentally friendly. These efforts are not only reducing the carbon footprint of the London industry, but also inspiring global event organisers to follow the lead.

It's not all hi-tech though, an undeniable part of the appeal of events in London is the city's history. The London event production industry is storied, taking us back to the grand royal ceremonies and exhibitions of antiquity.

The city offers a range of venues from the most modern mega-venues via quirky pop ups to famed historical landmarks, all of which has helped London's event industry to become the backbone of the city's economy, creating thousands of jobs and generating billions in revenue.

London's event producers are constantly creating memories, fashioning communities, forging friendships and connections, and reimagining, reinventing, and redefining how we gather, connect, and have a good time. Party on.



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# Welcome to Boutique Capital

As described below, we are a London based specialist real estate debt advisory firm.

We launched in 2012 and the Boutique team is proud of its professional achievements. Consistently assisting our clients in structuring the best funding solutions for real estate development across the UK, involving both residential and commercial projects.

My name is Alison Proctor, Head of Development at Boutique Capital, together with Director, Michael White we can advise on all your development finance needs. Our highly experienced team have the resources and proven knowledge to structure the best options across a wide selection of trusted lenders which includes the high street, challenger, and private banks, as well as other alternative finance providers.

For 2024 'Green Finance' has become a hot topic of conversation in development funding. The team at Boutique Capital understand how market forces react to Environment, Social and Governance factors (ESG) and how investing has grown. Importantly, we have grown with it and know ways to create and maintain



value for developers and Housing Associations working to ESG strategies.

I am regularly advising on how best to take advantage of green finance incentives, where developers can not only meet legislative requirements but also reduce the build costs associated with sustainable development projects.

## CASE STUDIES

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- Refinancing of a London mixed use block, for banking, retail and residential of 16 units - £13.8 million

- Investment loan for 2 apartment blocks, £29 million secured at exceptionally competitive rates. Fully sold GDV 45 million.
- Retrofit upgrade to Passivhaus standard for a Housing Association £8.6 million
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**Alison Proctor, Head of Development -**  
**07738 865223 or**  
**[Alison@boutiquecapital.com](mailto:Alison@boutiquecapital.com)**



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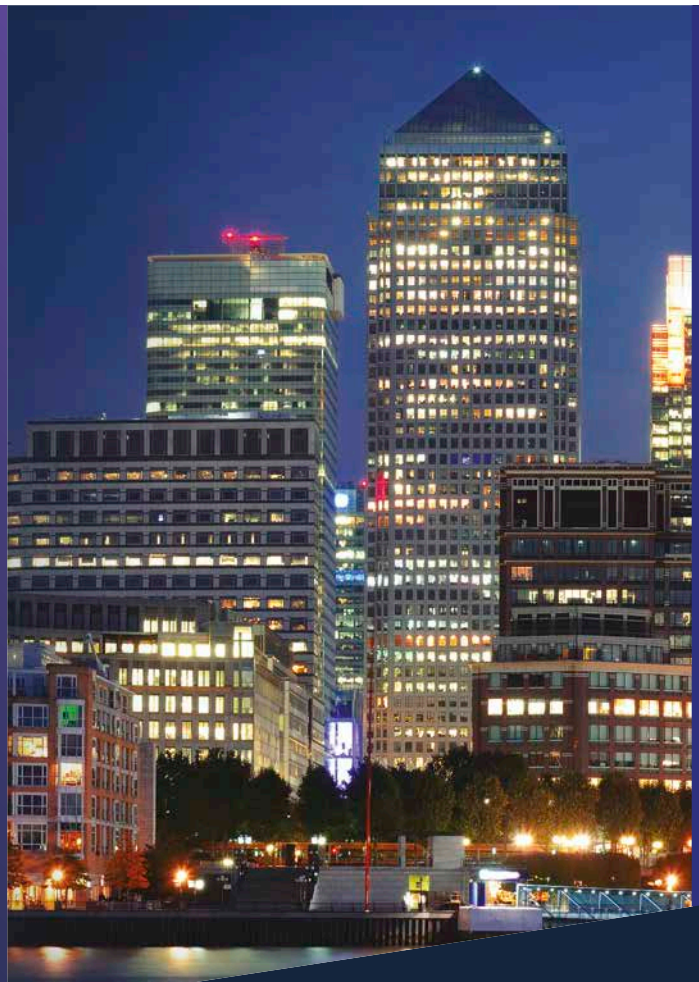
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At UEL, we're passionate about apprenticeships. We believe they offer a powerful pathway to building successful careers. We are incredibly proud of the journey our apprenticeship programme has taken.

Launched in 2017 against the backdrop of significant reforms in the apprenticeship landscape, it has been inspiring to witness its growth. Today, we support an impressive 910 apprentices across a network of 213 employers. This dedication to quality and innovation has garnered national recognition. Being shortlisted as a finalist in two categories for the prestigious FE Week & AELP AAC Apprenticeship Awards is a testament to the hard work and expertise of our entire team. But for us, the true measure of success lies in the achievements of our apprentices. Our **75.8% Qualification Achievement Rate (QAR)**,

exceeding the national benchmark by a significant margin, speaks volumes about the program's effectiveness in equipping learners with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive.

“

**The University of East London has been pioneering futures since 1898, from the 2nd Industrial Revolution through to where we are now, the 4th. We are a careers-led university. Our mission is to prepare students for the jobs of the future.”**

**Professor Amanda J Broderick,  
Vice Chancellor & President**

”

## **Our Achievements at a Glance, including being ranked #1.**

UEL received its first Apprenticeship Ofsted inspection in September 2023. The outcome was graded as 'Good'. More recently UEL's QAR (quality apprenticeship rate) was announced at 75.8% - the national

benchmark is 67%.

When compared to other London institutions with 100 plus early leavers, UEL ranked first, with the QAR target being achieved two years ahead of schedule, and 100% of apprentices passing their End Point Assessment in 2022/23.

Our focus is twofold: delivering high-quality programmes that equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed, and building strong partnerships with employers to ensure our programmes are relevant and valuable to their needs. With a successful track record, a commitment to innovation, and exciting new plans on the horizon, UEL is well-positioned to continue being a leader in apprenticeship provision. We're excited for the future, and we invite you to join us on this journey!

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# Hire an Apprentice With Croydon College

**Croydon College is one of South London's leading providers of apprenticeships, with a growing reputation for its focus on the employability of students. The college ensures that students leave education not only with top qualifications, but work-ready and equipped with the skills employers really want.**



The college works closely with local, regional and national businesses to gather valuable expert advice to inform the teaching and curriculum, and to provide students with the opportunity to interact with some of the best employers in the country. This keeps staff and managers up to date with employer requirements and industry standards, and allows local businesses to advise on curriculum and courses.

Employers are regularly invited by the college to participate in "Learning walks", giving them the opportunity to experience – first-hand – the skills, techniques and workplace-readiness that are prioritised in the learning offered to students. College managers and staff take part in "Employment walks" on local business' sites to refresh skills and upgrade their commercial awareness and expertise.

A cornerstone of the employability offer at Croydon College is the large number of apprenticeships on offer, including opportunities in the following professions and industries:-

- Accountancy
- Building and construction
- Carpentry and joinery
- Digital marketing
- Engineering
- Hospitality
- HR
- IT
- Plumbing and heating
- Project management
- Property maintenance
- Teaching

Apprenticeships are offered at Intermediate, Advanced and Higher (degree) levels, depending on the applicant's existing qualifications and experience. There are no tuition fees due by the student, since training costs are funded by the government and employer.

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) acknowledged Croydon College's



focus on employability in their review of the provision and stated, "There is strong evidence of the development of employability skills." At its most recent inspection, Ofsted noted, "Initiatives introduced by the college to develop students' employability skills have been successful in exposing students to the world of work in a number of different ways, including through imaginative projects and live briefs."

Croydon College continually works to maintain and improve its relationships with employers to ensure students leave with the skills they need, and employers want.

If you are interested in working in partnership with Croydon College, please contact [apprenticeships@croydon.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@croydon.ac.uk) or telephone **020 8686 5700**.

## HIRE AN APPRENTICE

- **Expand your workforce**
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92% of companies that have taken on apprentices believe this leads to a more motivated and satisfied workforce\*

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- \* Data from [apprenticeships.gov.uk](https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)
- \* Smaller employers are eligible for government funding which will pay between 95% and 100% of the apprentice training costs. Larger employers can use the levy to pay for training.

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Typically, an apprentice will split their time 80/20 between work and study. Our apprenticeship programs aim to integrate the key knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of professionals through on-campus studies and experience in the workplace. Charlie Kilkenny, an Occupational Health & Safety apprenticeship graduate, discussed his reasoning for returning to academia whilst working a senior position at Keltbray.

"I felt I was at a point in my life where I wanted to develop and better myself further academically."

Apprentices are exempt for any financial costs for their professional development and actually 'earn as they learn'.

These apprenticeship programs are covered in full by the apprenticeship levy, and so employers do not directly pay the course fee and can be assured that their workforce have an all rounded skillset within the context of their organisation.

Mapping apprenticeships to internal career progression, providing structured pathways that increase and maintain employee satisfaction has been proven to improve retention rates.

Apprenticeships can also facilitate social mobility, reaching people from diverse backgrounds to open up opportunities for all and so diversify your workplace.

We strongly encourage critical thinking with a view to producing professionals with sound judgement and the ability to find creative and innovative solutions in the workplace to ensure the existing and future fulfilment of your business strategic aims.

The BSc is accredited by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and the MSc is accredited by the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), which are both recognised professional bodies the respective industries.

"...for those that feel they're ready to step up and take on their next personal challenge, they may want to consider the MSc Apprenticeship.

As did I, you may well feel a little daunted that this will take you three years to achieve, but this will reflect well on your CV and ultimately will make you more attractive to employers, especially for those more senior positions."

**Charlie Kilkenny, Head of HSQE, Keltbray**

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# Q&A with Jayne Greenman, HR Director at Arena Racing Company

Arena Racing Company is the largest racecourse operator in the UK. It operates 16 racecourses across the country, from Lingfield Park and Brighton to Doncaster and Newcastle. In addition to racecourses, ARC owns five Greyhound Stadia. It is a prominent name in the racing sector, acting as a shareholder in various racing-related ventures such as the horseracing TV channel, At the Races.



Jayne Greenman

## WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO INVEST IN A TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME?

Over the last three years, there has been a lot of work across the horse racing industry to make it more diverse, inclusive and welcoming. As a business, we're always proactively seeking ways to develop and diversify our workforce and the introduction of the apprenticeship levy allowed us to hone in on this. Apprenticeships allow us to recruit entry-level staff from an entirely new pool of candidates whilst also developing existing team members' skills.

This means we're able to address workforce gaps with a two-pronged approach—by training existing staff members and by investing in emerging talent. This gives us the best of both worlds since established team members are given opportunities to grow professionally as they tap into their knowledge to mentor our newer employees.

Due to the complexity of our business, from groundskeeping to catering, media production to business administration, we also have a wide breadth of teams, all with different focuses, and requiring different skills. This means a broad range of skills are always in demand to support our operations and overall company growth.

## HOW HAS THE EXPERIENCE OF HIRING APPRENTICES BEEN SO FAR?

By collating feedback from our apprentices, over time, we have been able to create a high quality programme which meets both the needs of apprentices and the business. When first launched, the biggest challenge

was finding quality training partners who could work with us across the UK. However, over time we have been able to refine our preferred supplier list meaning that our Apprentice cohorts are supported to a high level throughout the programme.

Such teething issues are an inevitable part of the process; however, once you have the chance to fine-tune your programme, the benefits reaped across the business are undeniable. Those benefits have been evident on a day-to-day basis and include increased morale amongst staff and more knowledge exchanging between teams.

In the long term, you develop a strong network of apprentices across the business. This network of staff can act as a hub for sharing best practices based on their learning and work experience.

## HOW HAVE YOUR APPRENTICES BENEFITTED FROM WORKING WITH YOU DURING THEIR TRAINING PROGRAMME?

We started our programme in 2017, and have a completion rate of over 85%, with many apprentices choosing to stay with us afterwards. Apprentices are not only treated the same as other employees and challenged by us within their roles, they're also able to pursue multiple options available to them to progress their career and learn new skills.

We have also received so much positive feedback from our apprentices, past and present, which is a testament to the quality and effectiveness of our apprenticeship scheme. We recently held an 'Apprentice Appreciation day' where apprentices past and present came together from across the business to learn from each other, network and enjoy the thrill of a raceday with members of the senior management team. Those I talked to on this day shared with me how they are gaining experience, learning, growing, and being exposed to new experiences. They also feel like they're developing their character and are generally excited about the future and what their careers will look like.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE EMPLOYERS CONSIDERING USING A TRAINING OR EMPLOYMENT SCHEME FOR THE FIRST TIME

## TO HELP DEVELOP THEIR WORKFORCE?

Just go for it! If you haven't yet, then definitely start researching what's available and best for your business – you can do this through resources, such as the DfE Skills for Life site. Like with every business decision made, it's understandable to have some initial hesitation, but it really does pay off. Many young people are out there now looking for opportunities and so if an employer isn't offering Apprenticeships, they risk missing out on these new talent pools and the knowledge they can bring to business. Apprenticeships benefit both the apprentice and the employer, which equals the playing field and provides the apprentices hired with the motivation to succeed in their role.

## WHAT FUTURE PLANS DO YOU HAVE IN MIND FOR THE PROGRAMME?

This year we hired 11 apprentices, with plans to hire 10 – 20 more across the business.

In 2023, we were introduced by our industry partner the Racing Pathway to a partnership with the Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation which works to support and create new connections within all types of communities and particularly in the careers space, to give marginalised young people access to opportunities across a wide range of sectors and industries. As a result, we have welcomed three young apprentices to our Lingfield Park Resort team with plans to extend this programme further in 2025. On top of this, we're looking into a partnership with Harrison College near Doncaster Racecourse to specifically support hospitality and catering apprenticeships for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) following a really successful couple of years of placements for their students.

These are examples of some of the inter-community relationships apprenticeships make possible for employers. We're hoping to continue expanding and improving our apprenticeship programme to attract a wider, more diverse range of people.

*If you're interested in learning more about employing apprentices for your business, click [here](#).*



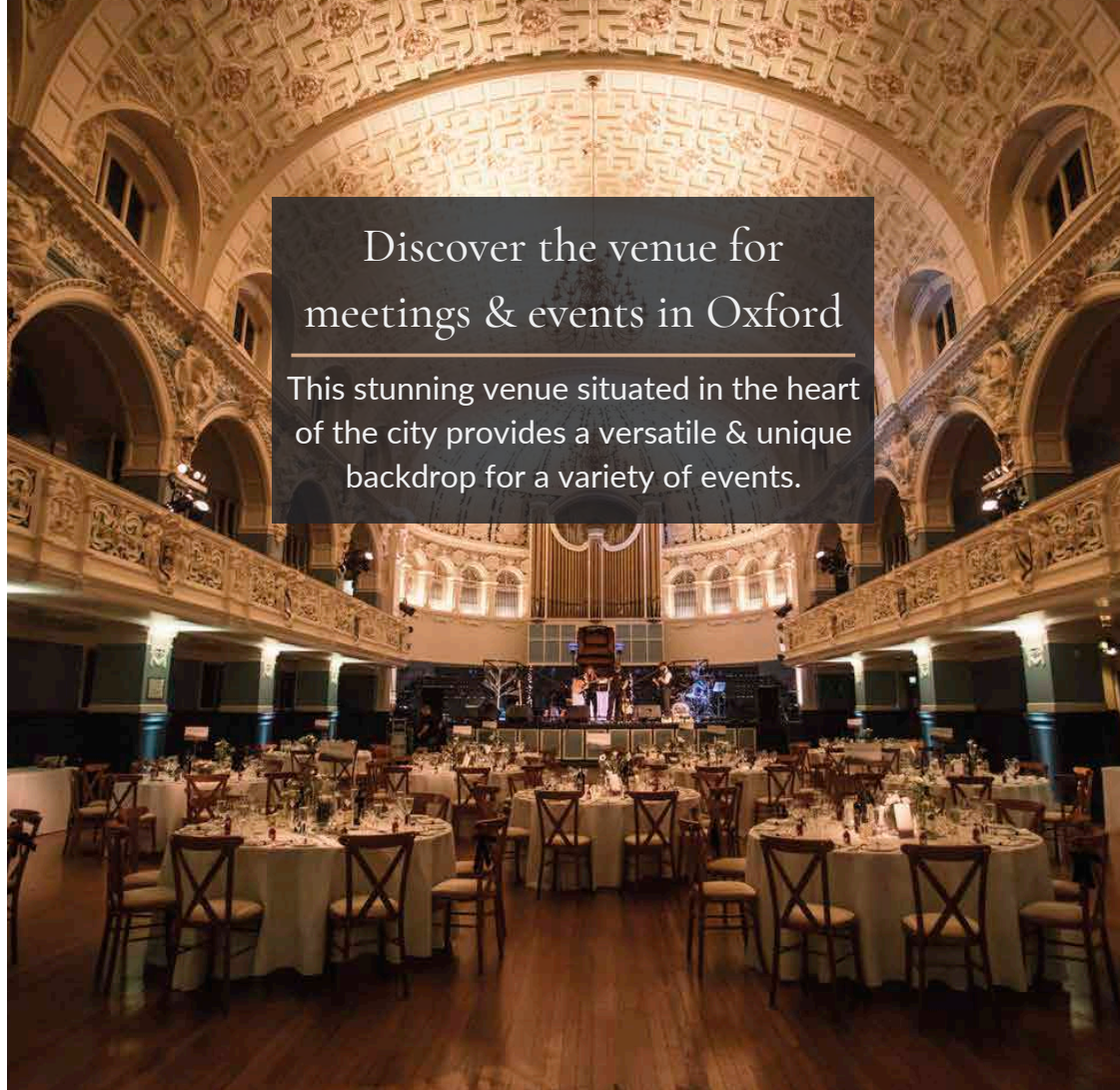


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Set within the historic wharfs and quays of East London, Canary Riverside Plaza is the only five-star independent hotel in Canary Wharf. The 142 spacious guest rooms and suites make for an incredibly comfortable stay, be it for business or leisure, offering stunning views of the River Thames and city beyond. Enjoy the full five-star experience with access to the adjacent Health Club and Spa or indulge with afternoon tea on the sun-filled terrace at the Quadrato Restaurant.

# Shield Pest Control's Guide to a Pest-Free Property During the Summer Months

**Shield Pest Control is one of London's longest running and highly regarded pest control organisations. Operating for almost fifty years, the company is renowned for providing incredibly high standards of pest control services to both domestic and commercial clients across South East England.**

Shield Pest Control is dedicated to helping property owners to maintain a pest-free environment. Below, the team runs through the common pests that are prevalent during the summer months and provides tips on how you can prevent them from disrupting your home environment.

## Wasps and Flies

Wasps and flies can be a nuisance in the UK as the weather warms up. Wasps begin to emerge during the late spring and early summer when the Queen wasp comes out of hibernation to build a nest and form a new colony. By late summer, this colony reaches its highest population, and seeks food sources to sustain the colony throughout the winter.

There are various methods to prevent wasps and flies from invading your property this summer. Both insects are attracted to food sources, therefore it is vital to regularly empty your bins, ensuring they have secure, tight-fitting lids to block pests out. Flies are attracted to decaying food, which makes bins the perfect environment for them to breed.

It is also important to maintain outdoor spaces by ensuring all food and drink spillages are cleared promptly, especially sugary substances. Vegetation build-up also attracts wasps, which are known to build nests

in shrubs and trees. To prevent this, keep vegetation trimmed, especially during the summer.

You should inspect your property for any entry points and ensure that these are sealed to prevent flies and wasps from gaining access. You can also book regular professional inspections with a pest control company such as Shield Pest Control to detect any potential nests that are lurking around your property and eliminate them at an early stage.

## Garden Ants

Another common summer pest is ants, which can be very unpleasant when found inside a property. Garden Ants enter a property for several reasons, the most common reason being that they are looking for food. Similar to wasps and flies, a quick method of prevention is to eliminate any food sources that are lying around.

You can successfully get rid of ants without using harmful chemicals. Some

natural ways to remove the ants are by using Tea tree and peppermint essential oils which are highly potent for ants.

Mix a few drops of peppermint oil into a bottle, add water, and spray this onto any surfaces where you have spotted ants. The same goes for tea tree oil, which you can also soak cotton balls in and scatter around your property. White vinegar is another natural remedy that can be used. Simply wipe surfaces with a solution of white vinegar and water, and ants will avoid the area. However, if you aren't successful and the home remedies don't appear to be working, you can call in an expert from Shield pest Control to help eradicate the infestation.

Without a scent trail, ants are unable to find their way around your property. Therefore, you should try to interrupt this trail as much as you can by using the natural remedies above and spraying these onto the infestation to destroy the trail and eliminate the ants.

Scheduling regular pest control treatments with a business such as Shield Pest Control can create a protective barrier against the risk of unwanted pest infestations. This way, targeted methods can be used to eliminate specific pest threats and help to keep your property secure.

With pests just as common in rural areas, as they are in urban locations, Shield Pest Control's qualified technicians can be available quickly across the entirety of the South East.

**Get a free quote today by calling Shield Pest Control on 0800 954 8098.**







# SHIELD PEST CONTROL









We're exceptionally proud of the quality of work that we do, and this quality is reflected in our Royal Warrant. Since 2008, we have held a Royal Warrant, indicating that we regularly work alongside the royal family to ensure that their residences and workspaces are pest-free and safe.

## Pest Control Service

We have a wealth of experience under our belts, which means that we know the best ways to help you protect every element of your home or business. No matter the pest you're facing, we are certain we've seen it before, and that we'll be able to help out completely.

As one of the leading companies offering pest control in London, we have to work in a number of distinct and unique environments. From flats to offices, we're familiar with the intricacies of residential pest control in a range of different spaces, as well as commercial pest control services, too.

We're certain that we have the specialist knowledge to **help you in the most effective way possible.**

-  BIRD PROOFING/ FOULING
-  CLEANING AND REMOVAL
-  DAMP & TIMBER SURVEYS
-  FOX PEST CONTROL
-  INSECT CONTROL
-  MAMMAL CONTROL
-  RODENT CONTROL
-  SANITISATION



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# FUNDING BUSINESS AMBITIONS

A light blue circle with a double-line border containing the text '£1.7bn' in a large, bold font, with 'funding so far' in a smaller font below it.

**£1.7bn**  
funding so far



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