


Somerset Voice

The Official Magazine of
Somerset Chamber of Commerce

August /
September
2022



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Chamber of
Commerce

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FIRST WORD

It's been a busy time for the Chamber team these last few months, supporting our members, attending events and getting out and about around the county and beyond.

Locally, we supported Yeovil Chamber's Business Fair - you can find out more about that in our Chamber news section on pages 22-23 - and attended a business networking event at Somerset County Cricket Club (which included a great T20 match, too!).

I have been to London to represent the Chamber and our members at the British Chambers of Commerce's Global Annual Conference where speakers included the then Chancellor Rishi Sunak, business guru Mary Portas and John Holland-Kaye, the CEO of Heathrow Airport.

I also supported the Federation of Small Business at our joint 'meet the buyer' event in Bridgwater, attended the Somerset Education Business Partnership Awards, given careers talks at local schools and met many members and business partners, including WPA, Higos Insurance and Yeovil College.

You can read about the Somerset Education Business Partnership Awards on pages 24-25, while there's a preview of our own Somerset Business Awards in the Chamber news pages as the 2023 awards open next month, on September 12!

Elsewhere, you can find out more about our recruitment members in this edition's sector focus on pages 15-18 and if you attended one of our recent events you may well be featured in our #WellConnected event galleries on pages 19-21.

Finally, I'd like to welcome some new members to the team - our new Events Manager, Robert Cox, and Membership Officer, Natalie Hodgson, who have joined hot on the heels of our new Hinkley Supply Chain Project Lead, Scott Jenkins.

These are exciting times for the Chamber and our members, too!

Emma Rawlings

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS

Contact us to find out what benefits Somerset Chamber Business Partners receive.

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Richard Huish College in Taunton is celebrating following a recent Ofsted inspection which has once again rated it with the highest possible inspection grade – 'Outstanding'. It achieved this in all of the four key judgements, recognising a consistently high quality of education and personal development. This third successive top grade places Huish with only a handful of institutions nationally to have been an 'outstanding' provider of education for more than twenty years.

Throughout this period Huish has frequently been praised by inspectors for its commitment to continuous improvement, striving to enhance and maintain excellence as standard and delivering an exceptional experience to all students. This most recent report noted that the college has a vision to provide high quality education for all members of the community, based on a broad and holistic educational offer to its students.

The report commented that: "Teachers set high academic standards. In turn, learners set high standards for themselves. They meet these by studying hard and making the most of the excellent opportunities

the college offers. The strong local reputation of this college is justified. Leaders and staff establish and promote a culture of respect and high aspirations."

It also noted that students benefit from a comprehensive pastoral curriculum on a weekly basis, important human values are well developed and an inclusive and supportive culture is celebrated, with the LGBTQ+ group receiving a particular mention.

Principal Emma Fielding said: "I could not be prouder of our staff and students at Huish, this is an incredible achievement and testament to their talent, hard work and dedication. I am pleased that the inspection team noted the high quality of teaching, learning, personal development and support at Huish and how far above and beyond staff go to provide an exceptional educational experience. It is a tremendous privilege to be part of such an amazing educational community and to be, once again, acknowledged as one of the best post sixteen providers in the UK."



SIMPLY OUTSTANDING

It's not too late to study at Taunton's Ofsted Outstanding Sixth Form College this September.

We have so much to offer, with over 45 courses to choose from including Level 3 A Level and Vocational qualifications, Level 2 Pathway, Apprenticeships and adult learner opportunities, an exciting Enrichment programme, fantastic facilities including boarding, and more!

Apply online today or get in touch to start your Huish journey.

Apply here



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Richard Huish College, South Road, Taunton, TA1 3DZ | 01823 320800 | www.huish.ac.uk | E.hello@huish.ac.uk



BRITISH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC SURVEY Q2 2022

Measures for inflation at the highest levels on record. The BCC's Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) for Q2 2022 – the UK's largest independent survey of business sentiment and a leading indicator of UK GDP growth – shows inflationary pressures continuing to reach levels never previously recorded in its 33-year history, as the vast majority of firms expect further price rises.

AT A GLANCE

Turnover

Just over half (54%) of firms overall expect their turnover to increase over the next twelve months, down from 63% in Q1 2022.

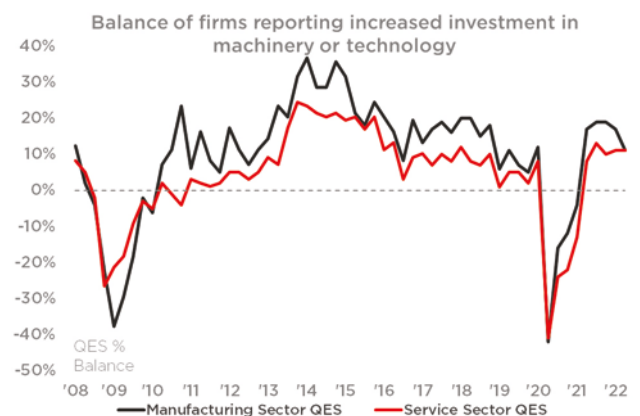
As measured as a percentage balance, the manufacturing sector stands at +38%, while the services sector stands at +37%. These are both the lowest figures since Q1 2021.



Investment

25% of respondents overall report an increase to investment in plant, machinery, and technology, compared to 27% in Q1.

As measured as a percentage balance*, the manufacturing sector stands at +11%, the lowest since Q1 2021. The services sector also stands at +11%, unchanged from the previous quarter.



For the full BCC QES Q2 2022 results see our website

www.somerset-chamber.co.uk



SOMERSET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC SURVEY Q2 2022

Concerns about inflation remain the main concern for Somerset businesses, with 85% saying it is of more concern now than it was three months ago, an increase of 4% on the previous quarter. Some 42% of respondents said interest rates were more of a concern and 22% cited tax.

Almost 60% had attempted to recruit staff, with 60% of those experiencing difficulty filling vacancies – almost half of those were for skilled manual/technical roles and around 45% were for professional/managerial roles.

Business confidence remains rocky, with almost a third believing turnover will worsen in the next 12 months, while 43% think it will improve. Just under a third believe profitability will improve (32%) and 73% of respondents expect to raise prices in the next three months.





Audio visual

As technology advances so businesses need to adapt and find new ways of working to reach their staff, clients and markets. Many of our members specialise in providing audio and visual equipment, while others have embraced its use to stay ahead of their competitors. Some offer help and support to enable others to maximise the benefits. Here, our members share their stories and top tips on making the most of the latest audio visual technology.

Wessex Commercial Solutions

At Somerset and Devon-based accountancy practice Wessex Commercial we've grown our network on LinkedIn over the last year. However, we were acutely aware that many of our connections might still think accountants spend most of their time dealing with compliance, tax returns and statutory accounts.

We wanted to change that perception. And what better way to do that than make the most of the LinkedIn Live feature?

We've used Streamyard to deliver our live streams and have adopted a Q&A interview style format. In our first 'Grow your Business with Graham' session, we asked "Are profits sliding while sales grow?", "How hard is stock working for your business?" and advised business owners to "Stop holding back on business growth?".

The response? We've had some great engagement and



insightful questions, however, the

benefit of using this format isn't limited to the event itself. Each Live can be replayed again on the platform. It can also be repurposed giving lots of content for future use. Like many businesses, we use Canva to create snippets of our Live events. You'll see these elsewhere on LinkedIn, as well as on Facebook, Instagram Reels and even TikTok.

We've found LinkedIn Live to be a great way to help businesses understand how their accountant can help them increase profit and cash in their business, as well as keep on top of compliance. We'd thoroughly recommend LinkedIn Live to other chamber members who want to find a new way to engage with a business audience.

Teapot Creative

Did you know that the human brain processes visuals 60,000 times faster than it does any text?

According to recent surveys from the Social Sciences Research Network, a whopping 65% of us are visual learners, a further 30% verbal, where the remaining 5% are experiential. Taking this into consideration can mean that by not incorporating forms of audio-visual into your marketing strategy, you aren't fully reaching and connecting with 95% of the population. They aren't able to take in all of what you are telling them.

This is why using audio-visual communication can now play such a key part in engaging with your target audience.

By tailoring your strategy to help customers understand what you can offer them, they will be more likely to make a purchase or seek work with you. Using audio-video as a part of your marketing strategy helps to create an engaging customer experience. This could be the key to harnessing the use of communication for your business and capture the attention of both new and returning customers.

Be it through animations, social media reels and videos, radio ads, brand videos or more; you are

more likely to gain business by introducing audio-visual elements

into your marketing plan and making them personal to you. Giving yourself the edge in today's ever-evolving and competitive marketplace.

At Teapot Creative, our digital marketing and design teams can help you elevate your business and brand by incorporating elements of audio visual into your marketing strategy so get in touch!



AV Path

Your boardroom. Your meeting rooms. The reception area. The open plan offices. The production lines.

They've always been there and you've probably always had some audio visual equipment in them.

With the big return-to-work happening at the moment, now is the time to really consider and develop your workplace collaboration systems and strategy.

Get your screens working harder - why not add a wireless collaboration device? Using a simple button or an app, you can bring mobile phones, tablets and other handheld devices into the meeting, as well as adding multiple



laptop sources simultaneously to create a truly collaborative session.

Install a video conferencing bar and bring in your remote workers - (not just the home-based ones; there are plenty of others on the road or overseas). By adding a video bar to your meeting room you can host and join video calls from your laptop or tablet.

Think about a room booking touchscreen system. Clearly indicated - green for available and red for booked panels quickly and easily show which rooms are available and for how long. Make the rooms more efficient by freeing them up after 10 minutes if there is a no-show so someone else can use them.

Save on paper, share, and circulate your brainstorming sessions by installing an interactive display. You can write on it, bring in content, share, download, and email your work instantly.

Digital signage screens across the office or campus let you quickly and easily share corporate and departmental information, local news, travel, even the day's menu in the canteen - a super-efficient investment!

Contact us for more information: www.av-path.co.uk

Blackstar Solutions

Hybrid working is here to stay. Our working habits have changed and companies have adapted accordingly. However, the right video technology to facilitate hybrid working hasn't always been deployed.

We'll outline four steps you can take to improve the experience for hybrid workers by using the right video conferencing technology.



Step 1: Understand the video meeting needs of hybrid workers

Video meeting users have different needs, use different video meeting platforms and have different hardware requirements. It's essential to consult with them and ensure the hardware they use is suitable and compatible across all platforms.

Step 2: Make it easy to hold video meetings

Provide your team with video conference equipment that is easy to use. Frustrations with complicated equipment and clunky platforms make video meetings unproductive. Speak to a consultant, request a demo or even trial the equipment before buying.

Step 3: Focus on audio

A good quality headset will work well when working remotely, but have you considered the audio in

a huddle room or larger meeting room.

Participants need to be heard, no matter where they're positioned. Consider the audio pick-up range and choose speakerphones that pick-up audio when people move.

Step 4: Improve video quality

A sharp natural image boosts the impression of professionalism. Choose a video camera that suits the room's size and make sure everybody can be seen.

Blackstar Solutions is a trusted telecoms provider who can help improve video meetings for hybrid workers. Contact us or find out more about our video conferencing solutions.

Impact Design & Marketing

Using video as part of your marketing strategy is a must, as it creates an engaging customer experience as well as being able to communicate your product in the most effective way.

The majority of us are visual learners, then audio learners, so it comes as no surprise that 85% of consumers are more likely to buy a product after watching a product video and nine out of 10 viewers said that they wanted to see more videos from brands and businesses.

An average person is predicted to spend 100 minutes per day watching online videos and video posts on social media get 48% more views - which is why the algorithms prefer them.

Top tips on making great and engaging content:

- 94% of people watch explainer videos to understand a product, service, brand, or business better

- Videos that are up to two minutes long get the most engagement. There is a significant drop in engagement for videos after two minutes
- 92% of consumers watch videos with the sound off and 50% rely on captions, making it imperative that you create videos that are optimised for silent viewing. You can quickly do this using an InVideo online editor that allows you to easily add and edit text to your videos in minutes
- Have something to say that's longer than two sentences? Say it with an animated text video
- Not just for consumers, video is an effective B2B sales tool

To find out more, contact Impact Design & Marketing on 07802 160064 or email richard@impactdm.co.uk.

impact
Design & Marketing

Orbital Media

Welcome to the future of conversational AI communications. Meet VirtTuri, a Somerset-based innovation developed by Orbital, which represents an exciting next generation of digital assistant, with extensive use cases.

VirtTuri blends two machine learning technologies; an intelligent NLP back end with a hyper realistic avatar, which can represent any human on the planet.

When you consider that the UK's average literacy age is

nine years old, this interactive and highly visual technology is already proving its worth by elevating user engagement, satisfaction and recall of complex information.

Key features of VirtTuri:

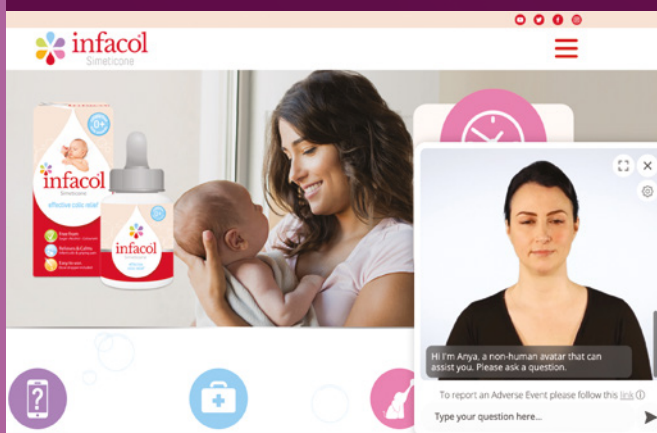
- Text to speech functionality allows for simple management of communications
- Can speak over 60 languages
- Can represent any ethnicity, age or gender
- Integrates into almost all digital settings
- Improves accuracy the more it is used.

VirtTuri can either be used for addressing FAQs at scale or as a highly personalised digital assistant, delivering holistic advice and support within specific user pathways, at scale.

The result of five years development and having just completed its first funding round, VirtTuri is now commercialising into the healthcare space with household brands but looking for further interesting opportunities for deployment across all industries.

Take a look at www.VirtTuri.com

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South West Aerial Surveys

Using the latest digital technologies, South West Aerial Surveys (SWAS) provide customers with measurable, accurate, cost-effective and immersive digital and visualisation solutions.

Our “What’s Built” product enables virtual tours and remote property assessment management for a variety of stakeholders. We have developed creative content for several Somerset businesses for their innovative creative content strategy.

From relational “dolls house” views where prospective visitors can see your property in 3D, to overhead aerial imagery that visualises the estate in so that guests know what to expect before they arrive.

South West Heritage Trust worked with us to showcase the Bridgwater Tile Museum, offering pre-and post-tours and immersive activities for visitors. Our photo-realistic visual information is hosted in an easy-to-use cloud-based platform.

Our outputs are very accurate and lifelike as well as exceptionally clear allowing users navigate room spaces in amazing quality. We also offer a full model customisation

service so that customers can project their facilities exactly how they want offering a safe and welcoming online visitors space.

So, if you are in marketing, hospitality, real estate, letting or even facilities management then SWAS would be delighted to hear from you. Find out more about how our internal and external scanning and models can help promote and create better engagement in a rich, immersive and engaging format.

For more information, contact David by emailing david@southwestdrones or telephoning 07974 829756.



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Great service... Great people...

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Phil Brown appointed head of office at Clarke Willmott in Taunton

Phil Brown has been appointed the new head of office for the Taunton branch of Clarke Willmott LLP.

A partner in Clarke Willmott's commercial property team, Phil undertakes a wide range of property work with a particular emphasis on commercial and residential development, acting for both landowners and developers in relation to both immediate and strategic development projects.



He joined the firm in January 2012 and was made a partner in 2015, assuming full equity membership in 2019.

Phil succeeds clinical negligence partner Chris Thorne, who took over the role in 2019 and steered the Taunton office through the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as overseeing a refurbishment process at the site in Blackbrook Business Park that has led to the creation of a low carbon environment fit for the new era of hybrid working.

With more than 190 staff and 22 partners, Clarke Willmott's Taunton office is known in particular for its expertise in commercial property and particularly development, agriculture, debt recovery and private client work, advising clients across the South West and nationally.

On taking over the head of office role, Phil said: "I am delighted to be appointed to this important role at an exciting time for the office and the firm

generally and thank Chris exiting the role with the office in a healthy position.

"As we continue our exit from restrictions brought about by the pandemic and settle into our new office environment, while simultaneously embracing hybrid working practices, there has never been a better time to drive forward our strategy as a Taunton partnership.

"While our local partnership may have changed over the years that I have been with the firm the strategy remains the same; to continue to embed ourselves in our local community and to support individuals and businesses, both big and small, local and national, by the provision of the very best legal advice at a competitive rate.

"I look forward to working with my partners to ensure the continued success of our Taunton offering."

For more information visit www.clarkewillmott.com

Richard Huish College graded Ofsted outstanding – again!

Richard Huish College, in Taunton, is celebrating following a recent Ofsted inspection which has once again rated it with the highest possible inspection grade - 'Outstanding'. It achieved this in all of the four key judgements, recognising a consistently high quality of education and personal development. This third successive top grade places Huish with only a handful of institutions nationally to have been an 'outstanding' provider of education for more than twenty years.

Throughout this period Huish has frequently been praised by inspectors for its commitment to continuous improvement, striving to enhance and maintain excellence as standard and delivering an exceptional experience to all students. This most recent report noted that the college has a vision to provide high quality education for all members of the community, based on a broad and holistic educational offer to its students.



The report commented that: "Teachers set high academic standards. In turn, learners set high standards for themselves. They meet these by studying hard and making the most of the excellent opportunities the college offers... The strong local reputation of this college is justified. Leaders and staff establish and promote a culture of respect and high aspirations."

Ofsted added that the college: "Provides education, encouragement and a wide range of excellent additional activities to develop

learners' knowledge, character, articulacy and ambition. As a result, learners develop their subject knowledge, a clearer understanding of their place in the local community and wider world, and pursue their interests and hobbies with enthusiasm."

It also noted that students benefit from a comprehensive pastoral curriculum on a weekly basis, important human values are well-developed and there is an inclusive and supportive culture.

Principal, Emma Fielding, said: "I could not be prouder of our staff and students at Huish, this is an incredible achievement and testament to their talent, hard work and dedication. I am pleased that the inspection team noted the high quality of teaching, learning, personal development and support at Huish and how far above and beyond staff go to provide an exceptional educational experience."



Albert Goodman raises £12,000 for its charity of the year

The Children's Hospice South West has benefited this year from the fundraising efforts of the Albert Goodman team, raising £12,000 for their chosen charity of the year through various fundraising and employee engagement initiatives.

Every year, staff from each of Albert Goodman's offices in Taunton, Bristol, Yeovil, Weston-super-Mare and Weymouth vote for a charity to support. Many of the charities are chosen due to personal connections

with members of staff and their families. Staff are encouraged to carry out fundraising for the chosen charity, led by a charity fundraising team, with a representative from each office or department taking part.

This year's choice is the Children's Hospice South-West. The charity provides hospice care for children with life-limiting conditions and their whole family across the South West. The care they offer is wide ranging; respite and short breaks, emergency care,

palliative care and end of life care.

Over the past 12 months, staff have engaged in fundraising activities such as cycling to work, a half marathon, a whole firm annual away day charity raffle, a bake off and a 90s day. The donations will go towards providing vital services for the region's hospices in North Devon, North Somerset and Cornwall.

Michelle Ferris, Partner and Head of Charities at Albert Goodman, said: "The firm's culture embeds a strong sense of community, and we feel it's important for staff to contribute to their local charitable and community environment.

"We are delighted that we can offer some extra support after a very challenging two years for charities. £12,000 will make a real difference to Children's Hospice South-West and we are proud to support such a worthy cause with this donation."



'Bolt tightening' celebrates new construction building at college

A 'bolt tightening' ceremony has taken place to mark the latest phase of building work on Bridgwater & Taunton College's (BTC) innovative new Construction and Civil Engineering Building, part of ongoing development across the college's campuses.

Due to open early next year, the building will house workshops and classrooms kitted out with the latest technologies to support the low carbon agenda. From school leavers to adults looking to upskill and retrain, the new facilities will provide opportunities to more people than ever.

Head of Estates, Jo Taylor, said: "The new Construction and Civil Engineering Building has been designed to maximise the college's drive to be carbon neutral. To help this, the position of workshops and classrooms has been configured to maximise energy efficiency and manage solar gain. The lighting is LED and meets current standards of energy efficiency.

"The design layout enables maximum flexibility, so the building can be adapted to suit all permutations in



a changing educational/industrial standards environment. We hope this will be an inspiring and versatile environment which will serve students, staff and employers well into the future."

BTC Principal and Chief Executive, Andy Berry, said: "The low carbon agenda is increasingly important. This sector will need more and more people with relevant skills. This new facility enhances our ability to deliver skills, providing pathways for our students which lead to great opportunities within the industry, both locally and further afield.

"The new Construction and Civil Engineering Building at the Bridgwater Campus is just one of the new

facilities we have developed recently and complements work that has been undertaken across our three campuses, including new T Level facilities for healthcare and digital, plus wards and study space for our nursing degree students, demonstrating the college's continued investment in and commitment to providing the best opportunities for local people."

Work on the Construction and Civil Engineering Building should be completed in Spring 2023. For more information about construction courses and other developments across BTC's three campuses, please visit www.btc.ac.uk or call 01278 441234.



New adult courses at Weston College



This September, Weston College is launching new adult courses, to help people reskill, upskill or improve their CVs. In May, the BBC reported that there were over 1.3 million live job vacancies in the UK, so the courses are the ideal opportunity for people looking to start a new career path.

Sir Paul Phillips, Principal and Chief Executive of Weston College, said: "We are excited to launch this new offer, which provides valuable opportunities for people over the age of 19.

"We are passionate about creating brighter futures for all, and these new courses are a great way for adults that are wanting more from their career, to retrain in an area that they are really passionate about.

"This September we are expanding our teaching locations, as well, with courses being delivered across our major campuses in Weston, but also in Bristol, and some delivered online."

More information is available by telephoning 01934 411411, or emailing enquiries@weston.ac.uk.

WPA wins Outstanding Innovation of the Year for Health with LifeStage Health

At the recent Healthcare Innovation Awards 2021&2, WPA won the Outstanding Innovation of the Year with LifeStage Health.



The awards panel lauded WPA for demonstrating 'an excellent example of a health insurance provider innovating to address new challenges and historic healthcare problems especially those that are not traditionally covered by health insurance policies'. They also observed that the broadening of benefits to include all genders was 'further demonstrating WPA's commitment to providing greater levels of service'.

Nathan Irwin, WPA's Chief Executive, said: "This is fabulous recognition of a pioneering innovative product designed to help our corporate customers support the health and well-being needs of their employees.

"This award comes in the same week as the Corporate Adviser magazine service rating awards, which ranked WPA's service as five star, affirming our industry leading service credentials."

Launched in November 2021, Lifestage Health is a pioneering product that facilitates access, and raises awareness of, women's health in the workplace and supporting their needs throughout life's natural stages.

Your employees' health and wellbeing is in safe hands with WPA

The UK's highest rated health insurer on Trustpilot, award-winning Somerset based WPA offer a range of healthcare solutions for businesses of all sizes.



Health Insurance

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Rated 'Excellent' at 6.7/22





Recruitment

Amberley Management Selection

Amberley Management Selection has been supporting West Country business owners who employ us to search for the right senior management people with the right skills to match the culture of their business. The search is carried out in a confidential manner without initially declaring the business name or location that we are representing. We are not a business agency and pride ourselves on our level of success.

We have been operating for 25 years and during that time we have also been Chamber members. We successfully carry out our searches for three specific reasons.

The first search approach is to recruit a person to add

to the management team in a leadership capacity.

The second can be to find someone who would be interested and able to buy into the business with a view to acquire at a later stage.

The third would be a clear client brief to find a buyer for the business.

This simply means that our search approach can fulfil all three opportunities dependent upon the clients need. And whether this be a straightforward recruit and selection process or to facilitate the sale of the business.

For Further information. Please contact Derek Smart on 07860 714484 or derek@amberleymanagement.co.uk.

www.amberleymanagement.co.uk



Weston College

Weston College has teamed up with construction heavyweight Willmott Dixon, to both support local adults to find jobs in the construction industry and to help construction firms recruit new workers through the Constructing Lives Together scheme.

Local people are gaining the training required to enter the industry through short and sharp courses delivered onsite, while local construction firms are able to access a new stream of employees - a much needed boost for construction employers, with the well reported skills shortages within the sector.

The initiative which is supporting

people across the South West is being funded by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB).

The free courses provide candidates with:

- Re-employment skills
- Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) certificates across a range of disciplines
- Health and Safety in a Construction Environment Level 1
- Work experience

One employer that has used the support of Constructing Lives Together, is Weston-based Apache Construction. Director, Ryan Hedges, said: "During the pandemic we lost some key workers and we

recognised that there was a gap in the market for reliable and like-minded staff.

"We have hired three people full-time in the last three months, all coming through the programme. Each new recruit has been a real breath of fresh air for the organisation and are really supporting us with filling our skills gaps.

"It has offered us the opportunity to interview people practically, and has opened a brand-new talent pool, with our recruits hitting the ground running!"



HR GO Recruitment

HR GO Recruitment is a nationwide recruitment company, supplying pre-qualified candidates for some of the best-known UK brands. But we're not just about big business. We are first and foremost a people-focused company.

With an in-house design team, we create a wide range of content across our digital and social media channels designed to attract, engage, entertain, and inform both clients and candidates. Our content strategy includes blog creation, email campaigns and social media posts.



In addition to posting highly targeted job ads, utilising keyword research, on job boards, we also use social media for candidate attraction. Our animated ads with clear CTAs are designed to get high engagement and share rates. We also post those ads in regional job and community social media groups.

We work to add value with every piece we create, from academic research and reporting on UK market trends through our University of Kent partnership, to our careers advice tips for jobseekers.

Something to bear in mind with social media content is that it's about creating community. So, in addition to our nationally focused posts, we also encourage our local branches to post content relevant to their local communities.

The consultants who do it best, like Helen Lacey, who covers the South West for permanent placements in commercial, engineering, operations, management and more, get far more engagement. This builds their community reach and success for their clients. You can contact Helen by emailing helen.lacey@hrgo.co.uk or calling 07725 028113.



NRL

As a recruitment and workforce solutions provider specialising in technical and engineering sectors for over 35 years, we've seen a great deal of change. From the growth of the UK's nuclear power sector, to the energy transition to greener more environmentally friendly power generation options.

Whether our clients are looking for key permanent positions to help them deliver their strategy, or hundreds of temporary workers to bring their projects to life, we're always on-hand to provide recruitment support, together with the necessary security clearance to onboard new team members.

The move to new net zero power generation and technology, such as hydrogen and carbon capture, has provided engineering companies with a new challenge – finding the skills needed to realise their carbon neutral strategic goals. At NRL we've worked with a

large number of our clients for decades, so are familiar with the need to identify the right transferrable skills as new energy sectors emerge – working with them to develop a long-term talent attraction strategy. As a carbon neutral organisation ourselves, it's something we're delighted to be able to support our clients with.

The changing energy mix also provides organisations with the opportunity to develop a wider and more diverse workforce, and we're on hand to help them put the recruitment processes in place. Our Member Committed to Diversity status with the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCO) and association with the Armed Forces Covenant, means we're committed to supporting people from all walks of life, recognising the value they have to share with prospective employers.

Find out more about NRL at www.nrl.co.uk



Ashtree Resourcing

Ashtree Resourcing's recruitment expertise has been gained through 20 years of working in a broad range of recruitment sectors. We have built an understanding of clients and candidates needs through hands on experience managing accounts directly and leading multi-site teams of recruiters.

Headed-up by Mark Walton, whose career prior to working in the recruitment industry included senior management positions within a leading retail organisation and a major provider of welfare to work services.

We relocated the business to Somerset in 2014 and have been active members of the Somerset and Bridgwater Chambers. Since HPC commenced, we have been members of the Hinkley Supply Chain.

Our eight years trading in Somerset has been very successful, building strong relationships with clients by providing a collaborative recruitment service. Recognised for not only finding candidates to fulfil the

job requirements but equally important, candidates who fit the culture of the business.

We specialise in sourcing for Head Office and Central Support functions in a variety of sectors, including finance, administration, HR, marketing, recruitment, buyers, facilities, health and safety, QA and contact centre roles.

We support B2B and B2C clients by sourcing the best candidates for management and sales roles from senior director level to supervisory roles. Additional services include: running assessment centres, outplacement contracts, retained assignments, salary benchmarking and psychometric testing.

Candidates registering with us are offered full support with CV writing, identifying their next job, interview preparation and are given timely, honest and open feedback.

Contact details: Mark Walton on 07711 008304, mark@ashtreeresourcing.co.uk.

www.ashtreeresourcing.co.uk



Jobseekers Recruitment Services

Jobseekers Recruitment Services is a local family business providing recruitment services primarily across Somerset, Devon and Dorset, specialising in office recruitment. Seemingly, many recruitment agencies are large national organisations that are faceless, but that just

isn't us! We are local and we care, we are here to help you find your next perfect recruit / job!

This year we are celebrating 50 years of business and still have the same aim of trying to make the process as painless as possible! (all fuelled by endless cups of tea!). As the industry evolves, we stay focused on delivering a quality and personal service to candidates and clients. Our success is not only due to the quality of our work but also down to our attitude, approach and the way we treat people.

We work with some of the best and loyal customers Somerset has to offer and are really proud to have built up a strong and valued profile within the local community. Outside of recruitment we enjoy opportunities to fundraise, our charity of choice is St Margaret's Somerset Hospice.

This year we have funded a charity raffle, 50 days 50 prizes for 50 years and so far, have raised over £1,000, giving away prizes such as Helicopter rides and Concert tickets. We have also planted 50 trees via Trees for Good Causes (a local charity) and plan to continue this next year with a tree for every permanent placement.

We are excited for the next 50 years!



Jaeger Recruitment

What is the definition of success? So many factors can come into play from turnover, number of clients or even if a company is still in business. Our values are simpler as we enjoy what we do. That is success for us.

At Jaeger Recruitment we run a multi sector temporary recruitment company that supports clients in logistics, warehousing and production. We support national multi million Pound businesses, as well as our local companies across Somerset. We can supply one member of staff or over 100 placements to any one location.

The fact that we really enjoy what we do means we go the extra mile in order to solving our clients' staffing needs. Along with our Best Small Business Award from 2021 in Sedgemoor, we are going from strength-to-strength within just three years of trading. Nine-five does not exist in our vocabulary and we work every step of the way giving us a reputation among our clients as a go to company when they need assistance.

We are on course for our biggest year yet and we would love local companies to share in our success story and join us on this journey so feel free to get in contact with either Paul (pictured) or Amelia.



Elite Staffing Solutions

It seems like the world and his wife are recruiting right now and the challenges facing businesses in finding candidates hasn't particularly eased. With record lows in unemployment in Somerset and significant growth opportunities for many local businesses, many of you will be needing to hire. How do you navigate this situation and how can we help you?

It is imperative that you get clear on exactly what it is you are looking for but equally what areas you could compromise on to get candidates through the door. Pay particular attention to ensuring that your job role is recognisable to searching candidates and rather than focusing on what you want from them, make it clear what makes you the best choice for job hunters who are inundated with opportunities.

A strong employer brand starts on the inside and works its way out to the hiring public so be sure you have ironed out any internal niggles and that your positive culture is radiating out through your staff, socials, website and beyond.

If you are competing for talent, having the best offering possible counts so look at your benefits, pay, development and don't be afraid to throw in some fun and quirky perks!

Elite Staffing Solutions are more than just a recruitment agency. We are experts at finding the unfindable and we work closely with our partner clients to figure out what they need, how to find it and most importantly securing and retaining the right talent.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/insurancerecruitmentexpert/>



Legal, insurance and finance will be the sector focus in the October / November edition of Somerset Voice, while the feature will be events and conferences, including Christmas parties!



Ladies' afternoon tea at Dillington House, Ilminster



▲ Emily Kadoch of Wessex Reserves and Cadets Association, Candy Bowman of Candida Bowman, Susan Fairless of Everys Solicitors and Maria O'Sullivan of costgard.



▲ Somerset Chamber Chief Executive Emma Rawlings (left) with Kate Walker of Kate Walker Bridal, Ilminster (centre) and Helen Williams of Porter Dodson.



▲ Helen Williams of Porter Dodson, Gill Freeman of Milsted Langdon, Rebecca Oatley of A C Mole and Emily Parker of A C Mole.



▲ Ruth Bethell of eCapital Commercial Finance, Lori Barnes of Albert Goodman, Jasmine Bryant of Albert Goodman, Louise Hambridge of Milsted Langdon, Kerry Nelson of Cooper Associates and Miranda Coleberd of Albert Goodman.



▲ Clare Watt of Avon Searches t/a X-Press Legal Services, Kate Robertson of Vickery Holman Property Consultants, Katie Hunt of Porter Dodson, Lesley Griffin of Cossington Park and Alison Baker of Mind in Somerset.

Let's network over lunch at Hornsbury Mill, Chard



▲ Mike Morgan of MMES 2012 Ltd and Charlotte Lilley of Global.



▲ Emma Rawlings Chief Executive of Somerset Chamber and Simon Shuker of Hafren Ousque.



▲ Candida Bowman of Candida Bowman and Lesley Griffin of Cossington Park.



- ▼ Jordyn Baker, of Albert Goodman, Lori Barnes of Albert Goodman, Mike Dyer of Begbies Traynor, Sally Maidment of Design Bean and Ges Green of Enterprise South West.



Let's network over breakfast at Taunton Rugby Football Club



▲ Paul Osborn of The Somerset Removal Company and Daniel Cooke of One Step Recruitment.



▲ Derek Smart of Amberley Management Selection and Stuart Martin of Ethical Sales Pro.



▲ Charlotte Lilley of Global, Sally Maidment of Design Bean, Julie Grant of Blueloop Limited, Helen Lacey of HR GO Recruitment Limited.



▲ Emma Rawlings Chief Executive of Somerset Chamber, John Watt of Avon Searches t/a X-Press Legal Services, Suzie Drew of Strode College, Andy Peake SRK Scaffolding.

Entries open soon for the Somerset Business Awards 2023

It may still be summer, but the clock is already ticking and entries will soon open for the Somerset Business Awards 2023!

The awards are the county's biggest annual business awards and are organised by Somerset Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the very best of the county's businesses.

The awards will open for entries on September 12, with a launch event planned on September 14 and a 'how to enter' online workshop scheduled for October 19. The awards will close for entries on November 25, while the gala final will take place on March 24 at the Winter Gardens Pavilion, in Weston-super-Mare.

Now in their 18th year, the awards are free to enter and businesses do not need to be a member of Somerset Chamber to take part. There is also no limit on the number of categories businesses can enter.

There are some new sponsors for this year's event and a new category to honour apprentices - from school leavers to existing employees. More about that in the next edition!

Emma Rawlings, Chief Executive of Somerset Chamber, said: "The Somerset Business Awards cover all business sectors across a wide range of categories and I would encourage all local businesses to enter the awards



to share their own success stories and celebrate their achievements. The final is a great night and we have some exciting plans for that, too!"

More information about the awards is available on the website www.somersetbusinessawards.org.uk, while updates will also be posted on the official business awards social media accounts.

Chamber team attends Yeovil Business Fair

A team from Somerset Chamber attended the first face-to-face Yeovil Chamber Business Fair last month, meeting some familiar faces and a few new ones, too!

Held at Yeovil Innovation Centre, it was the second business fair organised by Yeovil Chamber, with the first having to be held virtually due to the COVID pandemic.

Entry to the event was free and visitors were able to browse a wide variety of business stands and take part in workshops ranging from paying care home fees and how to boost the visibility of your website to how to use a defibrillator.

Emma Rawlings, Chief Executive of Somerset Chamber, said: "It was great to be able to support Yeovil Chamber and to talk to representatives from such a wide variety of local businesses."



During the fair, the Chamber ran a free prize draw raffle to win a hamper of Somerset goodies - all visitors had to do was drop their business cards into a 'hat' for a chance to be chosen at random to win the hamper. The draw took place in the Chamber office and the winner was Nicola Spinney, of CeeFlair, in Wincanton.

Business Partners renew membership with Somerset Chamber



Somerset Chamber is delighted WPA and Yeovil College have renewed their business partner membership.

We work closely with our business partners and are pleased to be able to support and promote them as part of their partnership.

WPA, or Western Provident Association, is a not-for-profit health insurance firm based in Taunton. The company was founded in 1901 and prides itself on working with like-minded individuals and companies to offer ground-breaking personal and business health insurance policies that have truly revolutionised healthcare in the UK.

Yeovil College has been serving the community in and around Yeovil for more than 130 years. The college is a key provider of education and training in South Somerset and North and West Dorset. It remains committed to its role as a tertiary college for the whole community and currently supports around 5,000 full and part-time students.



Charlotte chosen as latest QES luxury hamper winner

Chamber member Charlotte Lilley, an Account Manager with Global, was delighted to be chosen at random as the winner of our luxury hamper in the latest Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) prize draw.

Charlotte joined scores of other members to take a few minutes to complete the Q2 QES questionnaire - and was rewarded with a hamper full of local produce!

She said: "When I was told I had won a hamper, I thought it would be a gorgeous box about the size of a shoe box filled with a few very well-chosen snacks. I didn't expect that it might take some weightlifting skills to get it through the front door!

"This is so fabulous and way above anything I could have imagined and all because I filled in a survey for the Somerset Chamber of Commerce. Thank you so much! I can't believe the range that has been included, everything from cider to soft drinks, cheese and biscuits, to tea and coffee, with a full



range of condiments from honey and jam to chutney - and the basket just beautiful!"

BCC President warns the Government the economy cannot wait for a new PM

British Chambers of Commerce President, Ruby McGregor Smith, has spelt out what action businesses need to see from a prospective new Prime Minister following Boris Johnson's decision to step down as leader of the Conservative Party.

In a piece which first appeared in the Daily Telegraph, Ms McGregor-Smith said the economy simply could not wait and warned time was running out for businesses:

"As I witnessed the astonishing scenes playing out in Westminster in recent weeks, I knew business leaders across the UK would have been watching from behind their hands.

Whatever their political persuasion their hearts will have sunk with the realisation we are now saddled with a lame-duck Government which cannot take the big decisions our economy needs.

Recent data from the British Chambers of Commerce Quarterly Economic Survey makes clear that every single business sector is facing a bleak outlook.

Two thirds of firms expect to raise prices, while three quarters have no plans to increase investment. Business confidence on turnover and profits are on a downward trend.

Over eight-in-ten companies are worried about rising inflation and the soaring cost of energy bills is cited as a top factor in driving prices higher.

Yet we now face weeks, if not months, of paralysis, waiting for a new Prime Minister to emerge and then set about deciding their policies.

Business owners got through the pandemic using their ingenuity, taking tough decisions, and holding their nerve. Now in the face of difficult economic conditions, they have continued to show their entrepreneurial spirit.

While politicians do battle for the top job, we must also see action from the new interim Cabinet so that plans which were already progressing will not be allowed to fall by the wayside.

Announcements on the future of Local Skills Improvement Plans to help address skilled labour shortages, the allocation of the Shared Prosperity Fund, and decisions on the future of the Super-Deduction scheme and other tax breaks must all go ahead.

Work must also continue to progress the Export Strategy at the Department for International Trade and the Enterprise Strategy at BEIS.



A long-promised review of the Shortage Occupation List must get underway as soon as possible. The 1.3 million vacancies in our workforce are a huge drag on UK productivity and many of these gaps can only be filled by overseas labour in the short-term.

For too many months there has been a lack of strategic direction, too many opportunities have been missed, and too many decisions have been taken in isolation without looking at the bigger picture.

The autumn budget must be the main priority of any new Prime Minister and Chancellor - a chance for them to reset, rethink and get their house in order."





Somerset Education Business Partnership Awards throws the spotlight on young talent

The Somerset Education Business Partnership (SEBP) Awards 2022, attended by over 100 guests from businesses and education providers across Somerset, were held on July 14 at The Canalside in Bridgwater.

The awards recognised the people and organisations who are developing the skilled local work-force that Somerset needs.

The ceremony was opened by Kate Beaumont, Deputy Market Leader, South West Counties from headline sponsor Barclays, with a speech that highlighted the importance of businesses providing opportunities for young people to learn more about the world of work - so that local economies can thrive.

Somerset Chamber sponsored an award and the Chamber's Chief Executive, Emma Rawlings, spoke at the event, which was hosted by Somerset Chamber Member, celebrant Emma Britton.

But the night belonged to the winners of the ten award categories!

For more information about the Somerset Education Business Partnership and for the full line up of award winners, visit the Somerset Education Business Partnership website at www.somerset-ebp.co.uk/awards

The winners

Careers Inspiration in Business (1 to 249 employees) - Sponsored by Strode College

For a smaller employer that has effectively inspired young people about future career opportunities.

Winner: MK Test Systems



The MK Test Systems team with their award.

Careers Inspiration in Business (250+ employees) - Sponsored by Thatchers Cider

For a larger organisations that has effectively inspired young people about future career opportunities.

Winner: Army Careers Centre, Taunton



Zoe Blake of Taunton Army Careers Centre receives the team's award from Sophie Vidler of Thatchers Cider.

Careers Inspiration in Education - Sponsored by Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning

For the education institution that has most effectively inspired students about future careers.

Winner: Emma France and Jane Parker, Supported Employment Coordinators from Abri



Emma France and Jane Parker of Abri with their award.

ProActive Young Person - Sponsored by Hinkley Point C

For a young person who has independently taken proactive steps to prepare for their future career.

Winner: Chloe Fry



Sharon Fry receives Chloe's award from Phil Riste and Donna Brown of EDF



Removing Barriers – Sponsored by WPA Health Insurance

For an organisation or individual that has helped remove barriers to progression for disadvantaged young people.

Winner: Somerset County Council



Misha Liddiatt of Somerset County Council receives the team's award from Neil Davidson and Amy Saber of WPA.

Overcoming Barriers – Sponsored by Somerset West and Taunton Council

For an individual who has overcome barriers to progression towards employment.

Winner: Katlin Carr



Katlin Carr receives her award from Colleen Blake of Somerset West and Taunton Council.

Outstanding Personal Contribution – Sponsored by Weston College

Partners are invited to nominate individuals who have contributed to raising aspirations in Somerset over a significant period.

Winner: Danielle Haskings, Senior Social Value Manager at Willmott Dixon



Danielle Haskings of Willmott Dixon receives her award from Dave Crew of Weston College.

Best Placement Employer – Sponsored by Bridgwater & Taunton College

For the employer that provided the highest quality work experience.

Winner: Edward Martin Computer Services



Paul Griffiths collects Edward Martin Computer Services award from Lucy Hawkins of Bridgwater & Taunton College.

Best Placement Participant – Sponsored by Digital Somerset

For a person who has excelled during a work placement.

Winner: Christopher Moore



Christopher Moore receives his award from Barry Tottle and Lizzie Ginbey of Digital Somerset.

Continuing Through COVID – Sponsored by Somerset Chamber of Commerce

For an individual or organisation that demonstrated innovation and tenacity to continue inspiring young people during COVID 19 restrictions.

Winner: Somerset Highways Maintenance Social Value Group



Tim Henderson and Caroline Keirle of Milestone Infrastructure receive their award from Emma Rawlings of Somerset Chamber of Commerce.

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Somerset Chamber
why not take advantage
of our great range of
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WOULD CLASS THE
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‘COMPLETELY’ POSITIVE.”

We could use this advertising space to tell you what amazing accountants we think we are.

That we are friendly, fair, forward-thinking, transparent...trustworthy... (you get the idea).

But with client reviews like these, we're 'completely positive' that we don't need to.

Welcome to our newest members
of the Somerset Chamber.

NEW MEMBERS

27

Andrew English

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My mission: To inspire people to take control of their financial life, so they and their families can prosper long term. My passion: helping people and their business prosper through proper financial planning. My clients: always at the heart of what I do.

Andrew English, 07734 258342

andrew.english@sjpp.co.uk

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Laura Day, 07859 259308

laura@laurelfinance.co.uk www.laurelfinance.co.uk

Cannington Court

Events and Conferencing

As a unique conference and events venue, Cannington Court is a beautiful former 12th century Benedictine nunnery showcasing sustainability and net zero. It offers modern accommodation, contemporary dining and extensive meeting and event space and is also the location for the interactive Hinkley Point Visitor Centre.

Lisa Cann, 07875 117230

lisa.k.cann@edfenergy.com www.canningtoncourt.co.uk

Managed Document Solutions Ltd (MDS)

Office Services

MDS is a supplier of office document solution based in Somerset. We are the main partners for the South West Ricoh UK Ltd, Kyocera UK Ltd, Kodak Alaris and Brother UK.

Ian Stephenson, 01278 733225

ian.stephenson@manageddocumentsolutions.co.uk

www.mds-mps.com

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gemma.phillips@danielowen.co.uk

www.danielowen.co.uk

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Neil Basil, 01823 246800

neil.basil@patientchoice.net

www.patientchoice.net

Ferne Animal Sanctuary

Charity

Ferne Animal Sanctuary was established in 1939 by Nina, Duchess of Hamilton and Brandon. There are over 30-40 dogs, cats, and horses all in need of rehoming. Over 300 others remain at Ferne receiving care from our superb team.

Kevan Hodges, 01460 65214

kevan@ferneanimalsanctuary.com

www.ferneanimalsanctuary.org

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Patrick Internet is expert at solving the puzzle of online business growth. We'll take the time to understand your business, build a target audience profile, develop and execute a tailored action plan that will help you achieve your growth goals.

Dani Lippe, 0333 3355290

hello@patrickinternet.co.uk www.patrickinternet.co.uk

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Growing Vision is a leadership and management training consultancy helping HR Directors and leaders deliver exceptional performance by delivering practical, impactful and accredited leadership and management development through proven training, facilitation and coaching.

John Garland, 01278 733670

John@growingvision.com https://growingvision.com

Tessa Chapman Photography

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I offer a wide variety of photographic services from Headshots to architectural photography, event coverage to website and social media images. I pride myself in my ability to first understand the clients needs and then work hard to fulfil your brief.

Tessa Chapman, 07737 928610

tessachapmanphotography@hotmail.co.uk



Hinkley Point C gears up for a summer of heavy lifting

Hinkley Point C is getting ready for another spectacular engineering feat with the precision placement of 5,000 tonne cooling-water intakes on the seabed.

Four times longer and twice as high as a double-decker bus, each intake head will be connected to five miles of tunnels used to circulate cooling-water for the new power station.

The first heads have been carefully loaded onto barges at Bristol Port's Avonmouth docks, ready to be towed out to meet two floating heavy lift cranes "Gulliver" and "Rambiz" which will work in tandem to lower the structures into place. Each platform is the size of a football pitch and the cranes have a combined lifting capacity of 7,300 tonnes.

The four "intake" and two "outfall" heads have been built by Balfour Beatty in Avonmouth. Each "loading out" operation, carried out by lifting specialists Mammoet, takes several hours, with the water levels being adjusted at the dock, to ensure the barge can receive the load safely and securely.

Ian Beaumont, Project Director Marine Civils at Hinkley Point C, said: "This starts a summer of complex offshore

operations, with teams working in collaboration to deliver an incredible feat of engineering. It demonstrates the continued progress being made at Hinkley Point C."

Roger Frost, Project Director at Balfour Beatty, said: "Today marks yet another exciting milestone in the construction of Hinkley Point C with the arrival of some of the largest heavy lift vessels in the world, on site. We are now readying ourselves to successfully complete our next feat of engineering: lowering the head structures, which will support the nuclear power station's critical water-cooling system, to the very bottom of the Bristol Channel."

The structures will cap the tunnels which will supply Hinkley Point C's two nuclear reactors with cooling water. The heads are big for a reason. Their size means water will enter the intakes slowly, reducing the number of fish entering the cooling pipes. They are also placed sideways to the tidal flow. In addition, screens and a fish return system will transfer fish back to sea.

Hinkley Point C will be the first power station around the Bristol Channel to have fish protection measures in place.





Let's network over breakfast!

Tuesday
23 Aug

Our let's network events are a great way to get out and meet new people - while enjoying a delicious, cooked breakfast! A designated 'table head' will ask everyone to introduce themselves, giving guests the opportunity to make meaningful connections.

Sponsored by

**BLOCK
WORK-
SPACE**

Time: 8.15am - 10am at Monks Yard, Ilminster
Cost: £19.75 plus VAT

Training workshop - How to foster creativity

Tuesday
13 Sep

One of the most common myths surrounding creativity is that it's a skill you either possess or you don't. However, when you strip it back, being creative is simply about having the ability to bring something valuable into the world. Jenny Walford, Acting Managing Director at ADPR, will focus on how to ensure creative thinking is at the forefront of your business.

Sponsored by

ADPR

Time: 9.30am - 1.30pm at Equity House, Taunton
Cost: £49.50 plus VAT

Training workshop - Eight steps to create your stand-out communications strategy

Tuesday
6 Sep

Good communication helps organisations engage staff, customers and stakeholders. A communications strategy is vital to set out who they need to engage with, how and when. Delivered by local communications consultancy, Distinctive, this workshop will cover the essentials to creating a realistic, workable strategy.

Sponsored by

Distinctive

Time: 9.30am - 12.30pm at Equity House, Taunton
Cost: £49.50 plus VAT

Training workshop - How to manage challenging conversations

Thursday
22 Sep

This half day workshop, delivered by Carly Catchpole, Director of Green Door, will explore why we might feel some apprehension in conversations where we need to address interpersonal issues or performance concerns and then provide plenty of tools, frameworks and practice opportunities to enhance skills in this area.

Sponsored by

**GREEN
DOOR**

Time: 9.30am - 1.30pm at Equity House, Taunton
Cost: £49.50 plus VAT

Annual Bank of England Update 2022

Thursday
8 Sep

Join Somerset Chamber and the Bank of England for the annual business update with Malindi Myers, the bank's Agent for the South West. Malindi will give an insight into the economy, highlighting key drivers and possible impacts for the future. There will also be the chance to network over breakfast!

Sponsored by

Handelsbanken

Time: 8am - 10am at Taunton Racecourse
Cost: £20.75 plus VAT

Training workshop - Understanding the benefits of good female health in the workplace

Tuesday
27 Sep

This event will help business owners support female members of staff by providing a wider understanding of the benefits of good female health in the workplace. It will enable them to create a safe space for their employees to be able to talk about any health concerns that they may be experiencing as well as actively promoting female health at work.

Supported by

WPA

**Nuffield
Health**

Time: 9am - 11am at Equity House, Taunton
Cost: no charge
(grant funded by Somerset County Council)

*Prices are plus VAT unless otherwise stated

Please note due to high demand, some of these events may be fully booked by the time of printing.

Please note that all non-members are entitled to attend a maximum of two Chamber events. Should you wish to attend further events, you will be required to become a Somerset Chamber member.



Alpha Housing wins Outstanding Customer Service Award

Taunton-based independent property agents, Alpha Housing Services, has received a prestigious ARMA (Association of Residential Managing Agents) ACE award. Having been shortlisted as a finalist in two categories, Alpha was thrilled to take home the ARMA ACE award for Outstanding Customer Service.

Alpha has already received a great deal of recognition from the industry, being either shortlisted, nominated or finalists for various industry and business awards over the years.

A spokesman for Alpha said block and property management was not just painting walls and replacing light bulbs. Alpha has turned buildings with maintenance challenges into thriving places to live. Through the use of customer case studies, the team was able to highlight to the judges how they provide exceptional service not only daily but also in times of complex and unprecedented situations.

Being the leading professional body

for property management services, ARMA has over 300 managing agents on their books. There were more than one hundred applications across the awards, including many from larger national agencies.

Managing Director, Piers Wrangham, said: "The team and I were utterly delighted to win this award; it was certainly the award that we felt meant the most to us. We have always prided ourselves on putting our customers at the heart of what we do, so to win, with such a high standard and against competition from other national agents has reaffirmed how worthwhile all the hard work is on a daily basis."

The ARMA judges recognised that the team at Alpha worked hard to listen to clients and understand requirements. They were impressed by Alpha's ability to provide necessary services to support each property management need, even during complex situations, stating: "This entry really stood out, particularly with the use of video case studies and strong



google reviews. Alpha were very honest about the challenges they faced and how they have overcome them."

With more than one hundred five star Google reviews, more than any other agent in the area, Mr Wrangham said Alpha had proven itself to be the number one property and block management company for the Southwest in 2022!

To learn more about Alpha Housing Services Ltd., visit www.alphahousingservices.co.uk/services.

New manager appointed at Hornsbury Mill

The Hornsbury Mill team has welcomed Paul Mullen as the new Hotel Manager. Paul is originally from Sheffield and comes with excellent credentials and huge experience having been in the hospitality sector for over 25 years.

Paul started his career in potwash and has experienced every aspect of the hotel business and hospitality industry from small hotels to pubs and bars, from trendy cocktail bars to silver service at the Houses of Parliament.

His early career included several years employed by the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire working at the famous Chatsworth House, Bolton Abbey and Lismore Castle in Ireland.

He honed his waiting skills at the flagship hotel, The Devonshire Arms, hosting prestigious large corporate and charity events



and smaller intimate functions for celebrities including television stars, popular singers and the royal family.

An interest in cocktail mixing took him to Amsterdam where he spent some time learning the craft of building, mixing, stirring and shaking cocktails - a skill he is keen to bring to Hornsbury Mill!

Paul's most recent role was as the Operations Manager at the George Hotel in the centre of Axminster, which he opened in conjunction with the proprietors after a £1.2 million refit.

Paul is passionate about customer service, an ethos that sits beautifully alongside that of Jane Nagle, the current owner, caring and looking after customers, be it for a coffee and cake mid morning, a three-course or light lunch or dinner for a special.

He is already planning to do a number of events, including afternoon tea with strawberries and Baileys Eton Mess ice cream to celebrate Ascot Week and Wimbledon, a sausage and cider festival showcasing local Somerset produce and a 'Meet the Morris Dancers' event with bells and batters, sticks and swords, headgear and hankies!

Hornsbury Mill offers a multitude of services from overnight hotel rooms, weddings and wakes, to a restaurant and lounge area ideal for an informal business meeting. The hotel is currently developing its lakeside conference facilities to accommodate around 100 delegates.

Business innovation event announced for Somerset

Somerset West and Taunton (SWT) Council is hosting a new, flagship business event aimed at supporting Somerset's businesses and innovation economy.

The 'Somerset Innovation Exchange' on Tuesday, September 27, will provide a collaborative forum for the county's leading businesses to learn and share the latest technological and industrial innovations, helping them to develop and grow together as part of Somerset's innovation community.

The event has been organised by SWT with support from Somerset County Council, The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HoTSWLEP), SWT Innovation Leadership Group, Tech South West,



Innovate UK and Barclays Eagle Labs, and is open to businesses at all stages of growth including entrepreneurs, designers, rising stars, inspirational founders and civic innovators.

Executive Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation at SWT, Cllr Mike Rigby, said: "Somerset Innovation Exchange is open to Somerset's best and brightest businesses in all stages of growth who want to meet likeminded people, hear about opportunities, develop new ways of working and share their experiences, ideas and enthusiasm.

"The event will explore how to grow, innovate and mature more companies in our region, and set practical problems we want to solve collectively.

"We are delighted to launch this new event to help support Somerset's talented businesses and accelerate growth of the innovation economy, attracting businesses looking to relocate or invest in this key business destination, rich in growth and opportunities."



The full-day event will include a keynote speaker, and sector panels including developing the talent pool, with inspirational business leaders sharing how they secured support and funding for their start-ups. A tech demo area will provide a chance to experience innovative technology from start-ups and businesses in Somerset along with networking opportunities throughout the day, enabling delegates to make valuable business connections.

Key themes for the event are energy, engineering and manufacturing, agritech, food and drink, digital, AI and Big Data, cultural and creative and healthcare.

Tickets for the Somerset Innovation Exchange, which will be hosted at Somerset County Cricket Club in Taunton, are on sale for £25 including a light lunch and parking.

To find out more visit www.somersetinnovationexchange.co.uk.

Cyclists' 150 mile challenge for hospiscare

Three cycling enthusiasts from South West IT solutions company Nexus have tackled a gruelling 150-mile cycle ride from Exeter to Land's End in aid of Hospiscare.

The IT professionals cycled through Devon and Cornwall along a hilly route, which was the equivalent of ascending and descending Ben Nevis three times.

The five-man team consisted of: Nexus engineers Neale Frood (pictured), Simon Gammon and Mark Runciman; Operations Director John Brett; and Managing Director Stuart Wilson, who will join them for a leg of the two-day journey.

Stuart said: "There is strong support and admiration within Nexus for the care that Hospiscare provides. We have supported the charity for some time now - it's become part of what makes us tick - and we will continue to support Hospiscare as a 40 Club member."

Nexus Finance Director, David Murray, knows the importance of keeping charity's like Hospiscare going. His younger brother James was diagnosed with grade three malignant glioma brain tumour in January 2018.

David said: "For the last few months of his life he was cared for at home by carers, who helped him retain as much dignity as possible, while allowing him to remain in his own home with his everyday things around him."

"The care demonstrated by Hospiscare, meant so much to our family, and it cannot be underestimated, nor will it ever be forgotten." David's brother sadly died on December 26, 2020.

David's brother-in-law, Neville, was undergoing treatment for bowel and liver cancer. When his treatment became ineffective, Nev opted to receive palliative care at home, before he passed away in June.



David added: "Hospiscare not only helps people in their final days, but it also helps their family to cope with losing them. Family members can see that their loved one is treated with respect and dignity, right to the end."

To support Nexus in their fundraising efforts, visit Nexus Open Systems LTD is fundraising for Hospiscare (justgiving.com). Nexus' other fundraising plans include a 25 mile walking challenge from Axmouth to Exmouth.



Hydrogen South West consortium launched

A group of nine leading organisations covering aerospace, shipping, hi-tech engineering and public utilities have come together to launch Hydrogen South West, a partnership which will create an infrastructure ecosystem that will bring the benefits of hydrogen to the South West of England.

This infrastructure ecosystem of key industries aims to decarbonise transport, commerce, and power, while driving sustainable growth, upskilling the region and delivering new job opportunities.

Focusing on key sectors such as shipping, aviation and housing as well as industry, the consortium includes a number of chamber members including Bristol Airport and Dynamics, owned by EDF.

Other leading companies include easyJet and Airbus, industrial heavyweights GKN Aerospace, consultants and engineers Costain and Wood and regional leaders Bristol Port, and Wales and West Utilities.

The collaboration creates links between supply and demand

centres in the region and enables cross-sector partnerships that will drive the development of hydrogen infrastructure and technology.

Several pilot projects are planned, including:

- Hydrogen hub at Bristol Port – a study is underway to explore configuring the port to accept hydrogen or ammonia by ship, power landside vehicles with hydrogen and establish a hydrogen production facility at the port. The project includes developing a local pipeline network and supporting Airbus' hydrogen-powered aircraft of the future
- Project Acorn – easyJet aims to begin flying hydrogen aircraft as soon as they are commercially viable. To prepare the ground, the company will continue with the research and development of hydrogen powered ground support equipment at Bristol Airport

Simon Earles, Hydrogen South West chair and Director of Sustainability



for Bristol Airport, said: “The South West has a rich engineering and energy history and is home to a powerful cluster of leading aerospace, transport and logistics businesses. This combination of industrial experience, delivery expertise and regional knowledge presents a formidable opportunity to accelerate the UK’s transition to alternative power at scale.”

The partnership is working with Business West to create a skills development proposition that would bring upskilling and employment benefits to communities across the West of England.

To find out more, visit www.hydrogensouthwest.com.

Container Team's Andre is named best in UK

The Container Team's Andre Sejourant has been named as the Self Storage Manager of the Year. He was selected as one of just six finalists in the Manager of the Year category in this year's Self Storage Association Awards.



A spokesman for the company said it was a huge accolade and just getting to the final was a fantastic achievement. They said Andre always took great pride in his work and goes the extra mile to look after his customers, so the award was well-deserved!

As the UK winner, Andre will now progress into the European Self Storage Awards which take place in Portugal in September. These are organised by FEDESSA (the Federation of European Self Storage Association).

With headquarters in Weston-super-Mare, Container Team has six self storage sites known as Space Programs across the South West. Each site is run by a Mission Controller. Andre is the Mission Controller for the Swindon site.

The Self Storage Association is the professional body that represents the whole UK industry, of which The Container Team is a proud member.



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Haulage company goes the extra mile for driver safety

Chard-based transport and logistics company, C&D South West has invested over £20,000 in electric pump trucks to ensure the comfort and safety of their drivers into the future.

It is no secret that over the past two years the nation has increasingly relied on the logistics sector to deliver, literally. Along with a national shortage of drivers, it's been a tough ride to



ensure that both customers and employees have been wholly satisfied, but C&D has been committed to doing all they can.

With these factors in mind, C&D considered the ways in which they could improve efficiency in their delivery, but also the happiness of their employees, too.

The decision to purchase the electric pumps was made to ensure that drivers felt safe and comfortable doing their role, specifically handling palletised tail lift and residential deliveries.

Supplied by SHS Handling, the electric pump trucks ensure the transport of loads swiftly and easily, are high speed, are able to be charged quickly and can be used in the narrowest of spaces. With the versatility to work in various environments, the addition will guarantee to also increase productivity amongst the team.

Being able to increase productivity whilst decreasing manual labour is a clear win-win for Lorna Hammond, Managing Director at C&D: "The addition of the electric pump trucks helps support all of our goals as a business.

"Not only are we ensuring the safety and happiness of our team, but giving them the recourse to do their job to the best of their ability increases customer satisfaction as we save time and reduce the chances of making mistakes.

"The heart of our organisation is people – employees and customers, and anything that ensures we provide a better experience for them we are willing to consider implementing."

More information is available from the C&D South West team at www.cdsw.co.uk.

Major refurbishment transforms Milsted Langdon's Taunton office

Chartered accountancy firm Milsted Langdon has completed a major refurbishment of its Taunton office, focusing on sustainability and the benefits of eco-friendly improvements.

The firm's largest office, which is based in Winchester House on Deane Gate Avenue in Blackbrook business park, has undergone significant building work, including a reshaping of the internal structure to create a more modern work environment that allows for further growth, as well as a spacious coffee-shop style lounge area for staff and contemporary client meeting rooms.

The move is part of the firm's ongoing plans for continuous improvement around sustainability and innovation and reflects Milsted Langdon's future ambitions in Taunton.

The firm had already started its journey to a more sustainable future by going paperless across all its offices and further eco-improvements as part of the refurbishment include solar panels being installed on the roof, an electric charging point added to the car park and new energy saving

lighting and air conditioning system in place.

Chairman Tim Close said: "Completing this project was a huge achievement and we're seeing significant improvements for our staff already.

"Although it meant that the office had to close whilst building work was carried out, it wasn't an issue - the pandemic has illustrated how we can be flexible and work remotely with no

impact to client service.

"Our designers worked closely with an internal project team to understand our brand and the way we, as a firm, want to work going forward, and the new office reflects a modern and flexible approach, with innovative and sustainable workplace solutions to help our people thrive".

For more information visit www.milstedlangdon.co.uk.



Brainwave in search of tradespeople to join their team

Childrens charity, Brainwave, in Somerset, is appealing for help after being affected by the ongoing shortage of skilled workers.

The charity needs tradespeople to help upgrade its current facilities and is opening its books to appoint preferred suppliers interested in working with the charity to support children with disabilities.

Electricians and plumbers, in particular, are needed to fit an accessible wet room in the accommodation used by visiting families, as well as electrical jobs, both big and small, to manage jobs such as installing lighting units and switches.

It is also trying to recruit therapists as the ongoing recruitment crisis continues to cause problems for local charities and businesses.



Keith Sinclair, CEO Brainwave, said: "As we celebrate our 40th year and welcome new families to our centre we're keen to upgrade our facilities and accommodate more children. Finding reliable tradespeople who we can call on as and when we need will be a great asset to us so any recommendations will be fantastic.

"Recruitment of therapists - physio, speech and language, occupational - has been a source of difficulty for us over the past 12 months and we are aware that other sectors are struggling in this area too.

"If any fellow Chamber members can support us with recruitment, it would be most appreciated and in return you will be enabling us to reach out to more children with disabilities to reach their potential."



Brainwave has been helping children with disabilities achieve greater independence for over 40 years by aiming to improve their mobility, communication skills and learning potential through specialist therapies.

The children that Brainwave works with have a range of conditions, including autism, cerebral palsy and genetic disorders such as Down syndrome. Therapists, who are drawn from the mainstream fields of physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and learning and development, work with families to devise a unique therapy programme, specifically designed to suit each child's needs.

Since 1982, Brainwave, which has its headquarters in Bridgwater, has delivered over 13,000 assessments to children with have a range of conditions including autism, cerebral palsy, sensory processing and Downs syndrome nationwide.

Anyone who can help the charity should email emma.james@brainwave.org.uk.



Sansum donates funds to local school in Wells for their new farm project

Sansum Solutions Group Limited, a commercial cleaning contract company based in Cheddar, was delighted to be able to donate £200 towards an exciting new farm development project at local school St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School, in Wells.

This exciting project is in the early stages of its creation and development and will offer a holistic approach to learning for those children at the school who may have a social and emotional mental health need. It will provide them with a safe and peaceful place to learn outside of the classroom. The farm area will add value to each child's learning



experience, offering limited sensory input, building confidence and self-esteem.

Jason Woodcock, Managing Director of Sansum, said "Sansum provide its specialist commercial contract cleaning to many schools in Somerset

and as part of our Corporate Social Responsibility Policy are always looking at ways we can add social value and benefit to our local communities.

"We are, therefore, delighted to be able to donate funds to this project and have pledged ongoing support to St Cuthbert's Junior School in Wells, as the farm area project continues to develop."

Jennifer Wilson, Business Development Manager of Sansum Solutions Group Limited, is pictured presenting a £200 cheque to Helen Mullinger, Headteacher of St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School, Wells.

Exciting times ahead for Yeovil Town Football Club

It is an exciting time for all involved at Yeovil Town Football Club as the new season is just about to kick-off with a new-look kit and a return to a striped shirt design for the first time since the 90s.

This season, Yeovil Town is proud to have leather specialist Pittards as the back-of-shirt and sleeve sponsor and to celebrate the kit launch the club donated unused kit to Saris Addis Sefir, a football team in Ethiopia.

The club is known as the Glovers due to the glove-making history of the Somerset town so it was fitting to have Pittards as a sponsor.

And while first team manager Chris Hargreaves is looking to achieve the club's aim of returning to the promised land of the English Football League, it is fair to say the whole club is on a journey that is paved with positivity, re connection and strong engagement of its fans and the business community.



Commercial manager, Mark Robinson, has launched the club's business networking group, YTFC Business, and has been working hard to build relationships and engage as many business in the town and surrounding area as possible

The Club hosts a breakfast morning every month, allowing local businesses to network and share ideas, with first team manager Chris Hargreaves and Chairman Scott Priestnall both attending recent events.

As part of the club's bid to be at the heart of the community, this season's home shirt launch saw club captain Josh Staunton visiting both Pittard's and Leonardo Helicopters, in Yeovil.

During his visits, the skipper engaged with staff of both businesses, many of whom are supporters of the club. This was documented as part of the club's kit launch video, where Staunton was taken up in a helicopter at Leonardo's and taught to operate the machinery and process of tending the leather used in the process of making leather gloves at Pittards.

Mr Robinson said such a successful launch would not have been possible without the connections and relationships formed at the YTFC Business group, where the club has been able to meet a number of prominent business people since its launch last year.

For more information about the group, please contact Mark Robinson by emailing MRobinson@ytfc.net.

Next phase of Killams Park underway in Taunton

Summerfield Homes has started work on the third phase of its award-winning new homes development in Taunton at Killams Park.



With work originally starting in 2016, the development has won five awards for the quality of the homes which include two, three and four bed homes. The third phase, now well underway, will also see the construction of affordable homes under Summerfield's My Homes initiative, amongst the first 26 of the final 101 properties left to build in the third phase.

As part of the phase three plans, Summerfield Homes has included a new play area for the benefit of the local community as well as considerable levels of open space and allotments.

Ed Khodabandeloo, Managing Director at Summerfield Homes, said: "Killams Park has become one of the most sought after places to live in the Taunton area and I'm pleased to be progressing with Phase Three. Our sales team look forward to welcoming prospective purchasers to the development later this year."



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Wincanton achieves major health and safety milestone

Wincanton, the official warehousing and transport service partner for the construction of EDF's Hinkley Point C nuclear power station, recently achieved a major health and safety milestone at its site in Bridgwater as it marked 1,000 days without a Lost Time Incident (LTI).

Since the contract began in 2018 Wincanton has controlled the storage, handling, asset tracking and transportation for incoming materials for Hinkley Point C from multiple warehouse locations across the south-west. This includes materials as diverse as soil samples through to the 23.2 tonne pipes that form part of the

reactor cooling system.

An active safety culture, driven by education, awareness and engagement is at the heart of the service Wincanton provides. Its outstanding health and safety record sets it apart from competition and leads industry standards in the UK.

Becky Krajniewski, Account Manager at Wincanton, said: "We carry out a daily safety brief each morning which discusses all activities for the day, visitors, safety roles, security concerns and what went well or didn't go well from the day before.

"We've created a culture where

Wincanton

colleagues feel confident to challenge each other, and visitors, if rules are not being followed."

One of the keys to success are fortnightly 'toolbox talks', which cover updated responses for every type of incident. These talks have improved communication and ensured staff at all Wincanton sites across the contract, are kept up to date with project developments on its way to achieving its 1,000 days-without-an-LTI milestone.

Taunton teacher off to coach at Commonwealth Games

A teacher from Taunton School has been selected as a hockey coach for the Commonwealth Games this summer.

Elliot Foweraker will head to Birmingham with Team Wales later this month as assistant coach to the women's hockey team who will compete in the prestigious international sporting event.

The 32-year-old said: "I'm really excited to be part of the Commonwealth Games - it's a brilliant opportunity to work with such amazing players and staff at a major international event."

Elliot has recently been working with Hockey Wales, coaching the senior

women since January alongside his full time job as Director of Hockey at Taunton School in Somerset.

He said: "I feel privileged to work at this level and I'm very grateful to Taunton School for supporting my development. The experience with Hockey Wales has been invaluable, all of which I strive to bring back to add value to the school's programme."

This year Elliot has coached three Taunton School teams to reach the regional indoor finals, four boys have competed in national finals, and three pupils have been selected for the England in their age categories.

For more information visit www.tauntonschool.co.uk.



Hippychick wheely helps the bugs and the bees



The Bee Wheelybug, along with its Ladybird counterpart, are best sellers in Hippychick's portfolio of children's toys and youngsters are now also able to learn more about the flowers the insects need to thrive.

Every bee and ladybird Wheelybug purchased from Hippychick in July, August, and September, will be despatched with a pack of seeds, containing a variety mix of bee and bug-friendly meadow flowers.

The Bee Border Garden Mix contains 10 grams of high-quality seeds designed to produce results. The seeds are suitable for growing throughout August and September and include cornflower, lesser knapweed, marjoram, native red clover, vetch, and foxglove.

More information is available from Hippychick at <https://www.hippychick.com/>

Bank of England summary



@BoESouthWest



BANK OF ENGLAND

Huw Pill, Chief Economist and Executive Director for Monetary Analysis and Research, at the Bank of England, talks about the factors that have pushed inflation up in recent months and explains why bringing inflation back towards the 2% target is now more important than ever.

These are challenging times, for the economy, for economic policymakers and for all of us facing the cost of living crisis.

At 9.1% in May, UK inflation is uncomfortably high. The Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) latest forecasts suggest inflation is set to rise further towards the end of the year, as international commodity prices rises stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine filter through to UK utility and food prices.

Acting to achieve the MPC's 2% inflation target is now more important than ever. The MPC is committed to returning inflation to target in a sustainable way over the medium term.

Since I joined the MPC last September, we have halted the Bank's asset purchases, raised Bank Rate cumulatively by more than one percentage point to 1.25% and started to shrink the asset portfolio accumulated via quantitative easing (QE).

We are now considering whether to start selling gilts, as well as implementing further interest rate increases.

These measures represent a shift away from the very accommodative stance of monetary policy originally established in the face of the global financial crisis and maintained, more or less, ever since - in the face of the European sovereign debt crisis, the fallout from the Brexit referendum, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

UK inflation currently stands at its highest level since 1982 - a big part of the story is the impact of a series of external economic disturbances that have driven up international goods and energy prices.

Bottlenecks have emerged in international markets. These stem from a combination of changes in the global pattern of consumer demand and disruptions to global supply chains. Both phenomena have their roots in the COVID pandemic.

Lockdowns both forced a switch from spending on face-to-face services towards consumer durables and interfered with the production and distribution of those goods globally. The price of tradable goods - for which the UK is essentially a price taker - have been driven up as a result.

New lockdowns in China and the invasion of Ukraine have exacerbated supply disruptions through the spring, prolonging the inflationary impulse. And, as we all know, the

invasion of Ukraine has also had a profound inflationary impact on international energy prices, as well as boosting other commodity prices, in particular for food.

Not only did higher goods and energy prices drive up UK inflation, but they also implied a squeeze on UK households real spending power.

Even a very activist MPC policy could not have prevented some short-term inflation volatility in UK inflation emerging in the face of external price shocks.

The role of monetary policy is to ensure that, as the inevitable real economic adjustment occurs, it does so in a manner consistent with achieving the 2% inflation target sustainably over the medium term, while minimising undesirable volatility in output and employment.

A complicating feature of the UK economic landscape is that these external price shocks have coincided with tightness in the labour market and the strength of corporate pricing power, at least in some sectors.

This raises the threat of second-round effects becoming established in UK price and wage-setting behaviour.

The MPC's May forecast anticipates that the real income squeeze coming from higher international energy and goods prices will slow domestic demand and, eventually, result in the emergence of economic slack, an easing of corporate pricing power, higher unemployment and a looser labour market.

The question is whether this economic weakness will be enough to contain inflation alone. The MPC has taken the view that monetary tightening has been required to ensure that inflation returns to target. I would anticipate that we will see more policy tightening ahead.



Banks must improve treatment of struggling small businesses

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has told banks that they must treat small business customers fairly when collecting and recovering debts. An FCA review of bank collection practices revealed that lenders were not treating small businesses fairly and bank staff did not have the right training to provide effective support to customers. It also found that lenders did not have clear policies to help staff identify and support vulnerable customers.

Read more about the review at:

<https://www.fca.org.uk/news/press-releases/fca-tells-banks-improve-treatment-struggling-small-business-borrowers>

Businesses report fall in turnover

Figures from the Office for National Statistics have revealed that 24% of businesses reported a fall in turnover in June 2022 compared with the previous month. More than half (60%) of businesses with fewer than ten employees reported that they had been affected by general increases in prices, compared with 77% for business with ten or more employees.

Read more about the figures at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/bulletins/businessinsightsandimpactontheconomy/14july2022>

Committee calls for a co-ordinated focus on long-term growth

A cross-party committee of MPs has expressed concern at the lack of long-term thinking in economic strategy, following the abolition of the Industrial Strategy and the Plan for Growth. The committee found that the Government has no overall strategic vision of what the UK's economic problems are, how they should be prioritised and what policies are effective. The committee also believes that there should be a co-ordinated growth strategy.

Read more about the concerns at:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/158/treasury-committee/news/172034/treasury-committee-calls-for-a-renewed-coordinated-focus-on-longterm-growth-to-bolster-the-uk-economy/>

Sales fall to a rate not seen since depths of pandemic

The volume of retail sales declined for the third consecutive month in June, according to figures compiled by KPMG and the British Retail Consortium. Discretionary purchases were hit hard, especially white goods and homeware, while consumers also traded down to cheaper brands in food and non-food items.

Read more about the fall at:

<https://www.retailgazette.co.uk/blog/2022/07/uk-retail-sales-fall-to-a-rate-not-seen-since-depths-of-pandemic/>

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INCLUDES: ONE DRINK, THREE
COURSE MEAL & TWO HOUR SHOW

WATCH
HERE



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