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Insight

Spring 2022 | ISSUE TWENTY EIGHT

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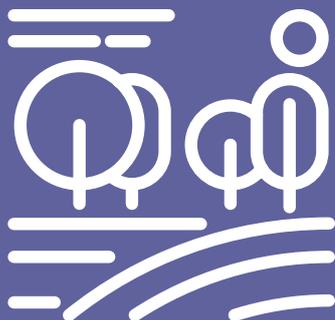


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Working to create thriving, greener and healthier communities.

Overcoming today's challenges and shaping opportunities for tomorrow.

Find out how we are building a sustainable future for all of our residents and businesses:

www.hertfordshiregrowthboard.com

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Business and Politics clearly do not mix.

A pandemic arrives creating a 9.4 percent contraction in the economy following which the UK economy grew by a better-than-expected 7.5 per cent in 2021 to record the fastest growth since the Second World War.

In data, released recently by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the UK is on track to be the fastest growing economy in the G7 in 2021, after experiencing one of the worst annual declines in 2020. Despite the rapid growth since, though, measured on a quarterly basis, the UK's gross domestic product in the three months to December remained 0.4 per cent below the level recorded in the fourth quarter in 2019, before the rapid spread of Covid-19.

The monthly data showed that GDP fell by 0.2 per cent in December. City economists had forecast a 0.6 per cent decline.

The UK economy is facing a materially weaker 2022 as the crippling burden of rising inflation, soaring energy bills and higher taxes on consumers and businesses dampens activity, despite a temporary boost from the lifting of Plan B Covid restrictions.

As business owners we are required to chart these stormy seas of rising demand against a lengthy period of reduced need and at the same time keep our businesses solvent and maintain levels of employment and employee demands. We are chastised for poor management in recessions and again for being profligate in rising markets. Do you ever get the impression that you cannot win?

Unlike the many politicians lining up to chastise both BP and Shell for profiteering from rising energy costs and oil prices, against a background of the continued failure of politicians to manage an adequate energy supply and in a market where Russia monopolises European gas supply, we must surely understand that they all have a business to run?



ADRIAN HAWKINS, OBE

Chairman biz4Biz,
Publisher Insight Magazine

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Resilience is a vital attribute both in business, and also in life, and in the past few months we have seen plenty of that as we all claw our way back following the tribulations of the pandemic.

Life is slowly returning back to something like that which we knew some two years ago, and although it may be too early to roll out the word 'normal,' signs are looking promising for 2022.

Indeed biz4Biz is a case in point with two major events coming up in our timeline in the first half of the year.

In early March we see the first ever Sustainability Conference which has been held in Herts, Beds, Bucks and Cambs.



Insight Editor Darren Isted

The event is a day-long conference at Rothamsted, near Harpenden in and features a host of key speakers on a topic which is clearly going to be the major issue of 2022.

Then in July we have the latest biz4Biz Awards which are once again taking place at Tewinbury Farm in the centre of Herts.

Nominations are still being made for this prestigious awards, it's still not too late to get your entry in, and with the judging process soon to be underway, it really will be a chance to see just how dynamic business has been in reacting to such trying times.

New beginnings always bring fresh optimism and this really is true as we march ahead in 2022.

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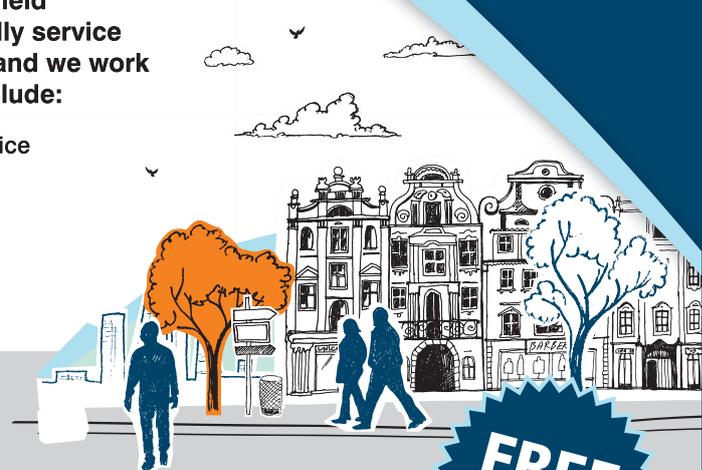
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Hertfordshire Growth Board

LIVE LINK
TO WEBINARS

HERTFORDSHIRE LEADERS WORKING TOGETHER TO LEAD A 'GREEN RECOVERY'

Health, education and local government leaders set out their sustainability priorities for 2022 as a part of a live debate on the future of Hertfordshire.

Delegates from across local and central government, the development and construction industry, businesses and civic organisations attended this special hour-long event to hear how Hertfordshire will lead a 'green' recovery and help ensure that every person can benefit from good sustainable growth.

Hertfordshire Growth Board is the way the county is now working together to manage growth. With the Hertfordshire population expected to rise by up to 175,000 by the mid-2030s, at least 100,000 new homes and jobs will need to be created over the same period to address those needs.

It is made up of the County Council, the 10 district and borough councils, the NHS Integrated Care System (ICS), Homes England and Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The event hosted by The Voice of Authority (TVoA) platform and sponsored by Willmott Dixon put a number of questions to its panel of experts and set out to answer:

1. What does sustainable growth actually mean?
2. How are we translating 'green' ideas into future ways of living and working?

Cllr Richard Roberts, Leader, Hertfordshire County Council and

Chair, Hertfordshire Growth Board, said one of his main priorities for 2022 was to build on COP26 and county commitments to be carbon neutral by 2030.

"Coming out of COVID, we need to work with our residents so that they can live fulfilled and healthy lives. We have to work harder to enable as many people as possible to participate in our vibrant society.

The challenge that we also face is that we have to manage future development and our resources more responsibly to reduce our carbon footprint." Asked if sustainable development was an oxymoron, Cllr Roberts said moving away from a carbon-heavy agenda, such as providing well-insulated homes and air-source heat pumps, could only be seen as a very positive move.

Cllr Linda Haysey, Leader, East Herts District Council, political lead for the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership, set out how the Growth Board is working

with this partnership to deliver climate change action and reduce the carbon footprint with policies already in place.

The Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board was also set up, she said, with the primary aim of brokering dialogue between local authorities, investors, developers and land-owners to deliver high quality place-making.

Neil Hayes, CEO, Hertfordshire LEP, set out the work that is underway to develop a clean growth strategy and help the county to achieve its net-zero targets. The debate then moved to two key areas focusing around health and skills development and why these are so critical to future sustainable growth.

Rt. Hon Prof. Burstow, Independent Chair at Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System (ICS), said levelling up was a very real issue with a seven year life expectancy gap across the county, and stressed the importance of the ICS working with place leaders via Hertfordshire Growth Board,



Toby Fox, MD at 3Fox, interviewing Richard Roberts, Leader, Hertfordshire County Council and Chair, Hertfordshire Growth Board during the live webinar



businesses and education. He said: "Over the past 19 months we have all been responding to the pandemic and the different waves and that has been a powerful driver for collaboration and innovation. Now as we enter the third year of the pandemic, from a health care perspective we have to restore services and tackle backlogs."

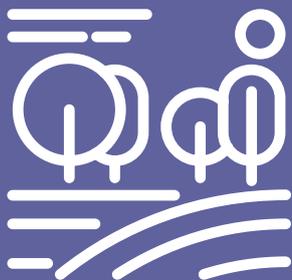
"The health care equation is not about simply delivering better services, it is about addressing those causes of ill health. Seeing healthy lives as a key component of



economic prosperity has meant the Integrated Care System has been delighted to become a part of the Growth Board." Prof. Julie Newlan MBE, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business and International Development) University of Hertfordshire, set out the pivotal role universities have to play in driving the local skills agenda and creating opportunities for the future.

Hertfordshire was a 'case study' in partnership working with strong links between education, industry, business, local government and the LEP to deliver that agenda.

Hertfordshire a sustainable future



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SOCIAL



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Adrian Hawkins OBE talks about the upcoming biz4Biz Sustainability Conference
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The Herts Sustainability Accelerator #HSA is now open. Join other #Herts #SMEs @UniOfHerts@BoroughCouncil



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biz4Biz Awards
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Voting in the biz4Biz Awards ends on 28 February - this is your last chance to nominate your company and vote!



Hertfordshire LEP
@HertsLEP

Great news for Hertfordshire businesses! Yao Yingia, Design Chief at Lenovo – the world's largest seller of PCs



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Love shouldn't hurt.

If this is happening to you, or you are concerned about someone, we can help.

Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline is a **FREE** confidential, support and signposting service for anyone affected by domestic abuse – as well as for concerned family members and friends. Call **08 088 088 088** or email in strictest confidence to **kim@mailpurple.org**



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hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org

Registered charity no. 1184899

People say and do all sorts of things ‘in the name of love’.

But if those things include violence, bullying, mind games or controlling behaviour then that isn’t love. A bunch of flowers or a box of chocolates cannot make up for domestic abuse.

In a recent crime survey, over 42 thousand adults in Hertfordshire said that they had experienced domestic abuse in 2020. That number of people would fill Watford football club stadium twice!

1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men live with some form of domestic abuse in their lifetime.

Two women a week are killed by a partner or ex-partner in this country. 30% of domestic homicides happen on work premises.

Valentine’s Day can remind survivors of good times they have had with an abuser, making them feel lonely, which may in turn tempt them to go back to that abusive relationship. Or it can leave them vulnerable to fall in love again, often repeating the abuse.

Employers are in a unique position to create a supportive workplace culture that encourages health and wellbeing, and to help break the silence around domestic abuse.

For more information and guidance as to how employers can support domestic abuse survivors within their workplace, please visit The Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline.

The Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline is a confidential, free, support and signposting telephone and email service. Whether directly serving all victim-survivors, their friends and family, perpetrators, or indirectly to professionals, we provide a safe space for people to discuss their situation.

We are here to listen, 9am-9pm weekdays and 9am-4pm weekends.

Don’t suffer in silence.

THE WINE SOCIETY TO EXPAND ITS STORAGE CAPABILITIES

Work has commenced on the first extension to The Wine Society’s warehousing in over a decade.

The building of Warehouse 5, the first extension to The Society’s cellar space since 2009, will increase its storage facilities from 7.6m bottles to 11.3m – up almost 50% – as it responds to significant growth in demand both now and in the future. It will also enable the organisation to further streamline its goods in and picking procedures to enhance its service to members.

The new warehouse is 70m long and is 23m high, with over 6,000m² of floor space, roughly equivalent to the size of a football pitch. Using the latest in temperature-moderating technology, this unique project will involve careful planning to accommodate requirements for a strictly controlled operational environment.

The Wine Society’s chief operating officer, Karen Coates said: ‘We are delighted to have physically started the project, vital to The Society’s continued level of service to a



growing membership. Reconfiguring our existing warehouses brought increased productivity last year, and we look forward to improving our efficiency yet further to the benefit of our members and our suppliers.’

The works are being carried out by Farrans Construction, which has over 75 years’ experience of delivering world-class projects across the UK and Ireland.

Farrans Construction’s regional director, Cathal Montague said: ‘Our

team is looking forward to being on site and working alongside The Wine Society to complete a project which will help them to meet the demand of a buoyant market. Social value plays a key role in all of our projects and we will be working with the community of Stevenage to provide educational opportunities for people in the area through apprenticeships, placements and workshops.

We aim to leave a positive lasting impact in the areas in which we work.’

COMMERCIAL DIGITAL RADIO MULTIPLEX LICENCES RENEWED UNTIL 2035

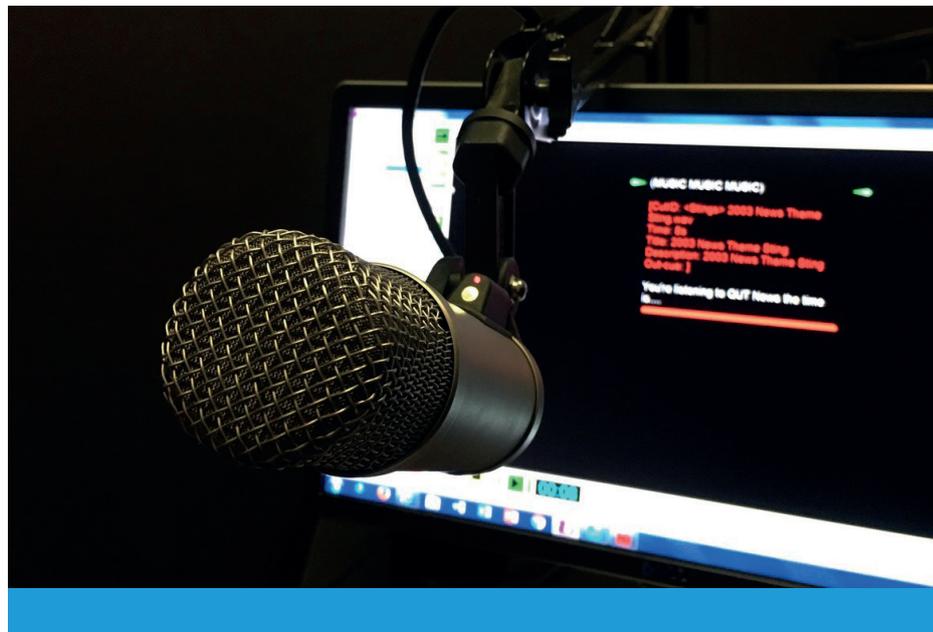
The government has given Ofcom the power to renew two national commercial radio multiplex licences - Digital One Ltd Multiplex and Sound Digital Ltd Multiplex, due to expire in 2023 and 2028 respectively - until December 2035.

The move will mean audiences across the UK will enjoy uninterrupted access to the huge range of radio content available from the country's national commercial broadcasters through their digital devices on a free-to-air basis. Well-known stations on the Digital One Ltd Multiplex include Absolute Radio, Capital and Smooth. Listeners can find the likes of Jazz FM and Talk Radio on the Sound Digital Ltd Multiplex.

Radio is extremely popular in the UK. Almost 9 in 10 adults listen to their favourite stations every week. But technological developments mean more people choose to listen to their favourite stations on digital devices and terrestrial broadcast digital (DAB) radio is now the most popular way people listen to radio programmes in the UK.

A digital radio multiplex is a service which groups a number of different radio stations onto one frequency. It differs from analogue (FM/AM) broadcasting where a single signal is broadcast.

Multiplexes allow radio broadcasters to use the spectrum - the airwaves over which all wireless communications devices communicate - to be allocated more efficiently and give listeners more choice on digital radio.



Renewing the two multiplex licences via a Legislative Reform Order will also provide long-term continuity for various national commercial stations to broadcast digitally.

- In October the government and radio industry published the Digital Radio and Audio Review, which assessed likely future trends in listening and made recommendations on ways of strengthening UK radio and audio.

- Recommendations included no formal switch-off of FM services before 2030 and new measures to protect UK radio stations' accessibility so that their content is carried on platforms via connected audio devices such as smart speakers.

- The full list of the radio services carried on the multiplexes being renewed:

D1 Multiplex licence expiring in

2023: Absolute Radio

Capital,
Capital XTRA,
Capital XTRA Reloaded,
Capital DANCE,
Classic FM,
Gold,
Heart UK,
Heart Dance,
Heart 70s,

Heart 80s,
Heart 90s,
KISS UK,
KISSTORY,
LBC,
LBC News ,
Magic,
Radio X,
Smooth UK
Smooth Chill,
talkSPORT,
UCB 1.

SDL/D2 multiplex licence expiring in 2028:

Absolute 80s,
Absolute 90s,
Boom Radio UK,
BFBS,
Fun Kids,
Jazz FM,
Mellow Magic,
Planet Rock,
Premier Christian Radio,
Premier Praise,
Scala Radio,
Sunrise Radio,
talkRADIO,
talkSPORT 2,
Times Radio,
UCB 2,
Union JACK,
Union JACK Dance,
Union JACK Rock,
Virgin Radio,
Virgin Chilled,
Virgin Anthems.

IAN FUNNELL APPOINTED AS NEW CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL NUCLEAR LABORATORY

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has announced that Ian Funnell has been appointed as the organisation's new Chair, succeeding Sir Andrew Mathews. Ian Funnell is currently Chief Executive Officer for Hitachi Energy UK Limited, for the UK and Ireland businesses. Ian spent nearly 2 decades at ABB in a number of different roles, including 5 years as Chief Executive Officer of ABB UK Ltd. Ian is also a mentor for the global high potential female talent programme and an Ambassador for the Women's Leadership

Association – indicators of his demonstrably strong commitment to sponsoring diversity and inclusion.

He has extensive experience in a non-executive capacity, and is currently Chair, CBI North West Region; Commissioner, COVID Recovery Commission; Board Member, Energy Revolution Advisory Group, Innovate UK; and Board Member, Energy Futures Lab, Imperial College.

He is a Chartered Engineer, and a Fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology. NNL is the UK's national laboratory responsible for nuclear fission

R&D and occupies a unique position in the nuclear innovation environment, taking science from inactive laboratory-scale demonstration to prototype deployment with real nuclear materials.

It is the custodian of unique world-leading nuclear skills, facilities and equipment vital to the UK and aims to support policy and provide long term sustainable value for the UK in 4 Focus Areas:

- Clean Energy
- Environmental Restoration
- Health and Nuclear Medicine
- Nuclear Security and Non-Proliferation

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AS A SMALL BUSINESS OWNER IN 2022

There are several new rules and regulations small business owners need to be aware of in 2022 as revealed by Enterprise Nation. Here's a summary.

Importing goods from the EU to Great Britain

Since the end of the Brexit transition period, the government has been phasing in changes to customs regulations. Until 31 December 2021, businesses importing goods into Great Britain from the European Union (except Ireland) had 175 days to submit a full customs declaration after physically importing goods. The ability to delay declarations ended on 1 January 2022. Businesses must now meet full customs requirements with most having to make declarations and pay relevant tariffs at the point of import. If you're importing animal products, you must also be prepared to submit pre-notifications via the import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS).

Border controls

On 1 January 2022, new rules were introduced which require ports and

other border locations to control goods moving Great Britain and the EU. This means that unless goods have a valid declaration and have received customs clearance, they will not be able to be released into circulation, and in most cases will not be able to leave the port, except from in Ireland.

Goods may be directed to an Inland Border Facility for documentary or physical checks if these checks cannot be done at the border. Businesses must also submit an "arrived" export declaration if the goods are moving through one of the border locations that use the arrived exports process.

If businesses do not follow the correct process, the new systems will not permit your goods to leave the country and they will be turned away as they will not hold export clearance.

Rules of origin

The UK's deal with the EU means that goods imported or exported to or from the EU may benefit from a reduced rate of customs duty under rules of origin.

Throughout 2021, businesses have

been allowed to export goods to the EU using tariff preference and get supplier declarations afterwards. Following a change on 1 January 2022, you must now have supplier declarations (where required) at the time you export your goods.

Commodity codes

Commodity codes are used worldwide to classify goods that are imported and exported. They are standardised up to six digits and reviewed by the World Customs Organisation every five years. Following the end of the latest review, the UK codes changed on 1 January 2022.

Brexit changes from 1 July 2022

From 1 July 2022, further changes will be introduced.

They include:

- requirements for full safety and security declarations for all imports
- new requirements for Export Health Certificates
- requirements for Phytosanitary Certificates
- physical checks on sanitary and phytosanitary goods at border control posts

Making Tax Digital for VAT

The government launched its Making Tax Digital initiative in 2019. It aims to transform the tax system and make it more efficient.

Since April 2019, businesses with sales over the £85,000 VAT threshold have been required to submit their VAT returns to the government digitally.

From 1 April 2022, businesses that charge VAT but have a taxable turnover below the £85,000 VAT threshold must also submit their VAT returns digitally.

To comply, businesses must sign up to Making Tax Digital by the deadline. Businesses must also keep certain VAT records digitally.

National Insurance and dividends tax increase

From April 2022, there will be a 1.25% increase in class 1 primary (paid by employees), secondary class 1, 1A and 1B (paid by employers) and class 4 (paid by the

self-employed) National Insurance Contributions (NICs). Dividend tax will also increase by 1.25%.

The change is to fund increased health and social care costs. From April 2023, it will be legislated as a separate 'health and social care levy' and NICs and dividend tax will return to 2021/22 levels.

Plastic Packaging Tax

From 1 April 2022, a new tax of £200 per tonne will apply to plastic packaging manufactured in, or imported into the UK, that does not contain at least 30% recycled plastic. The tax will affect UK manufacturers of plastic packaging, importers of plastic packaging, business customers of manufacturers and importers of plastic packaging, and consumers who buy plastic packaging or goods in plastic packaging in the UK.

Manufacturers and importers of less than 10 tonnes of plastic packaging per year will be exempt.

National Security and Investment (NSI) Act

New rules were introduced on 4 January 2022 that require businesses and investors to tell the government about an acquisition that could harm the UK's national security. The government can then scrutinise and intervene in certain acquisitions. It can also impose certain conditions on an acquisition or, if necessary, unwind or block it.

National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage

From 1 April 2022, the following National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage hourly rates will apply:

- National Living Wage (23+): £9.50 (6.6% increase)
- 21-22 year old rate: £9.18 (9.8% increase)
- 18-20 year old rate: £6.83 (4.1% increase)
- 16-17 year old rate: £4.81 (4.1% increase)
- Apprentice rate: £4.81 (11.9% increase)

BUSINESSES MOST IMPACTED BYOMICRON VARIANT TO BENEFIT FROM OVER £700 MILLION AS GOVERNMENT DELIVERS FUNDING TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Businesses in England most impacted by the Omicron variant will be able to tap into a multimillion-pound support package.

Firms in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors, many of which have seen a decline in footfall and increased cancellations due to the Omicron variant, will be able to apply for one-off grants of up to £6,000 per premises depending on rateable value:

- businesses with a rateable value of £51,000 or above: £6,000
- businesses with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000: £4,000
- businesses with a rateable value of £15,000 or below: £2,667

In addition, more than £100 million worth of discretionary funding is also being made available for

local authorities to support other businesses.

The grant funding forms part of a £1 billion support package which includes an additional £30 million for the Culture Recovery Fund and reintroducing the Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme - reimbursing eligible businesses for the cost of Statutory Sick Pay for COVID-related absences.

Businesses are encouraged to apply to their council for grant funding which will be administered over the coming weeks. Find your local authority on GOV.UK.

Businesses eligible for grants are those that offer in-person services, where the main service and activity takes place in a fixed rate-paying premises, in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors.

For example, this includes businesses whose main function is providing a venue for the consumption and sale of food and drink, those that provide facilities linked to recreation and entertainment, as well as businesses whose main premise is used for holiday accommodation.

The government has chosen to provide generous grants that are the same size as the monthly cash grants provided to hospitality businesses when they were fully closed earlier this year – despite businesses now being still able to trade.

Other businesses impacted by Omicron, such as those that supply the hospitality and leisure sectors as well as personal care services, are also able to apply for grants with the government

allocating more than £100 million to the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) fund for local authorities in England.

Local authorities will have discretion to allocate this funding to businesses most in need.

The Business Secretary has written to those local authorities who have more than 5% left over from previous ARG funding rounds, instructing them to disburse their remaining funding. Additional information

The £1 billion support package consists of:

- £635 million for targeted grants for hospitality and leisure businesses in England
- £102 million top-up for the

Additional Restrictions Grant

- £30 million for Culture Recovery Fund
 - £154 million of Barnett funding covering all three above
 - Funding for the Statutory Sick Pay Rebate scheme will be additional to these amounts
- Further information will be available in the published factsheets.

The one-off grants of up to £6,000 for eligible businesses in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors, depend on rateable value:

- businesses with a rateable value of £51,000 or above: £6,000
- businesses with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000: £4,000

- businesses with a rateable value of £15,000 or below: £2,667

• The additional funding is the third top-up to the ARG scheme.

The most recent data on local authority payments to businesses is to 28 November 2021 and so does not capture any recent spending. As of this date 88% of the funding available prior to this third top-up had been spent

• note that local authority funding allocations for the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant have been calculated using the latest available data (31 March 2021) on business numbers provided by the VOA

• figures by local authority are available on request

UK HAS LAUNCHED INDIA NEGOTIATIONS TO KICK OFF 5-STAR YEAR OF TRADE

The UK and India are engaged in negotiations on an ambitious Free Trade Agreement in New Delhi.

India is one of the world's biggest and fastest-growing economies and a deal would put UK businesses at the front of the queue to supply India's growing middle class, forecast to increase to a quarter of a billion consumers by 2050.

India is set to become the world's third biggest economy by 2050, with a bigger population than the US and EU combined.

A deal has the potential to almost double UK exports to India, boost our total trade by as much as £28 billion a year by 2035, and increase wages across the UK by up to £3 billion. Investment from Indian companies already supports 95,000 jobs across the UK.

The UK wants an agreement that slashes barriers to doing business and trading with India's £2 trillion economy and market of 1.4 billion consumers, including cutting tariffs

on exports of British-made cars and Scotch whisky.

A deal with India would be a big step forward in the UK's strategy to refocus trade on the Indo-Pacific, home to half of the world's population and 50% of global economic growth.

A new economic partnership with India, alongside UK membership of the massive Asia-Pacific trading bloc, CPTPP, will create a pillar in the region supporting free and fair trade.

A UK-India FTA would bring multiple benefits including:

- Playing a key role in our ambition to double trade with India by 2030 - supercharging the growth of our trading relationship which totalled over £23bn in 2019.
- Slashing barriers on UK exports – Removing duties alone would increase exports to India by up to £6.8 billion, supporting tens of thousands of jobs across the UK. Important UK exports like Scotch whisky and cars currently face

enormous duties of 150% and 125% respectively.

• Levelling up the UK – DIT analysis shows a trade agreement with India could boost the economies of all nations and regions of the UK. Almost 30,000 people in the West Midlands, for example, were employed via Indian investment in 2019, and the region could see a massive boost of up to £300m with opportunities for manufacturers of motor vehicles and parts.

• Investment in UK jobs - International investment from Indian companies already supports 95,000 jobs across the UK and could grow with a new trade deal.

• Boost UK's green industries - The Indian government plans to install 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022 and much more in the coming decades.

UK's world-leading renewables industry looks set to benefit from a deal that slashes barriers – such as import tariffs as high as 15% on wind turbine parts from the UK.

MENOPAUSE - IS IT STILL THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM?



Bower HR Consultancy

Clarity and harmony through the principles of HR

Many women have found themselves struggling with the impact of symptoms from the menopause – take it from me – it can be debilitating.

Memory loss, hot flushes, night sweating, sleepless nights, tiredness and mood swings – let alone the impact of the pandemic and trying to maintain positive mental wellbeing.

Approximately 13 million women in the UK are either peri or post-menopausal, and 60% of women experience behavioural changes whilst menopausal.

Many women at this age are likely also to have hormonal early teenage children, elderly parents to take into consideration, and for my own situation an autistic child.

I joke to myself regularly, it's my age!

But seriously, with the pressure that women place on themselves to try and be all things from being perfect mum, wife, and partner; trying to maintain a good body shape, exercise routine, and balanced healthy diet – the menopause adds to that pressure, and in many cases throws a woman completely off balance.

But it isn't just about the woman - it's the impact it has on their partner and the family, as well as in the workplace.

Many women have been left feeling incredibly low, and in many cases forced out of the workplace altogether as memory loss, and ability to function at the great level which they have commonly known for and achieve deteriorates.

Almost half of menopausal women say they feel depressed and a third say they suffer with anxiety. An inquiry was launched by the government after a survey found

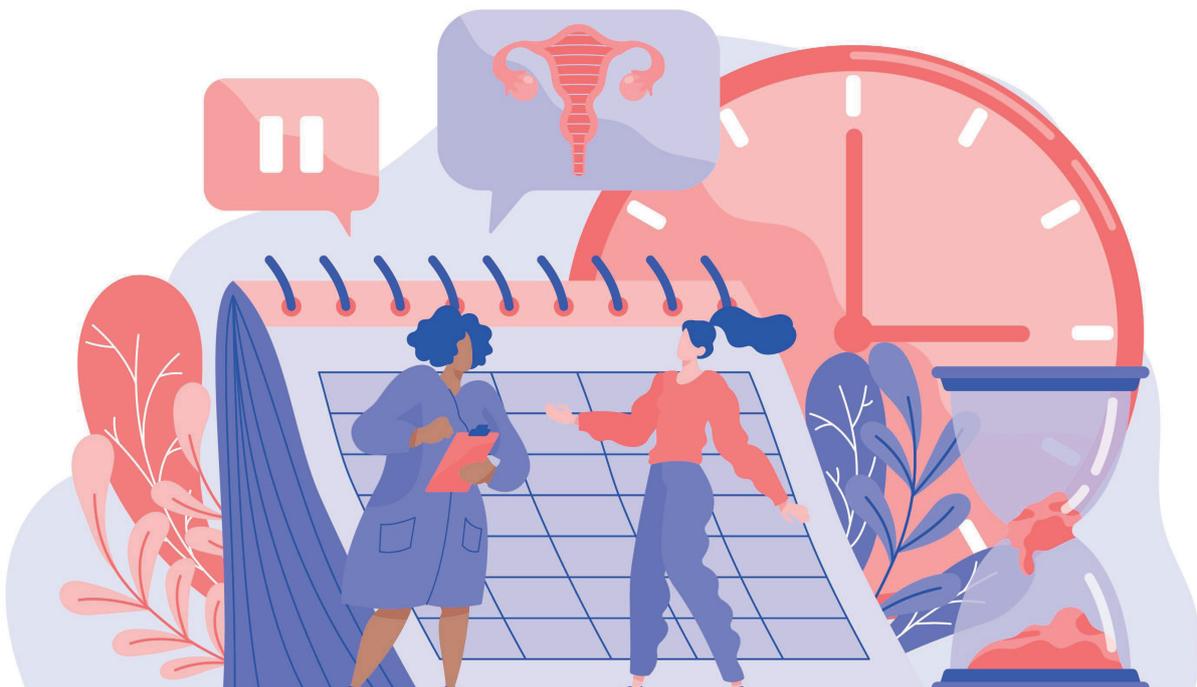
that three in five menopausal women were negatively affected at work by their symptoms, with nearly 900,000 women in the UK leaving their jobs.

What is also worrying is up until more recent times, the menopause symptoms have been overlooked and not taken seriously by the medical profession.

Although it is more openly spoken about now, it does remain a taboo subject – and a difficult topic to embrace.

Nuffield Health report that:

- Women are incorrectly diagnosed with depression and given inappropriate medication
- 8% of women seek help from a GP when suffering menopause symptoms.
- Quarter of those who visit a GP say that symptoms being menopause related are missed.



The Employee Value Proposition



The Employee Value Proposition is the reason why staff work for you; feel empowered and motivated in the work environment to remain with you and above all give their loyalty and trust to you resulting in improved productivity.

- A third of women who visited a GP are not made aware of HRT intervention, and when they are they are left very confused about HRT.

- Impacted by the symptoms of the menopause and not having the opportunity to express this. Doctors in some cases have not taken matters seriously.

It is also worthy to note that in some most severe cases, the menopause will be considered a disability, and of course it goes without saying that discrimination towards a female encountering the menopause would be considered unlawful as gender is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Training in the workplace is crucial to fully support and understand the impact of those affected, so that support, space, flexibility and work adjustments can be achieved.

Through understanding, a company can then truly offer the help needed.



Serena Bower

A menopause policy will also help to embed the acceptance and support to those experiencing or being impacted by the menopause. However, it is also vital when educating in this area, that women in the workplace are consulted in the delivery of the awareness and

training to ensure they don't feel embarrassed or targeted by the added focus.

Those companies where leaders deliver the positive experiences for employees, create the environment for team collaboration and truly understand their people will go the extra mile to ensure diversity and inclusion – and this includes those impacted by experiences of the menopause.

Diversity and Inclusion is part of the wider Employee Value Proposition which a company should implement to drive sustainable growth and profitability.

There are many great not-for-profit organisations out there which can support in this area.

Equally here at Bower HR, we can provide help and support in delivering awareness on this topic and support companies to realise their own unique employee value propositions.

biz4Biz Annual Conference

SUSTAINABILITY: THE PATH TO NET ZERO

Your Transformation to Sustainable Advantage
in Business and Society



Sustainability is a significant driver of transformation in Business.

Businesses need to put more emphasis on sustainable practices rather than just focusing on the objectives of efficiency and productivity improvements

With COP26 taking place in the UK recently, it is clear that the actions needed to mitigate climate change are now becoming a serious priority among world leaders. While the event made headline news across the globe, we must not lose sight of the growing impatience towards waste, ecological damage, and the overuse of precious natural resources caused by consumerism and industrialisation. We must bear witness to the images of decimated forests, polluted rivers, and burgeoning piles of plastic waste, to know society is heading towards a tipping point in attitudes.

Businesses should be acutely aware that the spotlight will increasingly be turned on to them, not only by governments, but by society at large. Now is the time that every company – from global brand icons to small

single plant operations – recognise that sustainable manufacturing and business operations are critical to their future success and reputation.

The drive towards optimising manufacturing and business efficiency and productivity should no longer centre solely around performance and profit but equally revolve around sustainability, with sustainable practices being at the forefront of any companies' transformation strategy.

As we make way to our biz4Biz Conference dealing with Sustainability on the 3rd of March 2022, we want to hear from any manufacturer in our area, the steps that they are taking either to introduce new methods or the design of new products to help others with this process.

We have witnessed supply and demand chain fragility in the past 18 months as well as the global semiconductor shortage, limiting operations across the automotive sector. And with inflation beginning to rise sharply, more uncertainty and volatility is surely yet to come. Sustainability could be the biggest challenge yet and this is emphasised

by TV coverage on the subject resulting in consumers and brands paying attention to the environmental impact of products and services. This pressure towards responsible and sustainable manufacturing is only going to grow and it will be increasingly difficult for organisations to be transparent as to their response.

It's time to consider the methods used in your business and our Conference sets out to provide a starting point for your current carbon footprint and provide details and methods to effect change. The presentations take place throughout the day and there will be an exhibition area to establish new ideas. Whether you are a business making products, in distribution or importing from around the world there will be something for everyone at our Conference. We also look forward to seeing those providing solutions.

Join us on the 3rd of March

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When:
3 March 2022

Where:
Rothamsted Research Institute

Price: Take advantage of our special early bird ticket prices. The normal ticket price is £195 plus VAT but we are offering a special early bird price of £146 plus VAT – this is a limited time offer so act now!
The ticket price includes refreshments and lunch.

Join senior business leaders to explore how organisations can help drive the net-zero transition, and get practical guidance on how to shape and finance your business' net-zero strategy.

Learn how to take the ESG (Environment Social Governance) journey forward in a sustainable and profitable way.

Our Speakers



David Hawes

Co-Founder, Net Zero International
David is the co-founder of Net Zero International, an organisation which is passionate about enabling businesses to understand their carbon footprint, analyse the results and create detailed plans to improve their overall impact to become a more sustainable business, via a suite of services including carbon accounting software, UN-approved partner audits and certification.



Marco De Benedictis

Head of Sustainable Finance, Barclays. Marco heads Barclays' Corporate Banking Sustainable Product Group, which was established in early 2020 to support the company's 2050 decarbonisation ambition. His responsibilities include: origination, focused on growing both sides of the balance sheet; portfolio management of the existing book; and sustainable product innovation. Marco also co-chairs the Corporate Banking Sustainability Forum.



Mark Pashley

Mercer & Hole
Mark is a Corporate and Business Tax partner at Mercer & Hole. Mark specialises in R&D tax credits and advice relating to capital allowances on commercial property portfolios. He views R&D tax credits as a valuable and under-used relief which can benefit companies operating in many sectors. Mark helps clients ascertain their ability to qualify for what can be an immediate cash injection.



Who should attend?
Environmentally- and Socially-Conscious Business Leaders seeking to reconcile purpose, people, profit and planet.
What will you learn?
An understanding of the difference

their business can make, and how these can deliver financial returns to their bottom-lines, and an appreciation of the importance of having ESG (Environment Social Governance) front-of-mind in Leadership.



Rondi Allan

Co-Founder, Sustainable X
Sustainable X supports businesses to make profit sustainably. Their business led approach allows SMEs to get a competitive advantage, win and retain their customers and employees and secure funding to support future initiatives. They will be sharing some practical advice, based on real case studies, on how to embed sustainability in what you do every day and how it enhances your business.



Phil Webb

MD and Founder, Investors In Community.
Investors in Community, a SaaS platform that helps connect organisations, individuals, charities, and community groups to demonstrate by working together powerful and evidenced social impact can be created. The platform is a growing movement to facilitate the improvement of the lives of people and communities and measures real social impact.



Leon Reed

CTO & Founder, Verisio
Leon is a social compliance auditor at Verisio, who audit companies globally for compliance to the Modern Slavery Act on behalf of retailers, local authorities and other organisations. Verisio provides all the appropriate due diligence, awareness training, mapping of supply chains, self-assessment questionnaires, risk assessment modelling using its software called Optimus.



Richard Whitehead

Richard Whitehead is Managing Director, Buildings and Places Europe, at AECOM, a multinational engineering firm that provides design, consulting, construction, and management services across 150 countries. Richard is also a Director of Perfect Circle, a joint venture company formed by Pick Everard, Gleeds and AECOM, which looks to make a significant and positive contribution towards shaping the built environment and to exert a positive influence on the issues affecting the public sector. Richard also chairs the Enterprise Zone Board.

Richard joined the LEP Board in March 2018 as a business representative and is the LEP's diversity champion.

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Adrian Hawkins OBE

Chair biz4Biz and Stevenage Development Board, Managing Director Welding World Ltd
Adrian Hawkins OBE is the former Deputy Chair of the Hertfordshire LEP, the current Chair of the LEP's Skills and Employment Board and the Founder of Weldability SIF, an innovative advanced manufacturing firm based in Letchworth Garden City.

We are delighted to introduce you to our new Associates here at biz4Biz each of whom will shortly be introducing you to our new ConneXions venues in Biggleswade, Milton Keynes, Hatfield and Luton as we expand our presence in Beds, Bucks and Cambs. Please feel free to connect with each of them for further details at the email address provided. Alternatively contact me if you are interested in hosting a ConneXions in other areas
adrian@biz4Biz.org

coaching@biz4biz.org

serena.bower@biz4Biz.org - Luton ConneXions

ian.taylor@biz4Biz.org - Milton Keynes ConneXions

steve.saunders@biz4Biz.org - Biggleswade ConneXions

katherine.bean@biz4Biz.org - Hatfield ConneXions



Gareth Hawkins

Coaching ConneXions
Gareth is a time-served Managing Director and an MBA Graduate who has acquired, built and sold businesses over a 20-year career in industry.

Having trained to ILM7 level in Coaching, he now works as an Executive Coach, as well as holding a number of roles – as Non-Executive Director, Advisor and Consultant – at several scaleup companies.

As a serving charity Trustee and foundation Vice-Chair, he also has experience of third-sector stewardship, and as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts he is committed to inspiring better ways of thinking, acting and delivering change through practical solutions, in order to create a better future.

coaching@biz4biz.org



Serena Bower

Serena Bower is a qualified HR professional and a member of the CIPD for over 20 years. She owns Bower HR Consultancy Limited, which provides people and engagement strategies for sustainable growth for start-up and SMEs. Her passion is unlocking the barriers to successful growth for SMEs.

With a background in HR and Learning Development environments gained from IT, Banking and Transport sectors in London which spanned 23 years, and of more recent years with a host of small businesses across a number of different industries. She has implemented successful learning development programmes; guided business owners through complex HR situations and contributed to the improved processes and shaping of business strategy of many new start-ups.

Fuelled by her passion and enthusiasm for understanding the needs of people and ensuring this contributes to the success of business, Serena firmly believes that people are a business's greatest asset - a tenet she lives out through her advice, guidance and practical support to business.

serena.bower@biz4Biz.org - Luton ConneXions



Ian Taylor

Ian Taylor is a highly experienced Business Advisor and Financial Services Professional, with more than thirty years' expertise in Senior Executive roles with Barclays and BNP: building successful and award winning teams, developing robust, long term client relationships, and leading a series of complex market related projects: making commercial ambitions a practical reality for more than four decades. He is also passionate about ESG, and committed to ensuring Cultural Diversity and Inclusion within the workplace.

He has been appointed to a number of Board Level and Public positions: Regional Director of Barclays (Hertfordshire and NW London) since 2010; Regional Director with BNP Paribas Fortis from 2003 to 2010 and, from 1994 to 2003, Relationship Director at Barclays. Ian is a Board Member of St Albans City of Expertise CIC; Member of the University of Hertfordshire Business School Advisory Group (since 2018).

Amongst extensive professional training, highlights include successfully completing the Larger Business Programme at Henley Management College, and Ian was chosen from many candidates to attend the Insead CEDEP General Management Programme. He is an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Bankers.

ian.taylor@biz4Biz.org - Milton Keynes ConneXions



Steve Saunders

When you work with Steve, he will help & guide you to:

- 1/ Grow your Profits – we know we can help you improve the profitability, cash flow & revenue of your business, using tried & tested strategies
- 2/ Take control of Your Time – we help business owners spend more doing the things they really enjoy; with the people they care about most.
- 3/ Build stronger Teams – we help to ensure that the right Team members are in the right positions, in the right structure & heading in the right direction!
As your coach, we will guide you to bridge the gap between where you are right now, and where you want to be, both in your personal life and your business.

You will develop long-term and short-term goals and strategies, as well as improve your business in areas that you might have overlooked. You may be able to survive in business without the help of a Coach, but we guarantee that with our guidance, you can achieve your personal and business goals faster!

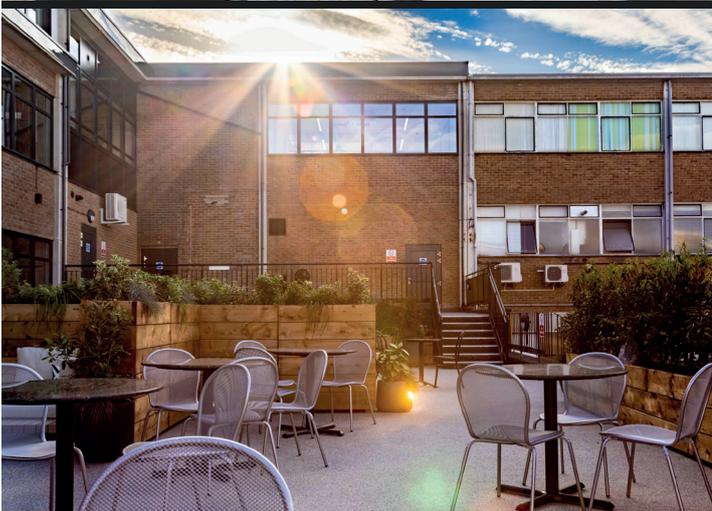
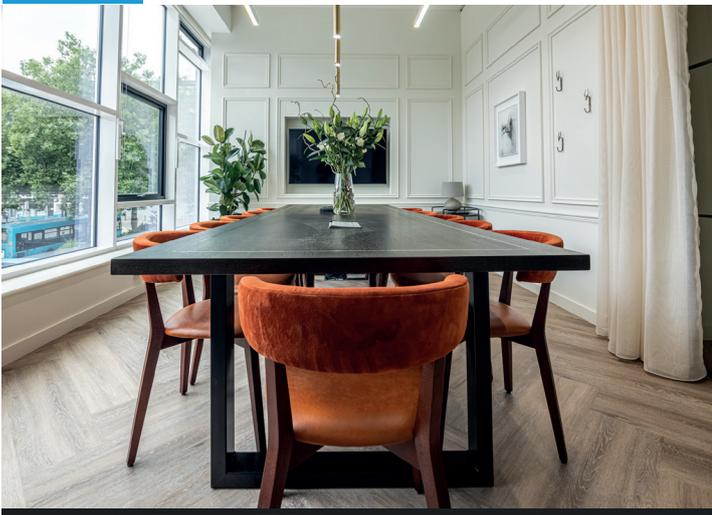
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Dr Katherine Bean
PhD

Dr Katherine Bean PhD is the author of Master the Sales Process, an entrepreneur and is active in the Herts business community. Grow your sales with Katherine and benefit from her years of experience.

katherine.bean@biz4Biz.org - Hatfield ConneXions



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BRINGING ELECTRIC VEHICLES INTO YOUR BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

By Richard Dilley, FCA FCCA
Partner, George Hay Chartered
Accountants
Tel: 01462 708810
www.georgehay.co.uk

As individuals and businesses become increasingly aware of the conversations being had about sustainability and the environment, many are considering how they can make greener choices.

One subject that we recurrently find ourselves engaging with employers and directors about, given the Government's commitment to ban all sales of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030, is switching to electric vehicles (EVs) and the tax implications of doing so.

Incorporating EVs into your business

Employers often opt to offer EVs to their workforce via a salary sacrifice arrangement. In principle, the employee pays for a particular benefit (in this case, an EV) by sacrificing a slice of their salary. Provided in this way, EVs are considered a Benefit-in-Kind (BiK) but do attract a preferential rate of tax. Unsurprisingly, lower CO2 emissions result in more significant tax savings.

The tax charge for solely electric cars is currently 1% for the 2021/22 tax year and will go up to 2% for the 2022/23 tax year. Compared to the 14% that vehicles emitting 1-50 CO2 (g/km), with an electric mileage range of <30, will pay in 2022/23, you can appreciate that 2% piques interest.

When considering EVs, it may also be worth getting to grips with the optional remuneration rules, and how these may or may not impact you.



Other tax implications and practical considerations

If you are thinking about replacing your own petrol or diesel vehicle, or those within your business, with an EV/s, it's worth bearing in mind the following points:

- You cannot claim VAT back on vehicles purchased by your company, unless 100% business usage can be proven. However, 50% of the VAT on leasing payments can be claimed back, even in cases where the vehicle is not used solely for business purposes.
- The electricity consumed to charge an EV, if provided to an employee at no cost via a point at or near the workplace, is not considered a taxable benefit.
- New and unused pure zero-emission cars and vans qualify for 100% first year allowance (FYA), in respect of capital allowances, with no upper constraint on value. Furthermore, the temporary 'super-deduction' affords for a 130% FYA on qualifying electric charging points, used within the business for EVs, until March 2023.
- As of December 2021, the Government's Plug-in Car Grant, which will be available until 2023 and



should be applied for automatically by the car dealership in question, provides a £1,500 contribution towards pure EVs priced under £32,000.

Obviously, all of the tax advantages do not take account of the fact that it's an electric vehicle and may have some limitations; for example, the vehicles range, time taken to charge, and the availability and installation of charging points are all important considerations. From discussions that we have had, we also know that cost and availability of vehicles are two significant drawbacks, presently.

Planning a purchase?

We understand the extent to which tax is an integral consideration when it comes to having control of your business and being able to plan proactively and effectively.

We can help you to dissect the implications of purchasing EVs, whether for yourself as a director or for your wider workforce, and of operating salary sacrifice schemes in relation to cars or other benefits.

To discuss your plans for the year ahead, or for more information about the tax and accounting services we offer, contact us on 01462 708810 or visit www.georgehay.co.uk.

This article is for general information only. No responsibility for loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from actions as a result of its contents can be accepted. The relevant professional advice should be sought in relation to your own circumstances.



The good news is now here and we can reveal that the biz4Biz Awards 2022, which are impartial, expertly judged and open to all those involved in a business which is based in Herts - have now seen voting open!

The biz4Biz Awards are the first of their kind and are impartial, independent awards that can be won by anyone involved in a business in Hertfordshire. The aim of the biz4Biz Awards is to seek out examples of being the best at what we do.

Online nomination and voting began in October 2021 and will continue until the 1st March 2022. Nominees will then be invited to attend judging. Companies can nominate themselves or be nominated by the general



The glittering biz4Biz Awards ceremony will take place on 8th July 2022 at Tewin Bury Farm Hotel, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL6 0JB and will be hosted by a soon to be revealed personality!

All nominees will have the opportunity to publicise their businesses on The biz4Biz Awards website with award winners having full on-going publicity following the awards ceremony.

Entry and Participation is completely Free of Charge. To nominate a company and vote please click the link below.





NOMINATE NOW



EXPECTED SHORTFALL OF 2.6 MILLION WORKERS IN THE UK BY 2030, NEW RESEARCH FINDS

New research published by the International Longevity Centre-UK (ILC) today projects that as a result of population ageing, COVID-19 and Brexit, the UK economy could see a shortfall of 2.6 million workers by 2030 - almost twice the workforce of the NHS.

Amid continued labour market challenges, ILC calls on Government to develop a comprehensive Workforce Strategy to tackle future shortages.

The Plugging the gap report by ILC, the UK's specialist think tank on the impact of longevity on society, warns that recent labour shortages seen in sectors such as transport, health and care are just warning signs of things to come, with shortfalls expected across a range of sectors over the coming years, including:

- Manufacturing
- Wholesale, retail, vehicle repair
- Construction
- Hospitality
- Transport and storage
- Professional and Scientific

- Education
- Health and social care

The report projects that 2.7 million more jobs will be created by 2030 if current trends continue. But with many older workers set to retire over the next years and fewer younger workers joining the labour force, these jobs won't be filled, warns the report.

Most importantly, a large number of workers fall out of the workforce long before State Pension Age as a result of poor health and or caring responsibilities but also barriers to re-employment.

Those that remain economically active up to and beyond State Pension Age will tend to work reduced hours. This trend is combined with added pressures of COVID-19, leading to many people retiring early, and Brexit leading to reduced migration, previously integral to the UK economy.

"Population ageing, the pandemic and Brexit have come together to

form the perfect storm. If we continue with business-as-usual, we are going to see huge shortfalls hitting all sectors of the economy", warns report author Prof Les Mayhew, Head of Global Research at ILC and Professor of Statistics at Bayes Business School.

"The Government has formulated a set of strong policy priorities to develop infrastructure, health and care over the coming years which will place huge demands on the economy. But if we fail to address the workforce challenge, we simply won't have enough people for the jobs."

In its report, the ILC urges the Government to introduce a comprehensive Workforce Strategy that looks across the whole economy. "We can't keep plugging the gaps as issues arise from sector to sector. Whether it's HGV drivers or care workers, at the core we need to ensure we create quality jobs that people can and want to stay in for as long as they want to", adds Prof Mayhew.





With 2022 well underway, All Oldies Radio has been busy preparing for what promises to be an exciting year of growth and continued success.

We've been broadcasting on DAB across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire since September last year, and in that time we have attracted a number of businesses, keen to promote their services to our local audience.

The All Oldies Radio music mix of Classic Hits is loved by those who were born in the 60s and 70s - known as Generation X - and who grew up listening to the very best music of the last 40 years.

And for our advertisers that's a great

audience because according to a recent study by Experian, those in their early 40s are amongst the most influential consumers in the UK.

Their earning and spending power is higher than any other demographic and here at All Oldies Radio, we already have their attention.

In fact we are preparing to launch an exciting listener campaign, making our station a household name and you will soon see our adverts popping up all over the region.

To be amongst the first to see that campaign and enter our free prize draw, turn to [page 36](#) and scan the QR code.

Like any business, a radio station has plenty going on behind the scenes

and we are very pleased to welcome Liz Cragg to the team.

Liz joins our sales team, and will be out and about in the local area responding to the many requests we get from local businesses who want to get their message on the air.

Liz brings huge experience, with a 15 year radio advertising career behind her and she's keen to share her knowledge and help our advertisers get the very best from their investment.

Of course our music and the presenters are vital and the key to our success, and we are pleased to say that we continue to attract the brightest and best, all of whom share our love of those classic hits that our target audience tune in for every day.

MANDATORY ARBITRATION PROCESS UNVEILED FOR COMMERCIAL RENT ARREARS

Author

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Longmores Solicitors

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The government introduced its long awaited Commercial Rent (Coronavirus) Bill ("the Bill") and Code of Practice ("the Code") on 9th November 2021 for issues relating to commercial rent arrears as a result of the pandemic.



LONGMORES SOLICITORS

At the beginning of the pandemic, in order to protect businesses forced to close during the pandemic, the government imposed a moratorium on commercial landlords evicting commercial tenants who were unable to pay their rent.

Alongside, restrictions stopped landlords seizing goods in lieu of rent, and businesses in rent arrears were protected from insolvency proceedings by their landlord. The Bill and Code apply to all commercial leases held by

businesses with rent arrears caused by the impact of the pandemic within a ring-fenced period and apply across the United Kingdom.

The main purpose of the Bill is an introduction of statutory arbitration between landlords and tenants in relation to a debt of rent arrears.

"Rent" is defined in the Bill as any amount payable by the tenant to the landlord and includes not only the rent but also service charges and interest on any unpaid amount.

"This is all focused on supporting the wider economy by encouraging landlords to look at the longer-term benefits."

Landlords are being encouraged to reach a negotiated settlement, rather than issue proceedings, if that will help protect the viability of the tenant's business,"

**property law expert Polja Atkins of
Longmores Solicitors in Hertford.**

“But this isn’t a blank cheque for tenants wanting to withhold rent on commercial premises: if they are able to pay, they are expected to do so. Also, it relates to specific ring-fenced periods and sectors.

Where a business was able to continue trading, such as pharmacies, they will not be covered by the proposed legislation, although each situation will be judged on a business-by-business basis, as not all tenants will fit neatly into the sector-related time restrictions outlined in the code.”

Arbitration will apply only to arrears which relate to periods of mandated closure, meaning that where there has been any gap in payment it is important that landlord and tenant are clear about the period that any subsequent rental payment relates to.

If a date within the ring-fenced period is not specified for any such payment, then it will be treated as outside the scope of the arbitration process.

However, the government is encouraging use of the Code by landlords in resolving all rent arrears, whether or not they fall inside the scope for arbitration, rather than by

issuing proceedings.

The Commercial Rent (Coronavirus) Bill will formalise the code of conduct by setting out a binding arbitration process for rent arrears accrued during the pandemic where tenants are unable to reach a negotiated agreement with the landlord.

To allow time for the legislation to be introduced, protection from eviction for commercial rent arrears will remain in place until 25 March 2022.

Please note the contents of this blog are given for information only and must not be relied upon. Legal advice should always be sought in relation to specific circumstances.



REVELLING UP FOR CHRISTMAS

Safe in the comfort that following two vaccinations and a booster, the worst effects of current strains of Covid are nullified, the Prime Minister introduced “revelling up” this Christmas encouraging us all to enjoy the seasons delights against a background of record-breaking infection levels.

It is now extremely clear that vaccinations and boosters are the winning formula in the fight against Covid as within little more than 12 months the virus has ceased its killing spree at the levels first witnessed in late 2020 and early 2021.

The Government - content in this knowledge – is allowing society to be reminded of the vaccines' efficacy, but sadly still delivering volumes of infected unvaccinated and perhaps less public-spirited people into the arms of the already distraught NHS, who are equally affected by rising infection rates.

The current narrative for society's fight against the Covid pandemic, which is now endemic in the UK, is more attuned to “let them eat cake” than “jaw, jaw, jaw is better than war, war, war”.

It is clear that the Government, the health system and society in general is lost for words in encouragement of anti-vaxxers to protect themselves.

The vast array of vaccination centres still deployed ready and willing to deliver first jabs as well as boosters, offering the final chance of survival at the last chance saloon. But sadly, their relevance and life-saving capacity is still failing to convince some and falling on the remaining deaf ears in this plight to deliver public information.

The advent of 2022 prepares us all for a return to a life of near normality, with Covid jabs joining the humble flu jab in the future protection of the ever-increasing elderly population. Is

it time now to question whether the current NHS model is fit for purpose in a world of increasing health risk and information intolerance and distortion?

Should we be thinking more clearly about the future purpose of the NHS in the context of health education rather than just health defect resolution?

It's clear that a service free at the point of delivery is much loved by us all, but we equally should all be demonstrating a respect for the costs of such a service and our responsibility to others where we are able, to ensure that the much-appreciated NHS system continues.

Covid 19 has been a lesson for us all in both the relevance and importance of the nation's health service and how, once again in this particular war on the virus, “so much is owed by so many to so few”, in our wonderful NHS.



WORK SPACE HUB APPROVED FOR ALDENHAM ESTATE



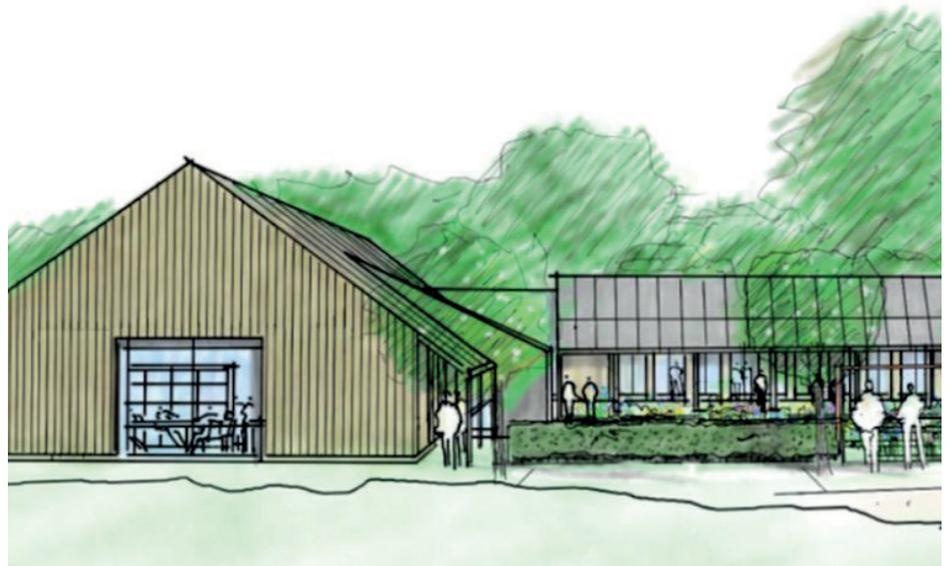
Work is due to start in October on the Home Farm Hub to be built in parkland on the Aldenham Estate in Elstree.

Plans recently approved by Hertsmere Borough Council, include a range of work spaces and meeting rooms for teams set on the 150-acre site in Herts.

More than 15,000 sq ft of work spaces are included in the proposals along with an on-site café, exercise studio, kitchen garden and outdoor spaces.

Original Victorian structures will be restored as part of the design and barns demolished and replaced with timber structures using Herts wood.

Although located in the green belt, documents supporting the plan confirmed it is a 'previously developed site' and herts requirements set in the Hertsmere Development Plan and National Planning Policy.



Estate manager, Humphrey Gibbs, said: "We can't wait to restore and repurpose the farm for the benefit of the local business community and future generations. Home Farm was built as a "model farm" to showcase innovative farming practices, so it feels quite apt that it should now be used by local businesses.

"This regeneration and landscaping work will preserve the ecological integrity of the farm and help it to thrive for years to come, and we hope to be able to attract residents with a similar passion for the great outdoors."

It is understood that work will start in October and will complete 2024.

CALL FOR NEW-BUILD HOMES TO COME WITH FAST AND RELIABLE GIGABIT BROADBAND

Digital Infrastructure Minister

Julia Lopez has launched a consultation on proposals for changes to building regulations to ensure new homes have next-generation gigabit broadband installed in them as standard practice.

Around one in ten new-build homes are still being built without gigabit connections, mostly in smaller developments, where the cost can be higher or broadband companies have not had the time they need to install connections before houses are completed.

The changes to the law will mean home developers will be legally required to build gigabit broadband into new homes in England and make it a priority as part of building work. They will also need to bring broadband network operators on board to consider gigabit broadband



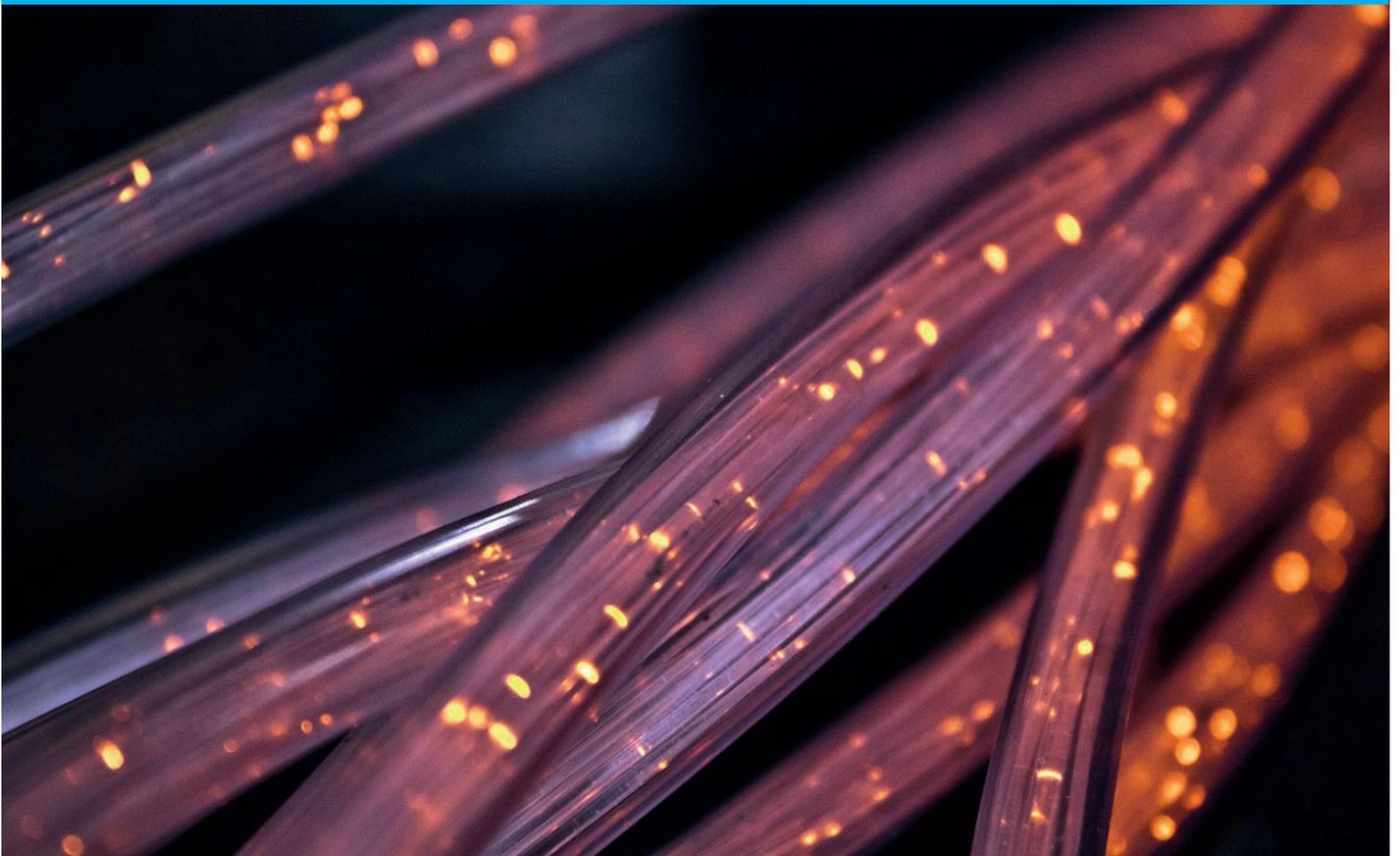
installation when construction plans are submitted to local councils. These measures will give more people access to future-proof internet connections and reduce the need for costly and disruptive work to retrospectively install them in homes. They represent another significant step in the government's plan to level up the UK and accelerate the nationwide rollout of world-class broadband.

Gigabit broadband is capable of download speeds of 1,000 megabits or one gigabit per second.

It allows people to work remotely more easily and gives homes the fast and reliable connections needed for streaming ultra-HD and 4k TV and films and gaming online on multiple devices at the same time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated just how crucial fast and reliable broadband connections are to the economy and to quality of life.

The technical consultation will be open for 10 weeks, closing on 28 February 2022, and respondents are encouraged to provide feedback on the specific questions raised or on other elements of the proposals.



A FIRST HAND VIEW OF HOW TRANSFORMATIVE PATIENT SUPPORT CAN BE



Unexpectedly, my focus this issue arises from a recent unscheduled stay at the Lister Hospital when hospital visiting was (and still is) restricted due to COVID-19.

The highlight of my brief stay was witnessing a powerful and emotional virtual visit to an elderly patient who had no technology or means of connecting with their family or friends.

The patient's mood had been low until the transformative visit of an iPad carrying trained volunteer to facilitate a half hour video chat with the patient's family.

The impact this made on the patient was immeasurable.

The patient became more motivated, upbeat, positive, smiling and engaged, which endured long after the call ended.

Meanwhile their relatives were given some peace of mind and the volunteer's compassionate care

rewarded.

Once discharged, my first call was to congratulate the East and North Hertfordshire Hospitals' Charity on their 'What Matters to You' service, which is fully funded by the charity, with funding from Trust & Foundation applications, community support and grateful patient donations

www.enhcharity.org.uk/Appeal/what-matters-to-you

If, as I suspect, virtual hospital visiting is here to stay and if your business is looking for a local charity partner or cause to support, please talk to me about the services or volunteering opportunities offered by this [charity](#).



Sarah Free, Charity Champion

Together we can leave a positive legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure we continue to stay connected to our loved ones when in hospital long after face-to-face visiting returns.

SUNSHINE APPEAL - THE COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT LISTER HOSPITAL

We have highlighted in previous issues of Insight magazine the brilliant Sunshine Appeal, launched by East and North Hertfordshire Hospitals' Charity, to raise funds to transform two outside areas at Lister Hospital in Stevenage.

The project will create beautiful outdoor spaces in which staff, visitors and patients - including patients in intensive care - can take a break from the busy hospital environment and enjoy some time in the fresh air and sunshine.

The charity is delighted to have already raised over £50,000 from fundraising activities, donations and grants from Trusts and Foundations, but they are still a long way from the £440,000 needed to complete the project.

They are calling on local businesses to show their support and help them complete the project which will have enormous and long-term benefits for the community.

Paul Mather, co-owner of Hertfordshire-based Mather Marshall estate agents, is backing the appeal. He held a golf day last year and raised an amazing £3,500 for the project.

Paul said: "I had a heart attack in 2015 while I was on holiday in the USA. I received treatment over there and then had to be flown back to the UK for further treatment.

"All the time I spent in hospital, I felt very confined by the grey corridors. I could see the sunshine outside, but I wasn't allowed to go out even though I could walk. I was desperate to breathe fresh air and feel the sun on my face.



"Golf was part of my recovery: it's being outside; it's exercise; it's a social event. I wanted to raise funds so Lister Hospital can have outdoor spaces for the staff and patients. Being outside does us all the world of good. "It's important to me, as a businessman, to support our local hospitals. It's what community spirit is all about. The Lister Hospital has

looked after me and my family when we've needed them, and now I want to help them."

To help bring sunshine into the lives of patients, staff and visitors at Lister Hospital, visit: wsunshine or email charity.enh-tr@nhs.net to discuss how your business can support the appeal.



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FORMER HERTS LEP DEPUTY CHAIR ADRIAN HAWKINS AND CHAIR, SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL, AND CHAIR, STEVENAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, RECEIVED HIS OBE, WITH HIS WIFE JENNIE, AT WINDSOR CASTLE RECENTLY.

Adrian's, who received the title Officer of the Order of the British Empire for his services to business, began his career in 1975 with the British Oxygen Company (BOC) and he founded Weldability Sif in 1981, which he grew from supplying one branded product in the UK, to many thousands internationally. The company became a highly successful and respected source for a full range of welding products, trading as Weldability, and in 2008 acquired Sif - a British welding consumables company started in 1925.

From 2014 to 2020, Adrian was appointed to the main board of the Hertfordshire LEP, serving his full six-year term and he has served as Deputy Chair of the Hertfordshire LEP from 2017 to 2020.

In recent years Adrian has been a school and college governor and chairman of a multi-academy trust.

Under his tenure, Adrian established the Weldability-Sif Foundation, a charity that today supports around 40 Welder-Training Studios across the UK, which have so far delivered 18,000 qualifications.

The foundation works alongside awarding bodies, incorporating the services of FE colleges and partners with businesses such as MakeUK and EDF, to address industrial skills pipelining for the UK workforce. In March 2020, Adrian was appointed the independent Chairman of the Stevenage Development Board.



STEVENAGE MP VISITS THRIVING LIFE SCIENCES CAMPUS TO HELP CREATE FUTURE 'STEM CITY'

Stephen McPartland, MP for Stevenage, visited the GSK campus to hear at first hand how it is fast becoming one of the most significant life science clusters and the levelling up opportunities this could bring for the town.

The MP met with Adrian Hawkins OBE, Chair, Stevenage Development Board and Chair, Skills Advisory Panel, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Steve Martin, VP and Head, Biopharm Discovery at GSK, Dr Sally Ann Forsyth OBE, CEO, Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst, and Dr Stephen Ward, Chief Manufacturing Officer at Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, on Thursday 27 January to hear about their shared vision for the cluster and the urgent need for a skilled workforce to support that growth.

The campus on Gunnels Wood Road comprises GSK, Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult Manufacturing Innovation Centre and Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst. It is central to the UK's largest cell and gene therapy cluster and the third largest globally thanks to its clustering of R&D and manufacturing excellence and its proximity to London, Oxford and Cambridge.

Over the past year, the New Town has attracted considerable investment with:

- GSK currently formalising the sale and development of 33 acres to unlock up to £400m in new investment and create up to 5,000 highly-skilled jobs, over the next five to ten years;
- Reef developers transforming the former
- North Herts College proposing to open its Stevenage Innovation and Technology Centre in September to



(from left): Dr Stephen Ward, Chief Manufacturing Officer at Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult; Rachel Castle, Director, UK Corporate Government Affairs, GSK; Stephen McPartland, MP for Stevenage; Steve Martin, VP and Head, Biopharm Discovery at GSK; Adrian Hawkins OBE, Chair, Stevenage Development Board and Chair, Skills Advisory Panel, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership; Dr Sally Ann Forsyth OBE, CEO, Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst

help develop a local workforce to support the town's fast growing life sciences and advanced engineering sectors located on Gunnels Wood Road;

- £37.5m Towns Fund to support a package of measures to help communities to build back better after the pandemic;
- A further £565k from the Government's Community Renewal Fund to help realise Stevenage's ambitions to evolve from a pioneer post-war New Town into a future STEM city.

Cell and gene therapy is one of the fastest-growing health and life sciences in the world, contributing around £74bn to the UK economy and a quarter of a million jobs per year. Stevenage is at the heart of this growth and has been designated a High Potential Opportunity location for cell and gene and a Marshgate town centre car park site into a £66m European Manufacturing Headquarters of Autolus; Life Sciences Opportunity Zone by

Government. The total private equity investment in biotechnology raised in Stevenage is similar to that of Cambridge, Oxford and London

This exponential growth and scale of investment has led to an urgent need for a skilled workforce. According to a 2021 UK Cell and Gene Therapy Skills Demand Survey Report, the forecast skills demand nationwide for 2026 is 10,000 bioprocessing jobs, a growth of 151% from today. It states that 'there is an urgent need to prioritise skills provision to continue the substantial growth of UK companies and for the UK to be a global leader in advanced medicine manufacturing'.

Stephen McPartland, Member of Parliament for Stevenage, said: "It is an amazing facility and I remember laying a commemorative brick back in 2011 when we were originally building the site. It is still there alongside our hopes and dreams to make Stevenage the hub for these exciting new technologies and treatments. We have already come a long way with the support



(from left) Dr Sally Ann Forsyth OBE, CEO, Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst; Adrian Hawkins OBE, Chair, Stevenage Development Board and Chair, Skills Advisory Panel, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership; Stephen McPartland, MP for Stevenage; Steve Martin, VP and Head, Biopharm Discovery at GSK; Dr Stephen Ward, Chief Manufacturing Officer at Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult and Rachel Castle, Director, UK Corporate Government Affairs, GSK

of over £200 million of Government investment and we are still just at the start as we plan even more rapid expansion to cement Stevenage's global leadership role in this area."

Adrian Hawkins OBE, Chair, Stevenage Development Board, and Chair, Skills Advisory Panel, Hertfordshire LEP, said: "I was absolutely delighted to welcome Stephen McPartland to this fantastic campus. No one who comes here can fail to be impressed at the scale of work being undertaken to support advances in the development and manufacturing of innovative therapies.

"We have an unrivalled opportunity to capitalize on that growth and create levelling up opportunities for our communities by developing a highly skilled local workforce that can service the sector's needs. Central to this vision is the new 4,000sqm state-of-the-art Innovation & Technology Centre to be operated by North Hertfordshire College in partnership with key businesses to provide new training opportunities.

"This sector growth on our doorstep opens up tremendous opportunities for apprentices, graduates, those already working in the sector who

wish to relocate and those outside of the sector to retrain. With a focus on lifetime skills, this will have a very positive impact on the town's regeneration and help us to realise our ambition to make Stevenage a future STEM city."

Dr Sally Ann Forsyth OBE, CEO at Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst (SBC), said: "There are around 40 companies in the SBC community, including many life science start-ups. Together, we currently support over 1,000 jobs locally and contribute £65m to the Hertfordshire economy.

The campus provides many high-quality jobs for the local community as well as apprenticeship and training opportunities for school leavers and people looking to build on their existing skills. By 2040, there are expected to be over 3,000 jobs at SBC-based companies and £196m contributed to the local economy." Steve Martin, VP and Head, Biopharm Discovery at GSK, said: "Our global R&D hub in Stevenage is a key location for GSK in developing our pipeline of vital medicines.

Our scientists here are focused on the science related to the immune system, the use of human genetics and advanced technologies,

aiming to discover transformational medicines for patients. We welcome the opportunity to work with local partners and are extremely excited about the plans to develop one of Europe's largest life science campuses in Stevenage."

Therapy Catapult, said: "The support of stakeholders like the local community represented by Stephen McPartland MP is essential to our success. The exciting collaborations with industry partners within and around our Stevenage Manufacturing Innovation Centre make Stevenage a global hub of CGT innovation.

We have seen increasing national and international investment in our facility in Stevenage, with companies drawn not only to our state-of-the-art manufacturing innovation capabilities, but also to the continuous efforts in developing highly skilled local workforce. We are excited to continue to work with the Government, as well as the local community, in supporting the enormous growth in the UK CGT industry, developing a skilled UK-ATMP workforce through the Advanced Therapies Apprenticeship Community (ATAC) and Advanced Therapies Skills Training Network (ATSTN) initiatives."

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