

# Business FOCUS

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Working together, achieving more

Official Magazine of Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce

Summer 2022

## Make the Most of **NETWORKING EVENTS**

Tips, advice and networking  
opportunities inside

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Bedfordshire  
Chamber of  
Commerce

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# TOP TIPS FOR ENTERING THE



## ***"Does my business really get kudos for entering awards?"***

Award winners and those who are shortlisted win an enormous amount of trust and kudos through being independently assessed. This is not only impressive for potential customers but for existing customers too.

## ***"Is there a 'feel good' factor too?"***

There is no doubt that existing and future customers feel good about buying from a 'winner.' Your staff will also feel motivated by being linked to the winners, especially when you've taken them along to the awards night!

## ***"Does our entry need to cover the whole history of the business?"***

Concentrate on what you have achieved in the last 12 months or done differently. Perhaps you have changed direction or spotted a gap in the market. Judges love that kind of information.



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# Business FOCUS

Official Magazine of Bedfordshire  
Chamber of Commerce

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# Welcome

The first quarter of the year had, unsurprisingly, thrown up another round of challenges for Bedfordshire businesses, with our latest Quarterly Economic Survey showing inflationary pressures reaching uncharted territory.

It's been decades since we have seen input costs surging at this rate and although there's only so much the Government can do about international supply chain interruptions and its impact on raw materials and fuel costs, it must do more to support SME's with rising energy prices. The Spring Statement was a missed opportunity to ensure business had greater support during an incredibly challenging time.

Alongside this, we are also seeing recruitment and labour challenges, despite the logical conclusion being to upskill your existing staff, fewer firms appear to be investing in training. With this in mind and the emergence of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), a real opportunity has arisen for employers to articulate the specific skills components needed for roles and begin to influence local provision. We expect the first tranche of LSIPs to be signed off in the Autumn so watch this space to see how you can get involved.

We also saw the end of the Kickstart scheme in Q1 and I'm delighted to announce we helped place 260 young people in jobs, with a number going on to secure permanent positions with employers. Although the programme came with its challenges it enabled local businesses to secure some great talent at a difficult time and help young people (re)start their careers. Increasing the number of Apprenticeship's locally becomes the next objective!

I'm also delighted to announce the return of our Members Summer Reception, the first since lockdown, and look forward to seeing you all on Thursday 23rd June.

**#workingtogether**

**#achievingmore**

**Justin Richardson**

Chief Executive

Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce



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**Richard Cooper**

Chairman of Bedfordshire  
Chamber of Commerce

## *The* Chairman's **VIEW**

As we reach the halfway point of the year, it is heartening to see businesses remaining optimistic about growth and opportunities despite the many challenges faced so far in 2022.

Even with concerns around inflation, supply chains, rising fuel and energy costs, businesses are continuing to become increasingly agile and flexible, enabling them to review and adapt their strategies to not only overcome these challenges, but indeed go on to new levels of success.

Many businesses found that they actually thrived during the Covid pandemic, and I have no doubt that this will continue in 2022. When faced with adversity, it drives people and businesses to 'think outside the box' and motivates sheer determination and grit to reach their goals.

Amidst the changing landscape, arming yourself with the flexibility to adapt and review your strategy frequently will ensure you keep on winning. I like to view this as not a time of recovery but instead a time of new opportunity.

Having met with many local companies in our region, I have seen first-hand how responding to market challenges with an agile and creative mindset, by diversifying, exporting or developing new products and services, results in success.

Here at the Chamber, we are in your corner to support your ambition and have a wealth of resources, support and information to help businesses across the county.

Business is done better together, so speak to us and let us help you achieve your goals for 2022, as you go from recovery to growth to success.

*Richard Cooper*

*“When faced with adversity, it drives people and businesses to ‘think outside the box’ and motivates sheer determination and grit to reach their goals.”*

You'll find plenty of opportunities to connect with other Bedfordshire Chamber members and local businesses at our range of upcoming events. Here are just a few of the scheduled events in 2022:



## Members SUMMER RECEPTION

23rd June 2022 | 5pm | Forest of Marston Vale  
Free of Charge Members Only Event

Here comes Summer! And we would like to invite you to our annual Members' Summer Networking Reception, this year being hosted at the glorious Forest of Marston Vale. Grab the chance to make those all-important connections and enjoy a delicious hog roast with all the trimmings in beautiful surroundings. Your Chamber team will be on hand to make those important introductions and update you on current benefits and services.

**Would you like to promote your business further?**

We have exhibition spaces available that will enable you to showcase your business to fellow members. If you are interested in taking part please indicate on your booking, £60 + VAT

## Meet the Neighbours NETWORKING BREAKFAST

19th July 2022 | 7.45am – 10am  
Wyboston Lakes  
Members only event £ 25 + VAT

Business doesn't recognise borders, so why should we? We're so excited to be joining forces with Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce for this structured networking breakfast which is being held face-to-face for the first time in over 2 years. These events have been very popular online during the time when we couldn't meet face-to-face, but nothing beats the buzz of networking in person! These structured networking sessions are designed to forge new business relationships across county boundaries, and maximise your opportunity to build a profitable network. Attendees will have the chance to speak to their table for a minute or 2 about their business, before moving around 2 other tables during the morning to do the same. This gives you a chance to make connections with as many professionals as possible! There will then be chance to network further and delve deeper into those conversations over a full English breakfast which is provided.

## Chamber CHARITY GOLF DAY

16th September 2022 | 11.45am – 6pm | South Beds Golf Club, Luton

Members Price:	Team of 2 - £120 + VAT	Team of 4 - £240 +VAT
Non members Price:	Team of 2 - £160 + VAT	Team of 4 - £320 +VAT

We are delighted to announce our first golf day for many years. in the form of an 18-Hole 4-Ball Better-Ball Stableford competition. This is a wonderful opportunity to be involved in the Chamber's golf day with prizes, networking, brunch and pizza buffet at the end.

The South Beds Golf Club charity for this event is MIND BLMK. MIND provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing mental health problems.

To book your places and for further information call 01582 522448  
or visit [www.chamber-business.com/events/chamber-events](http://www.chamber-business.com/events/chamber-events)



## Make the Most of **NETWORKING** EVENTS

It is well established that the benefits of networking are multitudinous. When businesses come together, they can share knowledge and relevant news. Networking is also an opportunity for them to build connections, discover new opportunities and raise their profile. There are also benefits for the individual who attends the meetings. For example, the meetings can develop their own reputation and support them in growing confidence. However, this only happens if you approach networking in the right way. Networking is like much else in life: you get out what you put in. But how can you maximize your networking opportunities?

### Before attending a networking event

There are many networking sessions running across Bedfordshire. Each one will have its own format and a slightly different approach. Start by doing a little research before deciding on which might suit you and your business best. If you have questions, find the contact details for the organiser, and drop them a message.

Try to book on to sessions in plenty of time, so the organisers have time to prepare themselves. Most will often want to welcome a new business and share with them the format of the session. Sometimes, they also like to provide name badges. If you book a morning session the night before, they might not be expecting you.

Before attending the networking session, you can do a few things to ensure you're well prepared. Prepare a brief introduction of two to three sentences and make sure you have business cards with the correct contact details on them. It's also helpful to set in mind your intentions for networking. A quick hint, this isn't to come away with a certain number of sales. Instead, you might focus on the types of businesses you wish to meet. Or, if you're nervous, you could set a target for the number of conversations you will have.

### During the networking meeting

When arriving at the network meeting, strive to make a good impression. If it is your first time networking with that organiser, arrive a little early. This will help them stay organised, support you, and sort any paperwork that may need completing.

Make sure you introduce yourself and talk to people. Be aware of your body language and show you're interested in what they're saying. Tilting your head slightly to the side is a good indicator that you are listening. Aim to listen more than you talk.

Some businesses join networking events intending to generate leads. While this can be the case, don't make the mistake of thinking of networking in terms of sales. Instead, focus on making connections. The leads and sales will often come further down the line with referrals from the connections you make. But first, you need to build those relationships. Networking also offers many other opportunities which can benefit your business. Keep the

focus on making connections and you will get far more out of your networking. Remember, this is a two-way process. Spend more time considering how you can help another business than how they might help you.

As people introduce themselves, try to make some notes. Sometimes, a business card has little information, and details can be hard to remember after a meeting. Don't feel as if you've got to get business cards from everyone – focus on those you would like to follow up with after the meeting.

Finally, before leaving, make sure you take the time to thank the organiser.

### After the networking event

Networking doesn't finish at the end of the meeting. In fact, often, the magic happens during the follow-up process. This is when businesses will build stronger relationships and support each other. Most will start with an email. If you take this approach, include a detail which shows you were listening to what they said during the meeting. This will go a long way in developing the relationship (another reason to make notes).

### How Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce can help with networking

Networking opportunities are just one benefit we offer with a variety of events held each month. As well as offering in person events, we also run online networking sessions. Many of these events are open to non-members, too. In addition, we run specialised events and share networking events from our partners.

However, our networking doesn't just happen within our events. We know our members well and when one requires support with an aspect of their business, we can connect them with others able to help. Making connections is at the heart of what we do.

If you're interested in networking with Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce, find details of all our networking events on our website: [www.chamber-business.com/events/chamber-events](http://www.chamber-business.com/events/chamber-events)



# QES Quarterly ECONOMIC SURVEY REPORT

Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) forms part of the British Chamber of Commerce's national survey and is the principal business survey in the UK. Its results are closely watched by both the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee and the Treasury. The data reveals a timely and accurate snapshot for the economic climate for businesses in Bedfordshire and beyond.

Our latest results have been published and the outcome for Q1 2022 saw a decline across the board from the previous quarter with business confidence indicators seeing significant declines, with inflationary pressures reaching uncharted territory.

- Domestic sales and forward orders saw a considerable contraction with only 37% of companies reporting an increase in the period.
- Exporters saw some gains with 29% of respondents seeing an increase in export sales.
- Just over a quarter of businesses (27%) reported an increase to cashflow in Q1 with investment in plant, machinery or equipment continued to stagnate with only 23% overall reporting an increase.

## The Bottom Line

Responding to the findings, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, Shevaun Haviland, said:

"Our latest survey lays bare the huge financial stress that firms across the country are under. The level of inflationary pressures has soared to record levels and we are now truly in uncharted territory. Firms cite cost increases coming at them from all angles, ranging from energy bills to raw material prices and the imminent rise in National Insurance.

We need to be absolutely clear: this cost of doing business crisis is squeezing firms' finances, driving further increases in prices and directly fuelling the cost-of-living crisis.

The Spring Statement was a missed opportunity to ensure business have greater resilience to weather the uncertain and volatile times ahead. The Government must provide urgent financial support, through the expansion of the energy bills rebate scheme, to include small firms and energy intensive businesses, and he must introduce an SME energy price cap to protect smaller firms from some of the price increases.

We also urge the Treasury to rethink and postpone the damaging National Insurance increase. A failure to act now will leave businesses with no option but to continue to raise prices - leading to more difficult months to come for both firms and households."



**Shevaun Haviland**  
Director General of the British  
Chambers of Commerce



# Member NEWS



## RSPCA Bedfordshire South CARING FOR BEDFORDSHIRE'S ANIMAL COMMUNITY

Warm greetings from all of us at Beds South RSPCA. We're thrilled to be a new member of the Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce.

Most folk aren't aware that each and every RSPCA branch is totally independent and entirely responsible for running themselves. Whilst we receive guidance from 'Head Office', our day-to-day running and financial upkeep relies heavily on volunteers and all but the smallest team of paid members. We have no animal centre of our own but, instead, a dedicated group of fosterers look after cats, dogs, rabbits and other small animals in our area. In our experience, taking animals into a 'home environment' works very well in preparing our wards for their new 'forever homes'.

Our tiny – but very popular – charity shop in Ampthill accepts all sorts of donations, from clothing to bric-a-brac. It's a most fascinating treasure trove and you never know what you'll find in there!

We're always on the lookout for help. Be that in the form of volunteers helping us out at our events or helping out at the shop; joining our fostering team or even coming aboard as a trustee. We've always room for more. What ever your skillset, what ever days and times you've got available to help, we've got a spot for you! And your time and effort will go a long, long way in helping our furry friends.

*If you have time to spare and would like to get involved, please get in touch: [info@rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk](mailto:info@rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk)*



**RSPCA Bedfordshire  
South Branch**  
Registered Charity No. 259020



## Police Led Video Initiative SET TO INFORM & PROTECT

With an estimated 65,000 attempts every day to hack SMEs in the UK, cyber security has never been more critical yet 43% of all businesses do not have a cyber security plan.

Phishing, ransomware, malware, and identity theft are just a few tactics criminals use to target small to medium businesses with the average cost of a cyber attack coming in at £8460. The reality is many businesses are not financially prepared to recover from an attack and many lose customers after a data breach.

The Eastern Cyber Resilience Centre is a Police led, not for profit organisation that was set up to improve cyber resilience in the East of England. Working with local Universities, utilising students, and trusted partners, they provide affordable testing and training services with the opportunity to procure private sector cyber services where necessary.

Membership is free but the organisation faces a huge issue, nobody thinks it will happen to them and if they are concerned..... 'Whose responsibility is it?' Lack of understanding and general apathy on the subject is playing into the hands of the criminals and incidents are increasing exponentially.

Faced with these challenges the ECRC set out to create a series of educational videos to get their message across and are now asking as many organisations as possible to spread this important message <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Q9O7QES7Yk>

Businesses are also encouraged to join the organisation to improve their cyber resilience and awareness, free core membership provides regular cyber updates and hint and tips.

*Visit [www.ecrcentre.co.uk](http://www.ecrcentre.co.uk) to keep updated with the latest ECRC blogs and follow @EasternCRC on Twitter and LinkedIn. You can also sign up here to receive the ECRC newsletter.*



## THSP wins NFDC SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Beds Chamber members, THSP are delighted to announce that they won the Supplier of the Year award at the National Federation of Demolition Contractors (NFDC) AGM and Awards on Friday 25th March 2022. This is a wonderful accolade for THSP in an industry that they have worked with for the past 30 years.

Managing Director, Adrienne Massey said: "Since 1992, we have worked with many NFDC member companies providing documentation, advice, site inspections, training and software. At all times we have striven to raise standards in the demolition industry and improve attitudes to health and safety."

THSP are engaged by the NFDC to audit their members' health and safety standards as well as assisting the Federation's training arm, the National Demolition Training Group to develop their courses.



*William Crooks, President of NFDC (left) presenting Chris Ivey of THSP with Supplier of the Year Award*

"Helping our customers to improve productivity and the quality of their health and safety work is paramount to the design of our products", says Adrienne. "Our guiding principle has been to make working safely, easier than not, so that management can spend less time at their desks and more time on site concentrating on keeping their employees safe."

Bedford-based THSP are now an Employee-Owned company, and winning the Supplier of the Year Award was the result of a fantastic team effort by colleagues from many different areas of the business. "We are very proud of their achievements and the kudos this brings to THSP," said Chris Ivey, Consultant Director for Health and Safety, who accepted the trophy on behalf of the company.

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

## Good posture is not...

We often think of good posture as standing in the perfect military stance "chin up, chest out, shoulders back, stomach in". Aesthetically quite pleasing to see rows of soldiers on parade, but not good and physically demanding if it is you that must assume the position.

Equally good posture in our view is not sitting in the perfect ergonomic chair all day long either.

The human body is an amazing piece of physical and biomechanical engineering. Clearly designed to MOVE. Packed with bones, joints, muscles, tendons, ligaments, other soft tissue and systems to ensure the human body moves and adapts to the challenges of life. Perhaps not the challenges of modern life? But challenges presented by the world many thousands of years ago when all humans lived as hunter gatherers.

Movement is PostureFit's "good posture". Movements helps the body, brain, lungs, heart, circulatory, muscular, and other body systems maintain good health. Just like your car, it needs to be maintained by using it, oiling it, refuelling it, and resting it from time to time. Your body is no different. Don't drive your car for some months and it won't like it. Drive your car around in first gear everywhere for a while....and it won't like it. Or drive it around at full speed and maximum revs for too long, and again it won't like it.

Learn to take care of your body. Take a look at this short video from PostureFit about the spine and your movement. Scan the QR code to the right with your mobile device.

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





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## Wyboston Lakes Resort **COMPLETES £1.5M HOTEL REFURBISHMENT**

The Waterfront Hotel, Spa & Golf at Wyboston Lakes Resort in Bedfordshire has undergone a £1.5m makeover adding a modern and stylish design, plus many new feature areas.

The transformational project included a major renovation of the four-star hotel's reception, Y Spa Bistro, and outdoor terrace, as well as the re-branding and refurbishment of the brasserie and bar. Three new event spaces were also added, which can be booked either separately or together, for corporate events, private functions, events, and social gatherings.

The re-design features warm, welcoming hues of deep blue and pale blues with bold colours and gold finishes, new layouts, and furniture with a chic, yet cosy vibe.

The hotel's brasserie and bar now rebranded as The Gravel Pit – a nod to the resort's past – offers an exciting new lakeside dining experience in a contemporary setting. The menu, carefully curated by the resort's head chef, is 40% plant-based and features vibrant flavours and locally sourced food, which is re-enforced with the 25-mile promise selection. The bar provides a stylish environment and even better views, along with an extensive drinks menu featuring a wide range of artisan gins, cocktails, lagers and wines. Funky outdoor seating has been added for guests to enjoy views of the East Lakes in the summer months.

A flexible co-working area under the resort's Landing Pad brand, has been added on the first floor as an alternative to Working From Home or travelling to the office. It offers an affordable and professional space with a choice of memberships. The innovative space features meeting areas, hot desking space and single person booths, plus a kitchen and eating area to connect with colleagues and friends.

This renovation follows a £5m investment in The Willows Training Centre and The Woodlands Event Centre where both centres were transformed into modern high-tech venues offering a wide range of inspiring and flexible event rooms with creative breakout areas and a fantastic restaurant.

The 380-acre resort also comprises an 18-hole golf course, water sports lakes, a nature reserve, serviced offices, business units, and land for future enterprise.

Steve Jones said: "We have transformed The Waterfront Hotel's key spaces through modern and smart design, centred around the needs of our customers. We are excited to offer new event spaces and co-working spaces for local businesses, too. We are always looking at ways to innovate to ensure our customers want to keep spending time with us in the future."

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

# Member NEWS



## Hayward Tyler's positive WORK EXPERIENCE

Many of you will appreciate the difficulty in hiring at the moment. Whilst it has always been a challenge to get a candidate who not only has the right skills, but is a good fit for the company, right now there appears to be a real shortage of readily available talent.

For us at Hayward Tyler, we have always valued our local community as a source of employees. One of the best ways of capitalising on this is by taking work experience students into your business. We have continually supported this programme over a number of years, albeit the COVID pandemic put this on pause for a time. Not only does this programme give students the opportunity to explore their interests and prospective career paths at a key stage in their education, but acts as a week long interview for employers to really get to know potential employees and their skill sets.

A great example of this is Oliver Page from Toddington – he approached our company for some work experience in the Engineering Department in 2019 and really enjoyed the experience. He spent his time alongside our engineering team, working on a project to make a model rocket. This involved getting an understanding of engineering drawings, learning the basic principles of 3D CAD (computer aided design), and getting an insight into the role of a design engineer.

Oliver maintained a link to the company and subsequently went on to apply for our Engineering apprenticeship – successfully! He is now in year 3 and well on his way to becoming qualified in this level 4 qualification. We look forward to having him as a skilled worker in the future, and maybe one day he will be a mentor for any forthcoming Hayward Tyler apprentices.

So my message to companies out there is to put in the effort to support your local students who ask to come and spend some time with you. With a little work initially to set up a programme ensuring a good and meaningful experience for the student, you can really gain from having them in your business. Don't miss out on this opportunity to find some great talent!

Pictured above is Oliver with the model rocket he made during his week with us, and him today busy at work with his fellow apprentices.

[haywardtyler.com](http://haywardtyler.com)



## Streets appoints new HEAD OF BANKING & FINANCE

Streets Chartered Accountants, a top 40 UK accountancy and advisory practice, are delighted to announce the appointment of experienced banking and advisory specialist, Martyn Shakespear, as its new Head of Banking & Finance. Martyn joins Streets with over 40 years' experience of providing funding advice to SMEs and corporates.

During his career, Martyn has held senior roles in NatWest, Bank of Ireland and the Co-operative Bank followed by 7 years as National Head of Banking & Finance within a top 10 UK accountancy firm and more recently as a director with BTG Advisory.

When asked about Martyn's appointment the firm's Chairman, Paul Tutin, said: "We are especially pleased to welcome Martyn to the firm. For a number of years we have provided clients with funding advice and we are keen to ensure we respond to the growing need for this by recruiting a dedicated specialist. We are therefore delighted to have been able to recruit Martyn, with his well-established track record and understanding of SME funding. The specialist expertise that he brings will prove invaluable for our clients and colleagues."

Commenting on his new role, Martyn said: "Streets are a well-respected, dynamic and forward-thinking firm. In recent times I have got to know a number of the partners, staff and clients and cannot wait to build the banking and finance service offering across the whole of practice as I am passionate about the value this will bring."

In his new role Martyn will provide banking and funding advisory services on a firm wide basis, covering its 17 offices throughout the Midlands, East of England, Yorkshire, London and the South East.

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



## TOP 5 TIPS for a Seamless Tenancy in 2022

Over the last ten years there have been changes to, or implementation of, over 175 sections of the regulations affecting the Private Rental Sector. At Robinson & Hall Residential Lettings, we pride ourselves on being up to date with current legislation and best practice. We hold the ARLA Propertymark and as a firm are regulated by The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Our lettings team top five tips for compliance and a seamless tenancy in 2022 are:

### 1. Has your tenant got the right to rent in the UK?

Following the UK's departure from the EU, we can no longer rely on a European Economic Area (EEA) passport or a National ID Card to prove a person's right to rent in the UK. Evidence of their immigration status must be obtained through the Home Office online service which stipulates their status and the expiry. It is therefore essential the checks are conducted throughout the tenancy.

### 2. Prepare for Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) changes

Landlords will have until 2026 to ensure all their rental properties achieve band C on the EPC before letting the property. For existing tenancies, the landlord will have until 2028 to meet the requirement.

### 3. Carbon monoxide alarm changes

All landlords will also now be obliged to ensure a carbon monoxide alarm is installed in any room of their homes where there is a fixed combustion appliance (including a gas boiler). Where a new fixed combustion appliance is installed, a carbon monoxide alarm will be required to be installed by law. Gas cooker appliances are excluded from the new rules.

### 4. Invest in your rental property

With rental market prices continuing to rise, it is good practice to decorate your rental properties every five years. This will almost guarantee a yearly increase as well as satisfied tenants.

### 5. Choose Robinson & Hall as your letting agent

Did you know, anyone can open an agency without having qualifications, experience or knowledge? Therefore, it is extremely important to choose an agent which is regulated by a respected industry body and has a proven track record of letting and managing properties within the area.

*For more information or to book a no obligation lettings appraisal, please contact Robinson & Hall on 01234 351000 option 1.*

 robinson  
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# Member NEWS

## Bedfordshire Independent THE NEWS THAT MATTERS TO YOU

The Bedford Independent is now in its fourth year and going from strength to strength. It was founded to provide the people of Bedford Borough with a modern news desk that would give them easy access to genuine and unbiased Bedford news. We are independent in ownership and opinion.

Our mission is to inform and inspire the people of Bedford. To do this we will work hard to bring you the news that matters to you from our town centre to the most rural of the Borough's villages.

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## Essential launches NEW EUROPEAN DIVISION

The Essential Group of Companies announce the launch of their newest division, Essential Branding Europe (EBE), which now offers an unparalleled UK and pan-European distribution service for discerning clients of promotional merchandise, workwear, PPE and uniforms. While many businesses are still trying to navigate the complex EU-UK trade rules, Essential Branding Europe was set up as a solution for clients requiring ongoing seamless trade in Europe. In creating a European hub, Essential can offer frictionless, tariff-free trade between EU countries, faster delivery, enhanced knowledge of local markets and trading requirements, more competitive prices by reducing the cost and environmental impact of transport, plus a far greater opportunity for expansion into new markets.

For over 24 years, Essential has been renowned within the UK for supplying the highest quality corporate branded merchandise, with exceptional award-winning customer service to some of the world's most prestigious market-leading brands. Essential offer a one-stop-shop for corporate branded apparel and workwear both in the UK and now offering the same exacting standards and quality throughout Europe.

Essential's UK based Operations Director, Louis Georgiou has a close working relationship with the workforce at Essential Branding Europe and visits the team at the new division based out of Romania regularly to oversee production. On a recent visit Louis commented: "It is vitally important that the Essential brand and reputation for offering the highest quality garments and first-class service is upheld on every single order, so I was absolutely delighted to visit our Romanian facility to oversee the first order for the World Rally Championship's (WRC) garments being printed for our client DRIVA who specialise in supporting global brands with imaginative products and services. The highest standards of quality control mastered from over 24 years' experience, ensure that all orders manufactured at Essential Branding Europe meet the exacting Essential standards and seamless service that our clients rely on us for."

Pawel Luczak, Operations Director for DRIVA said: "The quality of service and merchandise that we experience from working with the team at Essential is second to none. Our first order manufactured at the new Essential European division has been delivered with the same care and attention as every other order historically manufactured in the UK. Thank you to Louis, George and their expert team in Europe as the garments were a great success at the WRC held in Croatia last month."

Visit [www.essentialworkwear.com](http://www.essentialworkwear.com) or call the experts on 01582 475 801.

## NEW FUNDRAISING APPEALS at the L&D

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Charity has some new and exciting appeals that will make a huge difference. In December 2020, Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust received wonderful news of a statutory grant of £17m, which would allow both Bedford Hospital and Luton & Dunstable Hospital to make much needed improvements and renovations to their respective Emergency Departments. If you would like to support us with these vital appeals, please contact the charity team on [Fundraising@ldh.nhs.uk](mailto:Fundraising@ldh.nhs.uk).



### Emergency Department (ED) Appeal

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Charity is supporting our clinical teams by fundraising for equipment and services to help provide gold standard care for our patients. The items and services we have identified will support our staff to provide the best possible treatment for our patients in a comfortable and calming environment.

*For more information on this vital appeal, please visit <https://www.bedfordshirehospitals.nhs.uk/charity/support-our-hospitals/emergency-department-appeal>*

### Children's Critical Care Room

The L&D's Children's Department is one of the busiest in the area. Each year, approximately 150 patients per year require intensive stabilisation. Currently, these patients have to be resuscitated in open bays or cramped cubicles, which lacks privacy for the patients and their family and is distressing for other families and patients to see. It also creates a difficult working environment for our staff.

Our Charity is supporting clinical teams to raise funds to redevelop and refurbish an existing treatment room to create a new resuscitation room. This will provide a dedicated, spacious area which can accommodate a larger team with ready to access specialist equipment.

*For more information on this fantastic appeal, please visit <https://www.bedfordshirehospitals.nhs.uk/charity/support-our-hospitals/childrens-ward/supporting-a-paediatric-resuscitation-and-stabilisation-room>*



## FOXLEY KINGHAM RAISES £10K FOR LEVEL TRUST and announces new charity partners for 2022

Luton-based chartered accountants and business advisers, Foxley Kingham have completed their year of fundraising on behalf of Level Trust. They have raised over £10,000 for the local charity which focuses on improving the lives of children during their time in education so that children can fully participate in and enjoy their time at school.

The Foundation's team of trustees arranged two charity challenges that took place in September 2021; a 26-mile walk and a charity cycle. The hardy cycling team of Helen Spokes, Paul Bithrey, Steve Samson, Rachel Hayler and Duane Litchfield took on a hilly route around the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire countryside, covering 52 miles and over 3000ft of climbing and raising over £4000. And Tara Aldwin, Sarah Robertson, Ellie Robertson, Sophie Robertson, Gabriella Caulfield and Lesley Middleton laced up their walking boots and took on a marathon challenge to walk 26 miles in an impressive nine hours, raising a further £3500.

The rest of the fundraising was the result of a popular golf event at Cainhoe Wood Golf Course, as well as dress-down days, a quiz, a raffle and a car boot sale.

Tara Aldwin, Director at Foxley Kingham and Trustee of the Anniversary Foundation said: "It's been a great inspiration for us to work with Level Trust and the valuable work they do to support local children and their families. I'd like to thank the trustees and all the staff and supporters who have taken part in fundraising this year. We are also delighted to announce not one but three new charity partners for the year ahead and we are really thrilled to be supporting the outstanding work they do in our community."

Jane Malcolm, Chief Executive of Level Trust added: 'We are so grateful for the time and effort that Foxley Kingham have put into raising funds for us over the past year. The money they have raised is a significant sum and will go a long way to

helping us increase the number of children we can support next year. Thank you so much Foxley Kingham for all you have done and continue to do to help the children of Luton."

Foxley Kingham put it to their staff to vote for the next foundation charity partner but when the results were in the top three were so close the decision was made to spend the year raising funds for all three. The chosen theme for the foundation this year is health and wellbeing with a focus on mental health and the chosen organisations are; Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Charity (supporting CAMHS); CHUMS and Mind BLMK.

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Charity will support CAMHS, an organisation that offers help and support to children and young people (up to age 18) who have mental health difficulties and their families/carers. FKA fundraising will support CAMHS in the creation of a designated room at the Luton & Dunstable Hospital in the emergency department - allowing the space and time required for the assessment and treatment needed in a quiet environment away from the rest of the busy department. CHUMS Charity supports the local services delivered by Chums CIC, offering mental health and emotional wellbeing support for children, young people and their families. These services include supporting people through trauma from bereavement, baby loss and a disability friendship scheme.

Mind BLMK works to support positive mental health and well-being by offering several activities from well-being centres and local venues to make a difference in the health of people in the community. Planning is underway for more activities to return in 2022, including some one-off special activities, topic focussed workshops, tutor-led arts and yoga sessions - FKA funds will help to support the return of these services.

The team at FKA are really excited for the year ahead and have some grand plans in stock for returning to face to face fundraising events once again.

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

# New MEMBERS

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We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all **New MEMBERS** of the Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce. You can learn more about becoming a member and all of the associated benefits by calling us now on 01582 522448 or by emailing your enquiry to [info@chamber-business.com](mailto:info@chamber-business.com)

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[bedfordshireccc.play-cricket.com](http://bedfordshireccc.play-cricket.com)

Bedfordshire CCC is the representative team for the whole of Bedfordshire, competing in the step below full time professional cricket. We play home games across the county and away games can be anywhere in England or Wales. Playing three formats, T20, 50 overs and 3 day Championship in Division 1

## Carerstoday

[www.carers.today](http://www.carers.today)

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

Working with construction companies to help them to stand out by telling their unique story

## Eastern Cyber Resilience Centre

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

Eastern Region Cyber Crime Unit – protection for businesses against cyber crime

## Kings Arms Project

[kingsarmsproject.org](http://kingsarmsproject.org)

Founded over 30 years ago, we provide professional advice, innovative solutions and person-centred care to those at risk of homelessness and social isolation in Bedford and surrounding areas

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

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

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## RSPCA - Bedfordshire South Branch

[rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk](http://rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk)

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[chiltern.beds.sch.uk](http://chiltern.beds.sch.uk)

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

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## Work Place Cleaning Solutions Bedfordshire Ltd

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## YouTurn Futures

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

YouTurn Futures is a criminal justice charity which delivers a number of programmes to reduce reoffending across Bedfordshire



# Member PROFILES

**Member PROFILES** are provided as part of membership to the Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce. You can learn more about becoming a member, so you too can enjoy this and a host of other benefits, simply by calling us now on 01582 522448 or by emailing [info@chamber-business.com](mailto:info@chamber-business.com)

## 3 Legged Thing Limited

👤 Gary Garber  
📍 [www.3leggedthing.com](http://www.3leggedthing.com)  
✉ [gary@3leggedthing.com](mailto:gary@3leggedthing.com)



3 Legged Thing Limited designs and sells its own brand of camera tripods and accessories internationally.

## Creative Business Videos

👤 Timothy Mason  
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👤 Eddie Ballard  
☎ 07748 004056  
📍 [bedfordshireccc.play-cricket.com](http://bedfordshireccc.play-cricket.com)  
✉ [eddieballard@hotmail.com](mailto:eddieballard@hotmail.com)



Bedfordshire County Cricket Club play in the three National County competitions one step below professional cricket and are looking to bring on board sponsors and partners. We play county wide across Bedfordshire to ensure we spread and grow the game as well as away games across the country.

## Lumi Digital Design Ltd

👤 Zuwi Nnadi  
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## RSPCA Bedfordshire South Branch



👤 Alison Sutton (Branch Manager)  
📧 [rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk/](mailto:rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk/)  
✉ [info@rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk](mailto:info@rspca-bedfordshiresouth.org.uk)

Did you know, each RSPCA branch is entirely responsible for supporting themselves? As such, we are an independent charity carrying out animal welfare work throughout the local areas, and running a vital fostering schemes for cats, dogs, rabbits and other small animals. Our charity shop in Ampthill welcomes all donations.

## The Engraving Workshop Ltd

👤 Amanda Luddington  
☎ 07565 975081  
📧 [www.theengravingworkshop.co.uk](http://www.theengravingworkshop.co.uk)  
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## The Eastern Cyber Resilience Centre



👤 Melanie Bailey  
☎ 01223 856029  
📧 [www.ecrcentre.co.uk](http://www.ecrcentre.co.uk)  
✉ [mel.bailey@ecrcentre.co.uk](mailto:mel.bailey@ecrcentre.co.uk)

The Eastern Cyber Resilience Centre supports and helps protect SMEs, and supply chain businesses in the East of England against cyber crime. Build your cyber resilience, with free membership. Free guidance, support, practical tips and affordable cyber services. The ECRC is a police-led not-for-profit organisation.

## YouTurn Futures

👤 Teri Parish  
📧 [www.youturnfutures.com](http://www.youturnfutures.com)  
✉ [teri.parish@youturnfutures.com](mailto:teri.parish@youturnfutures.com)



YouTurn Futures is a criminal justice charity which delivers a number of programmes to reduce reoffending. We lead on the integration and engagement in society of marginalised groups and the coordination of delivery plans by police and partners to reduce all forms of exploitation in Bedfordshire. We believe better lives are achieved through working in partnership.

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