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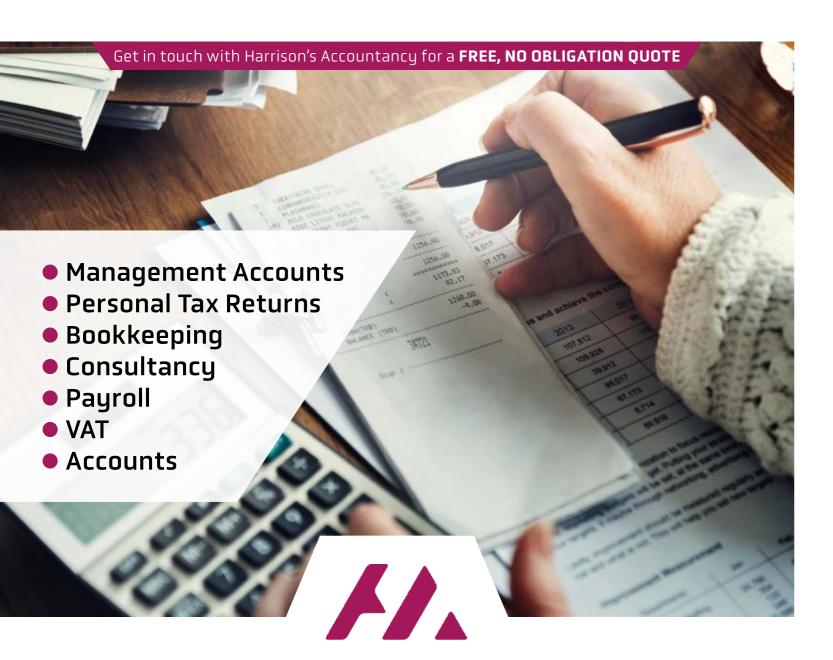
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Business **FOCUS**

Official Magazine of Bedfordshire **Chamber of Commerce**

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Welcome

...to the summer edition of Business Focus Magazine.

As we welcome the arrival of summer, our region's economic momentum has never been stronger. There are moments in a region's development that signify more than progress - they mark transformation. The recent announcement by Universal Studios to bring a world-class resort to Bedford is one such moment. But what makes it truly significant is that it doesn't stand alone

This landmark investment is arriving at a time when Bedfordshire is already undergoing an ambitious wave of growth. The expansion of London Luton Airport to accommodate 32 million passengers annually will significantly enhance international connectivity. Alongside that, East West Rail is progressing, set to restore vital east-west connections across the Oxford-Cambridge corridor via Bedford.

Add to this the construction of Luton Town's new stadium at Power Court, which will inject new cultural, leisure and economic energy into the town centre, and the ambitions at Luton Hoo to host the Ryder Cup, and it's clear: Bedfordshire is no longer preparing for the future - it is building it.

At the Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce, we see this not just as a surge in investment, but as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape the region's economy, redefine our identity, and elevate Bedfordshire's place on the global map.

However, bold growth requires a shared commitment to people and place. Our role is to ensure this momentum delivers across the board. That means acting as the connection between large-scale projects and the local business community—helping our members access new supply chain opportunities, scale their operations and adapt

It also means championing skills development, so that our workforce is equipped to meet future demands with confidence and capability. And it means working collaboratively with developers, educators, local authorities and community stakeholders to ensure that investment translates into inclusive, sustainable growth.

Because this isn't just about theme parks, railways or stadiums. It's about building a stronger Bedfordshire-one where businesses thrive, communities feel

empowered, and young people see a future of opportunity on their

The scale of investment we are seeing today will shape Bedfordshire for generations to come. As a Chamber, we are committed to shaping that future with purpose, partnership and

This is a defining time for Bedfordshire. And together, we have the opportunity to turn this momentum into lasting success.

#workingtogether #achievingmore

Justin Richardson

Chief Executive Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce

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Better Together

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Chairman's VIEW

On VE day, whilst writing this article, one can't help but be stimulated by the determination, organisation and belief in the fundamentals of our predecessors that made them winners. We haven't changed. Successful businesses continue with the same underpinnings of determination, organisation and belief in the fundamentals. The battlefield has changed, so must our armoury and necessary nimbleness to cope. What is so rapidly changing in the business world? One might say everything and not be wrong. But maybe there are some key points of inflexion.

Did, potentially the most iconic image of the decade of Presidents Zelensky and Trump in deep conversation whilst seated face to face in that most holy of places, St Peter's Basilica during Pope Francis's funeral represent a turning point?

We don't normally comment directly on party politics, just work tirelessly on policy issues, but is the recent upsurge in voting for Reform another turning point? Indeed, it has prompted febrile activity in the shaken two 'main' parties, to head back to their roots.

Do the chaotic reversals of Executive Orders and bizarre pronouncements from the White House mark an irreversible turning point in the established global order of trade?

Exponential growth in the use of Al is certainly another turning point in the way businesses operate.

So, faced with so much change and unpredictability, what can we do in defence and to exploit change as opportunity? I submit that ever deeper cooperation between businesses, with sectorial alignment is how. This will be coordinated and underpinned by your Chamber taking the leading role of guidance, training and support with the latest authoritative interpretation of the trading legislation and export requirements.

There are huge business opportunities ahead. Together we will overcome the obstacles, turn them to our advantage and benefit from all the fantastic developments already happening in Bedfordshire and beyond.

Rod J Calvert



Rod J Calvert OBE DL

Chairman of Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce

Continue with the same underpinnings of determination, organisation and belief in the fundamentals.

The battlefield has changed, so must our armoury and necessary nimbleness to cope.

Veruth Holding's

2025 BURSARY AWARD



After 15 years of storied success, we're pleased to announce that Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce have once again worked with David Sheridan of Veruth Holdings, to deliver the Engineering Bursary Award.

The winner of the award will be awarded with a £15,000 bursary, to assist them on their journey through university studying engineering.

Luton Sixth form College was once again the backdrop for the awards presentation this year, taking place on Thursday 8th May - The presentation was attended by judges, students and representatives from Luton Sixth Form and Barnfield College. This year's winner was Luton Sixth Form Student, Imaan Qureshi.

Imaan was delighted and shocked by her win, stating that it will be a massive burden off of her shoulders having to deal with the financial stress that university students are placed under, meaning she can fully focus on her studies.

After the win, David from Veruth Holdings said: "Engineering is such a great career and will solve some of our problems. It is a real pleasure to continue to support young people who are at the start of this thrilling subject."

It's such a pleasure to continue our support with this bursary, which has now handed out more than £200,000 to help support students on their engineering journey.





Bedfordshire Chamber SERVICES, PARTNERSHIPS & PROGRAMMES

While Bedfordshire's skyline prepares for roller-coasters, the Chamber has been busy building a different kind of infrastructure – one made of services, partnerships and programmes that help local firms grow right now. Four new initiatives, plus two dates for your diary.

A Passport For Products

Our newly launched ATA Carnet service is exactly that: a single customs document recognised in more than 80 countries that lets you take samples, exhibition equipment or professional kit abroad for up to a year without paying import duty or VAT. For manufacturers, creative agencies and event suppliers it eliminates red tape, cuts costs and opens the door to trialling fresh markets with minimal risk.

Fully Funded Export Support

A new UKSPF International Trade Support Project, in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council, offering fully funded support on market entry, compliance and digital lead generation.

University Business Partnership

A newly signed Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Bedfordshire turns academic theory into commercial advantage. The deal commits both sides to student placements, joint research and staff-development programmes.

Buying Local, Building Social Value

Confirmation of our Anchors Framework agreement with Luton Council, developed to help key local organisations work together to drive local business best practice and create social benefit. The first set of organisations to sign the framework are the University of Bedfordshire, Luton Sixth Form College, Active Luton and ourselves.

Celebrate the Momentum

All this activity needs a heartbeat, and you will feel it at two forthcoming events. First, the Members' Summer Reception (11th June), a relaxed evening of networking and new connections. Second, the SME Bedfordshire Business Awards (19th June), where we will toast every finalist and—by extension—the creativity and ambition of our county's business community.

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Chamber EVENTS



Better Together

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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 2025:



Members **SUMMER RECEPTION**

11th June 2025 | 5pm to 7pm The Forest Centre, Marton Moretaine Members ONLY event - Free of charge





British Chambers of Commerce GLOBAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

26th June 2025 | 9am to 5pm QEII Centre, London

Members: £150 + VAT | Non-Members: £300 + VAT



Connect **OVER COFFEE**

15th July - 9.30am - 11.15am Bedford Members: Free of Charge | Non-Members: £25 + VAT



Connect **OVER COFFEE**

16th September - 9.30am - 11.15am Marsh Farm Futures, Luton

Members: Free of Charge | Non-Members: £25 + VAT

To book or for further information call 01582 522448 or visit my.chamber-business.com/events

Chamber Annual Football TOURNAMENT 2025

In May, we proudly hosted the second edition of our annual Chamber Football Tournament, in honour of our late, great colleague Phil Neary.

After months of planning, we promised an unforgettable afternoon of drama on the pitch, and while we could not plan for certain events that occurred (a fire in the car park, paired with an unfortunate, harrowing injury that required an ambulance to be driven on to the pitch!). It was incredible to see so many teams trying their best, vying to be the second winners of the Phil Neary Trophy.

We would like to thank our incredible hosts, Stotfold FC for hosting the tournament and opening your arms to local businesses in Bedfordshire, we could not have done this without your support!

After many hours of competition, which featured last years finalists Hannah Solicitors and Highpoint Construction falling at the semi-final stage. This year's final was contested between two Luton-based companies, Greystone Solicitors and AEGIS Support Services. After a tense 0-0 draw, the contest was decided on penalties with Greystone leaving as the victors! Congratulations to Bilal, Ryan and the team at Greystone for lifting the trophy!





Photos provided by Duncan Jack Photography



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 of the economic climate for businesses in Bedfordshire and beyond.

Q1 2025 Findings

Domestic Sales & Orders: Nearly half (43%) of businesses reported increased domestic sales in the first guarter of 2025, while 41% remained steady and 16% experienced a decline. Similarly, 35% of companies observed stable future orders from UK customers, 44% reported growth, and 21% reported a drop.

Overseas Markets: Overseas performance nosedived in Q1 2025, with only 13% of businesses reporting an increase in sales and 40% reporting steady sales. Global pressures such as exchange rates, inflation and the threat of tariffs, respondents' forward order books indicate nearly half anticipate a decline in international orders in Q2 2025.

Workforce & Recruitment: Only 13% of firms recruited in the first quarter of the year, with 79% of respondents reporting no change in headcount. Looking ahead, businesses anticipate similar workforce stability, with only 9% expecting reductions in staff but 28% predicting further growth.

Investment: Overall, 18% of local companies reported increased investment in plant and machinery during the last guarter, 49% reported no change, and 33% reported a decrease. Over the same period, investment plans for training contracted by four percentage points, with 51% of respondents expecting their training commitments to remain unchanged and over one in four (27%) looking to reduce their training spend.

Cost Pressures: Labour costs, other overhead costs and energy prices remain the most pressing concerns for businesses and continue to weigh heavily on local businesses' ability to invest. Following the Budget and NI employer contribution rises, respondents anticipate increased wage costs, reduced future recruitment, and lower wage settlements for current workers.

Outlook: Nearly three-quarters of respondents are optimistic that turnover and profitability will improve over the next 12 months even against a backdrop of significant upward pressure on prices. A striking 66% of companies reported intentions to raise their prices in the coming months.

The Bottom Line

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

"The national insurance rise has been an impending concern for months. Our survey shows tax remains the top concern, with firms telling us they are planning to cut investment and raise prices, just to balance the books.

"Sustained economic growth will only come through businesses, not government. While there were some limited announcements in the Spring Statement which we welcome it is hard to get away from the bleak growth

"We urgently need the government to publish a wider tax roadmap, which includes national insurance, to give firms a direction of travel to lower cost pressures. Ministers must also focus on infrastructure projects and promoting exports, as a springboard for business growth.

"The Employment Rights Bill also threatens to fuel further costs and complexity on businesses at a very delicate time. While Government has listened and made some sensible changes - the legislation as it stands risks unintended consequences which will limit economic

"The Government needs businesses to invest and grow to kickstart the economy. But unless swift action is taken to ease cost pressures and support firms, growth will remain elusive."



Shevaun Haviland Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce

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Here are the Top Summer Must-Haves

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YOU'RE A SELLER – You Just Don't Know It

...says Phil Solomon of Sales Geek

Phil Solomon is the regional specialist for international organisation Sales Geek, which delivers sales training, part-time (fractional) Sales Director services, and some training that comes at absolutely no charge.

He believes that many people are very effective sellers - they just don't realise it.

"The number of times" he says, "someone's sat in front of me and said, 'I'm no good at selling', and then they speak to me fluidly and persuasively about their business for ten minutes... they don't know they're already selling!"

But Phil also emphasises the importance of listening. "You'll learn valuable things about your prospects' needs and pain points. Selling isn't about you, it's always about the customer"

Emotionality is also high on Phil's list of effective sales techniques. "People buy with emotions," he explains, citing powerful desires like not being seen to fail by making poor purchasing decisions, and instead being perceived as having a positive impact on the business and its reputation.

And this feeds into a wider area of Phil's professional interest – buyer and seller behaviour. Understanding "why customers buy what they buy from you, and not from somewhere else," he says, is key. "Once you know this, you can tap into it to drive more effective and efficient sales conversations."

Meet Phil in October

Phil prides himself on giving a helping hand to local businesses, with no cost involved, via the Sales Club. These are free sales training events, each focused on a sales topic announced in advance.

His next event in Bedfordshire is in October and is being run in conjunction with us here at Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce. More details will follow, so watch this space!

If you're interested in learning more visit https://www.salesgeek.co.uk/franchise/milton-keynes/or contact Phil on phil.solomon@salesgeek.co.uk



Member NEWS





AEGS SUPPORT SERVICES

Qadeer Qureshi *CEO, Aegis*



Why Manned Guarding Still Matters

IN AN AUTOMATED WORLD

People Notice People

One of the key psychological principles in security is the idea of being observed. When individuals—whether visitors, staff, or potential intruders—see a uniformed guard, it triggers a natural sense of accountability. Their actions are less anonymous. Someone is watching, and crucially, that someone is capable of making real-time decisions.

Both research and frontline experience show that manned guarding serves as both a practical and psychological barrier. The human brain processes the presence of authority figures—such as security officers— much faster than it does inanimate systems like CCTV cameras or access gates. There's an immediate behavioral shift: people become more cautious, more respectful, and less likely to test boundaries.

Beyond Surveillance

Automated systems are excellent at logging data, triggering alerts, and providing audit trails. But they lack two critical elements: judgement and empathy. A security officer, by contrast, can assess context in the moment. Is someone loitering because they're lost or because they're casing the property? Does a raised voice indicate danger – or just a frustrating phone call? These assessments are often nuanced and situational. Trained officers are skilled in reading cues, diffusing tension, and taking swift, appropriate action. This level of adaptability is particularly important in people-facing environments such as corporate offices, schools, retail settings, and construction sites.

Tech-Enhanced, Not Tech-Replaced

It's important to view technology and manned guarding not as alternatives, but as complementary components. Surveillance cameras cannot follow a suspicious individual. Access systems do not calm distressed visitors or administer first aid.

Security officers enhance the value of security technology, operating it, interpreting it, and responding to it in ways machines cannot. At Aegis Support Services, our officers are trained not only in observation and protection, but also in how to work effectively with digital tools to strengthen the security infrastructure on site.

The Human Element Still Matters

In an increasingly automated world, human presence is more valuable than ever. Manned guarding is about more than just keeping watch—it's about people who can think, adapt, and care.

Professional security officers, whether working independently or with technology, are one of the most effective and psychologically impactful ways to deter crime. At Aegis Support Services, we believe the human element is not a luxury—it's a necessity.

"In an era where artificial intelligence, CCTV networks, and smart sensors dominate conversations about safety, there remains one element of security that no machine can truly replicate: the presence of a human being. A calm, alert, and trained individual who knows how to read a situation, diffuse tension, and provide reassurance with nothing more than their presence."

Visit us at aegisupportservices.com



No Overheads, JUST RESULTS

Hive Virtual Assistant (Hive VA) offers flexible, remote support for businesses, families, and individuals, eliminating the overheads of traditional staffing.

Sebastian Trebacz, a Bedfordshire entrepreneur, highlights the benefits: "I'd rather invest in marketing than a fancy office. Remote talent and tools make more sense." This mindset is shared by many business owners, especially with rising employer National Insurance contributions.

Founded by Tania, an experienced Bedford-based professional with over a decade in healthcare and management, Hive VA delivers practical, tailored solutions. From managing household schedules to providing admin and organisational support, Hive VA adapts to each client's needs.

Tania also specialises in supporting individuals with ADHD, helping them establish routines, manage tasks, and reduce stress with a compassionate, person-centred approach.

Hive VA's remote model ensures clients receive reliable support without the hassle of in-house staffing. Whether scaling a business or organising family life, this flexibility is invaluable.

"We know every client is different," Tania explains.
"That's why Hive VA is built around flexibility."

Offering services such as schedule and inbox management, travel planning, branding, recruitment support, and more, Hive VA helps clients save time, reduce stress, and focus on what matters most. Accessible across Bedfordshire and the UK, Hive VA is the modern solution to everyday challenges.

To learn more, visit www.hive-va.com or call Tania at 07521 298 162. You can also connect with her on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/in/hive-va.



Windows 10 End-of-Life

DEADLINE EXPLAINED

For many businesses Microsoft Windows functions as the essential technological backbone of their business functions. Windows 10 has been on the market for ten years and many users still rely on it, but soon it's support will end.

When will Windows 10 support end?

Microsoft have stated that Windows 10 support will end on Tuesday 14th October 2025. If you are still using Windows 10, this doesn't mean that after this date your services will stop. What this date determines is that Microsoft will no longer provide Windows 10 updates and security patches. According to StatCounter.com (as of February 2025), 58.7% of users are still using Windows 10, and 38.1% currently use Windows 11. So, we have seen in the industry a slower adoption to Windows 11 than we did with Windows 10.

What happens if I am still using Windows 10?

From Tuesday 14th October 2025 the following changes will take effect to Windows 10:

- There will no longer be free monthly security update releases.
- You won't be able to receive technical support from Microsoft.
- You won't receive any bug fix patches.

At Cambridge Support, we always recommend businesses have the latest security updates and security fixes. This is because outdated software and systems, especially those not receiving support pose as a security risk to your business.

Should you upgrade to Windows 11?

There are few things you should consider before upgrading to Windows 11. We recommend checking if your current PC is compatible with Windows 11. If your current Windows 10 device is compatible, you can upgrade it. This is a much more cost-effective means to acquire the upgrade. However, if your hardware falls short, upgrading might cause compatibility issues and cause your device to lag. In this case we recommend buying a device with Windows 11 pre-installed. This way you can enjoy its features straight out of the box.

For help with upgrading to Windows 11 or any advice on if your Windows 10 device is compatible, feel free to contact Cambridge Support on 01223 921000 or email at ask@cambridgesupport.com

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Making Tax Digital for Income Tax:

WHAT BUSINESSES NEED TO KNOW BEFORE 2026

The UK tax system is entering a new digital era. From April 2026, Making Tax Digital for Income Tax Self Assessment (MTD for ITSA) will change how millions of self-employed individuals and landlords report their income.

Who's Affected and When?

- April 2026: Self-employed and landlords with total gross income over £50,000.
- April 2027: Threshold lowers to £30,000.

Gross income includes all self-employment and property income combined — not just profit.

What Will Change?

MTD for ITSA replaces the annual tax return with:

- Quarterly digital updates of income and expenses.
- An End of Period Statement for each income source.
- A Final Declaration of total income, replacing the traditional Self Assessment.

All records must be kept using MTD-compatible software, such as Xero, QuickBooks, or FreeAgent.

What Should You Do Now?

- Assess your income to see if you'll be affected.
- Adopt digital bookkeeping tools.
- Consult your accountant to ensure a compliant setup.
- Stay informed of future changes from HMRC.

Benefits include greater accuracy, improved cash flow visibility, and less year-end stress.

Challenges may involve new software, a learning curve, and more frequent reporting.

For more information on this, please do visit our website at https://simas-accounts.co.uk/ for more details, or the HM Revenue and Customs website gov.uk Making Tax Digital.

Need Help?

Simas Accounting & Tax is a certified partner with all major MTD software providers. We offer tailored support—from setup and training to full bookkeeping and submissions.

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Driving Business Growth and Innovation

IN CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

In partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council, the University of Bedfordshire has supported more than 129 local businesses through the Central Bedfordshire Business Growth and Innovation Programme, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). This transformative initiative has played a pivotal role in boosting business competitiveness, encouraging innovation, and laying the foundations for long-term, sustainable growth.

Through fully funded, tailored support, the programme has empowered established businesses across the region to evolve and thrive. Expert consultancy, academic-led student projects, and subsidised graduate employment opportunities have enabled organisations to access fresh perspectives, implement cutting-edge technologies, and apply forward-thinking strategies

More than 20 expert-led workshops have been delivered, covering topics such as digital transformation, sustainability, and strategic business planning. These sessions have not only equipped business leaders with practical tools and insight but also fostered a collaborative network of innovators and entrepreneurs

In addition, a dedicated capital grant fund of £177,000 has further enabled 34 businesses to invest in new technologies, product development, and essential upgrades – ensuring greater operational efficiency and future resilience.

The impact of the Business Growth and Innovation Programme has been nothing short of inspiring. Businesses are not only growing, but they're also transforming, rethinking what's possible, and redefining their role within the wider economy.

This successful collaboration between the University of Bedfordshire and Central Bedfordshire Council demonstrates the immense value of partnership between academia and local government in unlocking economic potential.

To explore case studies and discover how the programme is making a difference, visit: www.beds.ac.uk/ukspf-cbc

Interested in taking your business to the next level? Make an enquiry today: www.beds.ac.uk/business-support-enquiry







Training Tomorrow's Professionals Today

The term 'skills' is highly contested, closely tied to debates about the purpose and value of education. While philosophers, academics, business leaders, parents and students have long discussed this, and will continue to do so, many argue that education should enable individuals and communities to realise their aspirations (see Peters 2015; Dale 1989; Pring 1995, among others).

Whatever the curriculum up to age 16, further education colleges must look ahead, helping learners envision their futures and embedding their work within the skills agenda. They must collaborate with businesses to demystify the complexities of funding and regulation, making learning accessible and aligned with future industry needs.

As key anchor institutions, colleges also help communities imagine a future where healthcare, transport, retail, culture and other sectors are sustained by skilled professionals and technical experts.

The Bedford College Group is committed to co-constructing the curriculum in this way. With developments such as the expansion of Luton Airport, East West Rail, Europe's first Universal resort, and the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, Bedfordshire is poised to become a key engine of the UK economy.

To seize this opportunity, we must act now to align today's curriculum with tomorrow's workforce needs. By working together with the business community, we can understand the region's evolving skills landscape and ensure that we are ready to meet its immense potential.

If your business is interested in exploring the many ways to work with us, please email partnerships@bedford.ac.uk.



Developing Self-Awareness to Benefit Your Business

Howe To Consultancy is a forward thinking and innovative organisation and the challenge of remaining relevant and useful to those I work with provides an ongoing opportunity for me.

I dedicate time to develop and nurture trusted relationships with my clients and to truly understand the challenges that they are facing, whether they be linked to economic ambiguity, organisational performance or the need for change.

Highly self-aware individuals are viewed as more effective than those who have lower self-awareness. This is why all of Howe To Consultancy's development programmes start with self-understanding.

Research suggests that a good understanding of self, both strengths and weaknesses, enables individuals to develop effective strategies for interaction and can help them to better respond to the demands of their environment.

Programmes that we offer include:

- Insights Discovery individual programmes: Selfawareness and development, Team Effectiveness, Full Circle 360 and Transformational Leadership
- The UDEI Leadership Development Programme: Understanding, Development, Empowerment and Influence
- Coaching for all: how to use coaching as an effective tool for self and team development

I am currently involved in a national steering group which is exploring and discussing the use of AI in our society. I will share our findings and subsequent development opportunities in the next edition.

Meanwhile, if you would like to know more about any of the above please contact me at bex.howe@howetoconsultancy.co.uk or visit our website.





SAYING GOODBYE!

It's Never Fasyl

We understand this can be an emotional time losing a loved one! Choose from our afternoon tea option or finger buffet to gather with your friends and family in a celebration of life.

Funeral Tea - Selection of Finger Sandwiches, Tray Bakes, Tea/Coffee

Finger Buffet - Selection of Sandwiches, Savory Items to Include Sausage Rolls, Miniature Pork Pies, Quiche, Vegetable Spring Rolls. Tray Bakes, Tea/Coffee at £24.95 per person.

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Apprenticeships





Working together, achieving more



Leading UK gift specialist Kimm & Miller is excited to announce the launch of its new ecommerce website, designed to make it easier than ever for customers to shop its award-winning gift sets online. The site official launched on the 9 May 2025 and features the company's full collection of food, drink, homeware, and lifestyle gifts - including gifting collaborations with some of the UK's favourite brands.

The launch marks a major milestone for the Bedfordbased business, which has become a household name in the gifting industry over the past two decades. Known for its extensive seasonal gift ranges supplied to major UK retailers, as well as bestselling collaborations with brands like Costa Coffee, Disney, Coca-Cola, and Marmite, Kimm & Miller produces millions of gift sets annually. Now, with its new ecommerce site, the business is offering online shoppers the convenience of buying directly from Kimm & Miller all year round.

The website will feature a selection of Kimm & Miller's most popular gift sets - from gourmet food gifts and novelty chilli sauce sets to Costa Coffee merchandise and more. With a range of gifts suitable for birthdays, Christmas, and other occasions, the site makes it easy for customers to find thoughtful gifts at great prices, with speedy UK delivery offered as standard. The site also introduces 'Not Just A Gift', a new gifting and lifestyle blog offering seasonal gift guides, trends, and tips from Kimm & Miller's expert team to support and inspire shoppers throughout the year.

Rob Kimm, Managing Director, said: "We've been designing and supplying gifts for nearly 20 years: launching a new direct-to-consumer website is an exciting next step for the business, giving us the chance to connect with customers in a new way and showcase some of the gifts we know people love best. As shopping habits continue to shift online, this launch offers us a new way to meet changing needs and provide a great shopping experience - with more choice, convenience, and access to our gifts whatever the season."

Maddie Northern, Product & Digital Manager at Kimm & Miller, added: "This new site launch is an important step for us in making our gift sets more accessible to customers all year round. We've focused on creating a simple, enjoyable shopping experience for customers that reflects the quality of our products and the thought that goes into each gift."

www.kimmandmillershop.co.uk | IG: @kimmandmiller



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Better Together

Working together, achieving more



THE REMOTE WORK REVOLUTION: How Companies Can Adapt and Thrive

The world of work has changed. And for companies, the challenge isn't just keeping up – it's getting ahead.

Remote and hybrid working are no longer just big business trends. They're everyday reality for companies of all sizes, across every sector. While the flexibility offers clear benefits, it also brings new pressures - from keeping teams connected to managing performance and wellbeing at a distance.

That's where we come in.

At HR Delivered, we work alongside companies to turn the chaos of change into something clear, manageable and people-focused. Our team have significant experience in strategic and operational HR, and understand what businesses really need to thrive in today's working world: clarity, confidence, and a no-nonsense approach that delivers results.

We've seen first-hand how hard it can be for smaller businesses to balance it all – especially when resources are tight and time is even tighter. That's why we created our Power of Three service: a flexible package that brings together strategic HR insight, day-to-day partnering, and practical admin support.

It's designed to help companies:

- Build flexible policies that work for both the business and the team
- Train and support managers to lead confidently in hybrid environments
- Handle the day-to-day from sickness and absence to onboarding and contracts
- Stay compliant with ever-changing employment law

Whether you've got a team of five or fifty, we're here to make HR easier, smarter, and genuinely useful.

So, if remote work is on your radar - or already part of your business - let's talk. Because the future of work doesn't need to be complicated. With the right support, it can be your competitive advantage.

Let's make HR work for you. Contact hello@hrdelivered.co.uk or call 0330 332 4024



Marsh Farm Futures (MFF) is based in Futures House, a 65,000 sq. ft building, has an indoor playpark, a café, community halls, and quality office spaces to rent for small and medium enterprises.

MFF has been established in the community and working to benefit residents. MFF currently runs a free annual fireworks event, attended by over 5,000 people.

Our Community Corner provides access to a range of free services twice a week. These include our Community Fridge, a free food resource with the aim to reduce food waste, School Uniform service, Dental Care for children, Sexual Health supplies in partnership with Luton Sexual Health and Computer Room access. We hold weekly Community Coffee Mornings for residents to build relationships and combat social isolation. There is an established Community Garden, where residents can grow their own fruits and vegetables.

MFF runs 'Futures Youth' funded by Luton Rising. This project offers a regular weekly drop-in youth club for young people from Year 9 and above. Working in partnership with Luton Youth Partnership Service it has over 80 registrations and consistently has 25+ young people regularly attending.

MFF currently has some units to let at Futures House at competitive prices, which range between 15 sq. metres up to 360 sq. metres, on either short-term 12-month licences or long-term leases from 3 to 21 years. Tenants also receive free parking. The building provides small meeting rooms and large conference spaces with tables, chairs and audio/visual equipment in a range of settings to suit the hirer's needs.



To find out more about available office space and book a room or halls, please contact MFF on 01582 512555 or e-mail rafi@marshfarmfutures.co.uk or visit our website www.marshfarmfutures.co.uk

The Inspirati Journey

NAVIGATING LEADERSHIP

In 2011 Inspirati was founded with a vision – to guide leaders through transformation with wisdom, purpose and integrity. The Universal Equinoctial Ring Dial, an ancient navigational instrument became our emblem, not just a logo but a philosophy.

We became Leadership Navigators and Empowerment Engineers, charting paths for individuals and organisations through uncertainty. Over the past 15 years, we've partnered with leaders from international blue-chip companies, as well as public and private sector organisations, helping them harness their inner compass and align their actions with their values.

Marking 15 Years: The Next Horizon

As we celebrate this milestone, we recognise that the world of leadership has grown more complex. The storms of burnout, stress and imbalance threaten even the most capable leaders. So, we set out once again, exploring, researching and refining our craft.

The result is the Balanced Business Programme®, a culmination of our deepened expertise in coaching and leadership development. At its heart lies the ResilienceMap®, a vital tool designed to help leaders and teams navigate the pressures of modern business without losing their direction or well-being. More than just a framework, it is a guide that empowers leaders to build resilience, prevent burnout and cultivate a sustainable way forward, not only for themselves but for those they lead.

The Balanced Business Programme

A 5-Key Guide aligned to the ResilienceMap®

The Compass Analogy

As a leader, you're navigating a complex and fast-changing landscape. Without the right direction the pressures can quickly become overwhelming. That's where The Balanced Business Programme© steps in.

The 5 Key Directions of the Balanced Business Programme©:

- True North The Resilience Reset Framework
- 2. South From Burnout to Brilliance
- East The Leadership Recharge Blueprint
- 4. West The Thrive Formula
- 5. Centre Pause, Pivot, Perform

Why the Balanced Business Programme Works

The 5 key directions give you the structure to lead with confidence, clarity, and resilience, all while protecting your well-being. Each direction focuses on a vital leadership area to prevent burnout, boost performance and drive long-term business success.

M: +44 (0)7973 869867 | E: ps@inspirati.org.uk | W: www.inspirati.org.uk



Join us and our friends at The Woodyard Café & Brasserie, Luton Hoo Estate, Luton LU1 4LF

Thursday 10 July, 4pm - 6pm

Food for thought! Join us for a 'sizzle session' over a glass and nibbles and discover how the Balanced Business Programme®supports business success.

Take home a key piece of the ResilienceMap®, to kickstart your journey, plus a special offer discount for attendees. We'll have a short punchy presentation, networking and hopefully some sunshine! Don't miss out—RSVP today!

Bedfordshire Chamber Members (free) Guests £15:00

To book email events@chamber-business.com



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Working together, achieving more



Dunstable Town Council is excited to announce a year-long celebration marking its 40th anniversary, celebrating four decades of providing services to the Dunstable community.

To honour this milestone, Dunstable Town Council has commissioned illustrator Katie Hounsome to create new lamppost banners along the High Street. These banners highlight some of the many services and facilities the Town Council delivers, from community events and the cemetery to youth activities and the Town Ranger service.

Adding to the excitement, Dunstable will host its first-ever Soapbox Derby this year, promising fun and thrills for all ages. This event offers a fantastic opportunity for businesses and community groups to come together for a unique team-building experience. Creative minds are invited to design their own non-motorised karts and race them down a specially designed track, offering a day of action-packed entertainment for participants and spectators alike.

In addition to the Soapbox Derby, the Dunstable Community Lottery will be a key part of the anniversary celebrations. The lottery supports local causes and initiatives, helping to fund community projects and services that make a real difference in Dunstable. It's an exciting way for residents and businesses to get involved, support the community, and have a chance to win fantastic prizes.

Councillor Louise O'Riordan, Town Mayor of Dunstable, said: "For 40 years, Dunstable Town Council has been at the heart of our community, working tirelessly to enrich the lives of our residents, businesses, and visitors. This milestone gives us an opportunity to reflect on our achievements and look forward to an exciting future. We're thrilled to launch the celebrations with the new lamppost banners and can't wait to see the creativity and community spirit on display at our Soapbox Derby."

Throughout the year, the Town Council will hold a series of other initiatives, events, and activities designed to bring the community together and celebrate this historic milestone. From local concerts to family-friendly activities, there will be something for everyone.

Residents and visitors are encouraged to follow the Town Council's website and social media channels for the latest updates on the 40th-anniversary celebrations. Let's come together to celebrate Dunstable's past, present, and future in

https://www.dunstable.gov.uk/

DUNSTER HOUSE FOUNDER

Honoured in The King's New Year List

We are delighted that our founder, Christopher Murphy, was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2025 New Year Honours List, recognising his significant contributions to business and charity.

About Christopher Murphy

Christopher Murphy, born in December 1947, founded Dunster House Ltd in 1994 alongside his wife, Pamela. Initially focusing on uPVC windows and doors, the company has since evolved into a leading manufacturer of garden buildings, log cabins, and climbing frames. Today, Dunster House operates multiple distribution centres across the UK and owns over 14 factories across 8 sites in Europe, becoming a major UK employer with 11 UK locations employing over 460 members of staff in the UK and more than 800 globally.

Significance of the MBE

The MBE is a prestigious honour awarded to individuals who have made significant contributions to their community, profession, or the nation. Christopher's recognition highlights his dedication to excellence and his positive impact on both the economy and society through his business ventures and charitable initiatives.

Speaking about the honour, Chris said: "I am deeply humbled and incredibly honoured to receive this recognition. This award is a testament to the hard work and passion of the entire Dunster House team, and the unwavering support from my wife Pamela and sons, Alexander, and Andrew. I share this achievement with everyone who has supported our mission to continuously innovate and grow to become the hugely successful business that we are today."

Achievements and Impact

Under Christopher's leadership, Dunster House has become a trusted name in the industry, known for its high-quality products and customer-centric approach. His commitment to innovation is evident in the company's diverse product range and its expansion into international markets. Beyond business, Christopher has demonstrated a strong commitment to social responsibility. He established a dedicated Humanitarian department within Dunster House, focusing on developing solutions for humanitarian crises. The company has supplied major NGOs with essential sanitation equipment, aiding communities in need.



Additionally, Dunster House has been recognised for its support of the Armed Forces community, revalidating its Silver Award as part of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. This accolade reflects the company's commitment to employing veterans and supporting the Armed Forces Covenant.

Looking Forward

Christopher's MBE not only honours his past achievements but also inspires the entire Dunster House team to continue striving for excellence. With a strong foundation and a clear vision for the future, the company is poised to further expand its product offerings and continue making a positive impact on both the industry and society.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Christopher Murphy MBE on this well-deserved recognition and look forward to the continued success and growth of Dunster House under his visionary leadership.

dunsterhouse.co.uk

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Member PROFILES



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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

Amari Plastics (Bedford)

- David Callen
- bd⊚amariplastics.com
- amariplastics.com/bedford

Amari Plastics, a leading UK distributor, provides a vast range of plastic sheet, rod, tube, and film. We offer expert advice and tailored solutions, serving diverse industries with quality materials and exceptional service.

Inspirati Ltd – AMARI

CITYTALK

green shield group

HARPER LUXE.

Empowerment Engineers



- Pauline A. Stewart
- 07973 869867
- ∠ ps@inspirati.org.uk
- inspirati.org.uk

With 25 years of research and professional experience, we design evidence-based strategies to drive performance, growth, and resilience. Through coaching and programme delivery, we work closely with individuals, teams and businesses – sharpening focus, equipping them to thrive in challenging environments, and preventing burnout in the workplace.

Citytalk Group

- Dan Drake
- 01296 929717
- dan.drake@citytalkgroup.co.uk
- citytalkgroup.co.uk

Citytalk Group, founded in 2007 in Aylesbury, are an established, experienced, customer focused provider of Telecoms, Broadband, Business Mobile, IT Services, Security and Energy. Our bespoke solutions are designed by our expert team, following in-depth conversation with our clients, to help businesses of any size be more productive and future proofed.

Influence Productions

- Adam Rust
- 01234 637777
- adam@influenceproductions.co.uk
- influenceproductions.co.uk

Influence Productions is dedicated to unleashing the power of video. We specialize in creating mesmerizing content that influences the world around us. We're also experts in event coverage and live productions, ensuring every moment is beautifully captured and shared. Contact us to bring your brand to life through the power of video.

Green Shield Group

- Ian Tobin
- 07968 184613
- i.tobin@thegsg.co.uk
- greenshieldgroup.co.uk

Green Shield Group empowers UK businesses to achieve netzero targets through fully funded solar, voltage optimisation, and battery solutions, enabling significant energy cost savings and sustainable self-generation. Our client base includes many household names such as Boeing, Hilton Hotels, BMW, Marriott, the MoD, Starbucks and Greggs.

Leighton Town Football Club

- Mark Baker
- 01525 373311
- leightontownfc.co.uk

Leighton Buzzard FC is a not-for-profit football club run by members for members. We run a huge number of teams at all levels serving the whole of the community and have 'The Venue' which is the perfect place in central Leighton Buzzard to hold any Corporate or Private function or party.

Harper Luxe Serviced Apartments

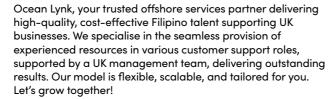
- Oliver Harper
- info@harperluxe.co.uk

 i
- harperluxe.co.uk

Harper Luxe, based in Dunstable, Bedfordshire, offers serviced apartments blending hotel-like cleanliness with home comfort, Ideal for business executives, our apartments feature free WiFi, fully equipped kitchens, air purification, parking, concierge services, and more. Accredited by IASAPP.org and recognized for sustainability by Greengage Solutions.

Ocean Lynk Limited

- Gilbert Mackay
- oceanlynk.com



Pavlova & Cream LTD

- Majella Taylor
- 07545 851414
- pavlovaandcream.com

Pavlova & Cream is an event and hospitality-focused photography and social media business, capturing the heart of food, drink, and service. With industry expertise and a creative eye, I help venues elevate their brand, boost engagement, and attract the right audience through beautiful imagery and tailored

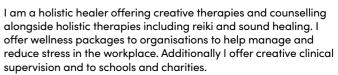
Pavlova & Cream

Holistic Healing and Wellness

Susannah Bradley

Susannah Bradley:

- 07845 926788
- Reikihealingbedfordshire@gmail.com



Purple Panda Marketing

- Amanda Evans
- amanda@purplepanda.net

Bespoke marketing service for small to medium businesses and charities, designed to enhance

your organisation's strategy development, and successful implementation. Whether you need support marketing an event, launching a new product, seek customer growth, or brand establishment, I offer tailored solutions that empower your team to achieve your marketing goals.

Woburn Safari Park

- Amy Hodges
- 01525 290407
- info@woburnsafari.co.uk

 info@woburnsa
- woburnsafari.co.uk

Woburn Safari Park is an award-winning visitor attraction, home to native, exotic and endangered animals. Whilst contributing towards educational & conservation initiatives, Woburn offers a range of ways for businesses to experience the park (from team building events to VIP tours) with opportunities available to help support our crucial work.

London Luton Airpo

el offers **250** spacious, contemporary guest rooms featuring lighting blinds, **55**° SMART TV's, multiple USB points and air-

dditional guest amenities include

- The Kitchen & Bar at Courtyard, offers all-day dining
- · 24-hour fitness suite · 24/7 Market Place
- · Business center
- · Car-parking
- · 3 Meeting & event spaces
- · Courtyard's signature media pods

he hotel has excellent air, road and rail connections: · London-Luton Airport is a short, 15-minute walk

- M1 Motorway junction 10 is a 5-minute drive
- Luton Airport Parkway station, with direct links into St. Pancras International, is a 13-minute walk

Chamber Members - Small Meeting Package

- * Unlimited Tea/Coffee, Jugs of Water
- * Pastries, Biscuits, Sweet Treat
- * Hot/Cold Buffet Lunch
- * LCD TV & Flip Chart
- * Complimentary High-Speed Wi-Fi
- * Room Hire

Car parking - £8

From £45 per person Quote Meet25

Offer is valid until 31st December 2025

Contact - Himalee.barber@courtyardlutonairport.com

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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

A&A Legacy Travel

Crafting unique experiences beyond the ordinary. We take pride in offering meticulously crafted experiences that reflect your unique interests, desires, and passions.

Abstract Recruitment

abstractrecruitment.co.uk

Abstract is one of the fastest growing multisector recruitment agencies, specialising in agency labour for: Warehouse & Industrial - Driving - Commercial - Technical -Construction - Manufacturing & Production.

Amari Plastics Plc

Amari Plastics plc is a leading supplier of plastics and related materials to UK industry. We predominantly serve three market sectors - Signs, Display & Graphics; Industrial & Engineering; Building & Construction.

Bedford Free School

Bedford Free School is a unique school with a fantastic educational offer. We really do believe that our pupils can go on to achieve extraordinary things.

Bedfordshire Open Door

Bedfordshire Open Door is a friendly and welcoming counselling service for young people.

Cambridge IT Security

At Cambridge IT Security we shield your business from cyber threats, attacks and data breaches. We work in partnership with you to build the right cyber strategies and systems to protect your business.

Cambridge Kinetics

Cambridge Kinetics is an award-winning, dynamic software company based in the Cambridge tech ecosystem.

Cambridge Support

Custom software development and business management software, CRM.

Cauldwell Primary

cauldwellschool.com

Cauldwell School is part of HEART Academies Trust.

Central and North West **London Foundation Trust**

linkedin.com/company/cnwlnhs/

We support local people back into work after some time out for a variety of health reasons. Helping people to achieve employment in their most ideal placement which is evidenced to improve their health outcomes.

Citytalk Group Ltd

Your essential business technology from one provider - telecoms, internet, IT and security

Clearhead Media Ltd

weareclearhead.com

One of the UK's leading creative video & social content agencies.

Cumberland Platforms Ltd cpl-ltd.com

Vehicle Conversion Specialists. As part of the renowned European Klubb Group, CPL brings decades of expertise in vehiclemounted solutions to the UK market.

Department for Work and Pensions

gov.uk/government/organisations/ department-for-work-pensions Government administration.

Duckworth Coaching

duckworthcoaching.com Expert Coach and Business Mentor.

Elstow School

elstowschool.co.uk

Elstow School is part of Advantage Schools.

eXtended Revenue Services

Sales Transformation, Coaching and Advisory. Focused on accelerating your revenue

FACES Bedford

FACES (Family and Children's Earlyhelp Services) is a well established local independent charity offering practical and emotional support to families under stress.

FAYTH Health

You local experts in health insurance with the WPA Healthcare Practice.

FirstCare (GB) Ltd

firstcaregb.co.uk

Firstcare are a family run care organisation that puts quality and compassion at the heart of everything we do.

Flexistaff Solutions Ltd

Recruitment can be a complex and demanding process, but with a team of industry-trained consultants, it becomes much more manageable

Future Traffic Solutions Ltd

futuretraffic.co.uk

Transforming fleet management through innovative and sustainable solutions.

GCH Fishmongers

Bedford based Fishmonger - provider of fresh and frozen fish and seafood, for personal or commercial use from either our high street store, or wholesalers in Marston

GPG Signs Ltd

apasians.co.uk

Business signage and printing.

Green Shield Group

areenshieldaroup.co.uk Enabling businesses to self-generate their own electricity. Fully funded or buy outright solar & battery technology.

Hancock & Hastings Accountants

hancockandhastings.co.uk

Working with individuals and businesses, we ensure that your accounts are accurate and

Harper Luxe Serviced Apartments harperluxe.co.uk

Luxurious serviced apartments in Dunstable.

HEART Academies Trust

HEART Academies Trust is a non-profit charitable organisation based in Bedford, dedicated to empowering local schools to achieve their full potential.

Houstone School

houstoneschool.co.uk

Houstone School are determined to make a positive difference to the educational landscape in Houghton Regis and the surrounding areas.

Influence Productions

www.influenceproductions.co.uk

Video Production - specialise in creating mesmerising content that influences the world around us.

Inspirati Limited

Leadership Development and Business Consultancy. As Empowerment Engineers we coach SME's in mastering performance and elevate Burnout awareness.

Intra Limited

intra-corp.net

individuals.

Manufacture of gauging equipment for building industry.

Laburnum Primary School laburnumprimary.co.uk

Laburnum Primary School in Sandy is a small, friendly one-form entry primary school at the heart of the local community, where pupils are known and cared for as

Leaps & Bounds

Leaps & Bounds place a laser-like focus on commercial advantage to maximise profit from decarbonisation.

Leighton Town Football Club

Leighton Buzzard FC is a not-for-profit football club run by the members for the members. We also have 'The Venue' which is the perfect place in central Leighton Buzzard to hold any Corporate or Private function or party.

Letterbox Cocktails

letterbox-cocktails.com

Letterbox Cocktails - an online store offering the best quality, premium, fresh

Lifeline Rescue Solutions

Providing comprehensive rescue solutions to businesses across the UK, from confined space and working at height, to working in and around water.

Marks and Spencer Plc

British multinational retailer specialising in clothing, beauty products, home products and food

Mattioli Woods

Our principal services include: wealth management, employee benefits, asset management, property fund management and professional adviser services.

Ocean Lynk Limited

Expert Virtual Teams, UK-Based Support. Enjoy flexible engagement options and personalised service delivered by highly skilled professionals.

Pavlova & Cream Ltd

Professional photographer and IDM Qualified social media specialist, passionate about all aspects of the hospitality industry

Purple Panda Marketing

linkedin.com/in/amanda-evans-

including food and event photography.

7006743b/

Bespoke "plug-in" marketing service for businesses & charities, designed to enhance your existing marketing efforts by auditing current activities, guiding meaningful strategy development, and ensuring effective implementation

Queen's Park Academy queensparkacademy.co.uk

The school serves a diverse and international community, and staff pride themselves on helping every child develop as happy, confident, and aspiring learners.

Retail Technology Services Ltd

Ridgeway School

An innovative and inclusive school, where the pupils are at the heart of everything we

Shackleton Primary School

Shackleton Primary School is part of HEART Academies Trust and is a great place to

sianpostsso.ora

Homelessness support - accommodation and outreach. Dedicated to helping people achieve their potential.

Simply Creative Agency Ltd

creation & social media management, Video Production and digital marketing solutions.

Commercial Property Consultants.

Healing and Wellness

Creative Arts Therapist and Clinical Supervisor.

TB2 Mechanical Ltd

tb2mechanical.co.uk

Mechanical contractors, specialising in commercial plumbing and heating services.

The Forge

A unique sales and marketing agency that's sparked by creativity, driven by results and backed by an undying resolve.

The OLLIE Foundation

theolliefoundation.org

prevention and well-being charity on an important mission. One Life Lost is Enough.

The Wood Veneer Hub

The Wood Veneer Hub caters for all your DIY requirements, offering you a one stop shop where you can get your wood veneers, adhesives and all the tools & finishes you might require along the way.

Woburn Safari Park

woburnsafari.co.uk

Award-winning visitor attraction, home to native, exotic and endangered animals. Whilst contributing towards educational & conservation initiatives, Woburn offers a range of ways for businesses to experience the park from team building events to VIP

Women In Business Network

wibn.co.uk/page/Louise Yexle Women in Business groups bring together business women from a wide variety of different professions. Our members range from seasoned networkers to those taking their first steps into the world of networking. All different, but with the same purpose... to support each other

Wooden Hill Federation

Wooden Hill Federation, where learning is at the heart of everything we do! -With our two fantastic schools, Ivel Valley School & College and Ridgeway School, we're dedicated to preparing all of our wonderful pupils for adulthood.

Innovative Networks, Solutions For Tomorrow. From market leading connectivity solutions to cutting-edge modern workplace features and multi-layered security, we are your partner in navigating the ever-evolving business world.

ridgeway.beds.sch.uk

Shortstown Primary

shortstownprimary.co.uk Shortstown Primary School is part of HEART Academies Trust.

Signposts

simplycreative.uk A full-service creative agency, specialising in web design, branding, SEO, content

Stimpsons Eves Limited

stimpsonseves.co.ul An independent, established practice of

Susannah Bradlev: Hollistic

Accredited Reiki Healing Specialist, Play

theforgesales.com

The OLLIE Foundation is a suicide

THE CONSERVATORY

AT THE LUTON HOO WALLED GARDEN

summer parties proms award evenings gala dinners birthdays





















christmas parties

anniversaries

team building

fundraisers

01582 459 216 events@lutonhoo-walledgarden.co.uk