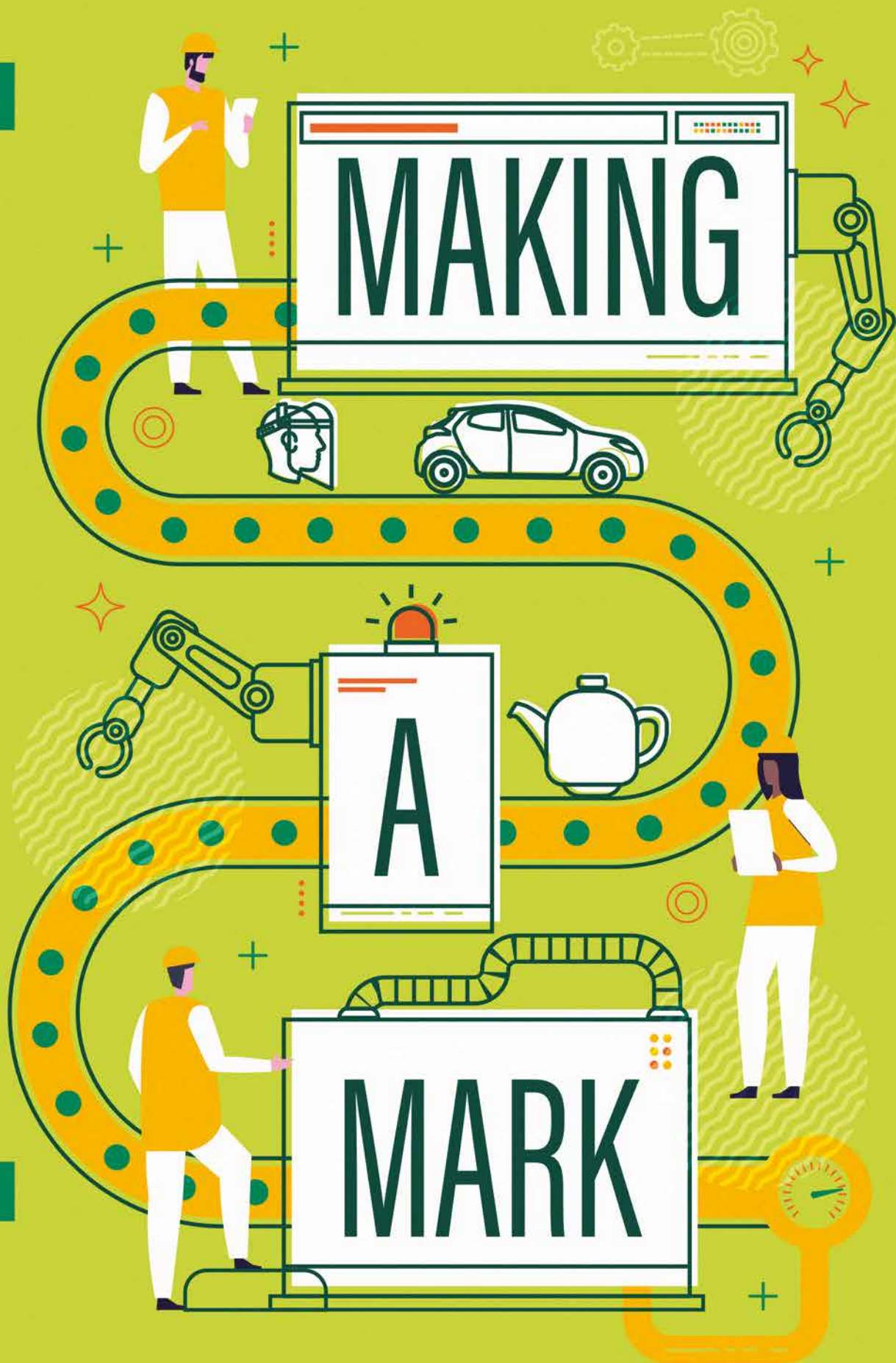


SPRING 2022

Derbyshire



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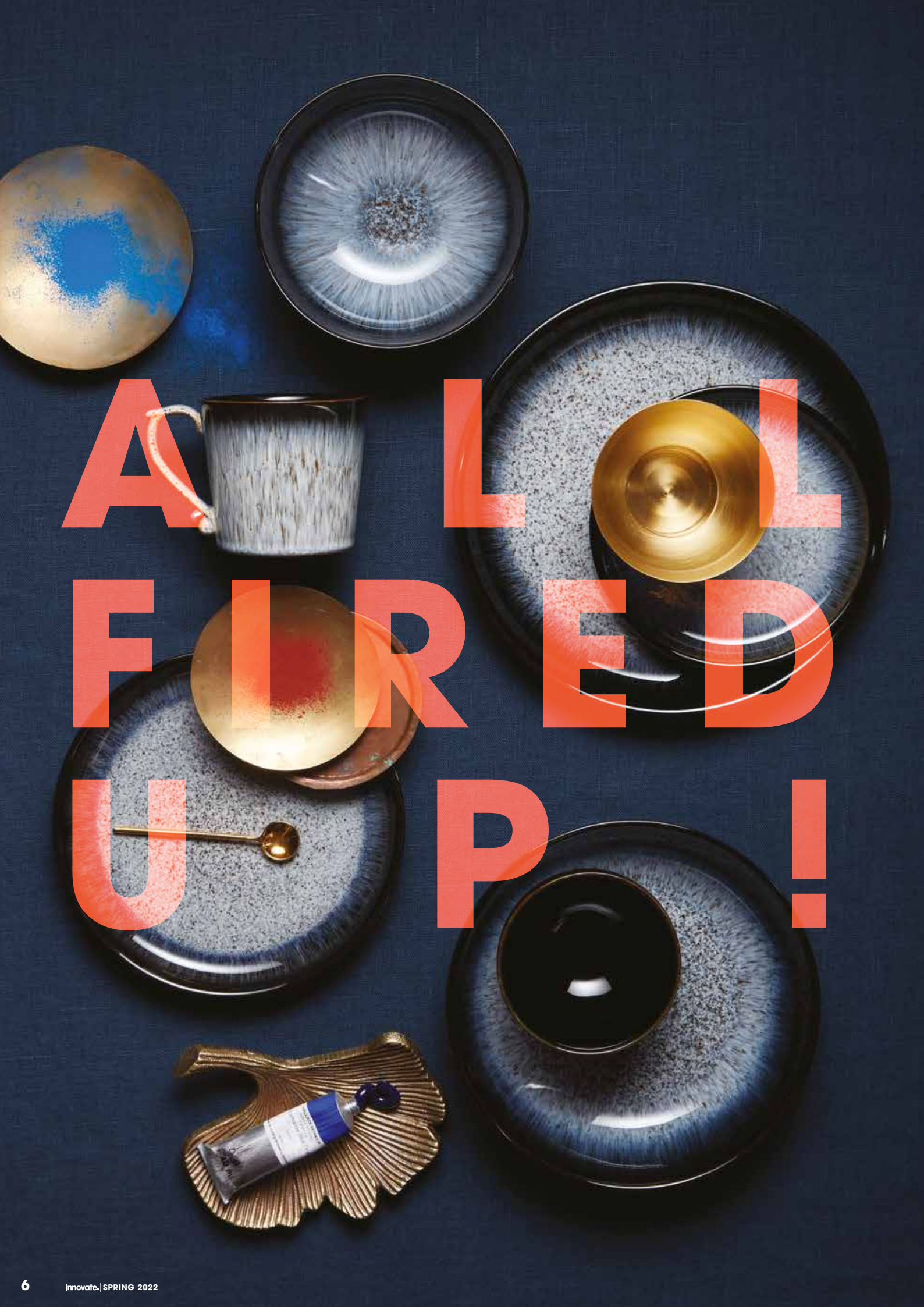


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ALL  
FIRLED  
UP!





## EXCITING NEW INITIATIVES HELP PROPEL CHERISHED POTTERY BRAND TO EVEN GREATER SUCCESS

**Pick up a high-end lifestyle magazine on the streets of Seoul and you're as likely to find an image of a pot made by Denby on the front cover as you are a picture of a Chanel handbag.**

The Derbyshire company is a massive hit in South Korea.

Consumers there love the beauty and quality of the firm's ceramics and homeware.

And they put a particular premium on Denby's heritage - more than 200 years of manufacturing on the same site, using techniques developed over decades as part of a process which ensures each individual piece is honed by more than 20 sets of skilled hands.

Now the company is building on its incredible Far East success by establishing a new operation in China, where an emerging middle class and increased disposable income amongst buyers offer significant opportunities.

It's an exciting time to be involved in Denby.

The business has just opened a new porcelain production unit - "a factory within a factory" - where its workers' skills with stoneware will now also be used to craft fine whiteware items.

It is launching new partnerships with big retailers like Marks & Spencer, Heals and Next in the UK, alongside its strong relationship with John Lewis, and recruiting new staff to keep pace with increasing demand.

And the company's fascinating story is being highlighted on primetime TV.

It's a far cry from 2009, when the firm almost went under before being rescued by its current investors, and its well-earned success is the result of a long-term strategy to position the brand in a higher-end segment, better reflecting the distinction of its products, and to identify new, quality international markets for its goods.

Any accomplishment of this magnitude is always heartening for the local business community but Denby's achievements will have a particular resonance for many.

The company has felt a part of Derbyshire family life for generations and a tour around the factory's museum is like opening your own kitchen cupboards or fondly remembering mealtimes with parents and grandparents.

Denby's global marketing director, Hayley Baddiley, understands the deep connection the business has with its region.

"It's an iconic brand with a ton of stories to tell," she says.

"The company has a real family feel and our people take great pride in working for a business that has so much history.

"I also absolutely love the product! I've got cupboards full of it and it's dotted all around my house, from bathroom to bedroom, as well as the kitchen."

But a Denby pot might never have been thrown if it hadn't been for the building of the Derby to Alfreton turnpike in 1806.

The road workers unearthed an exceptional seam of clay, with qualities of great plasticity that made it especially suitable for throwing and shaping on a potter's wheel.



Businessman William Bourne immediately recognised the opportunity the find presented, initially transporting the precious raw material to his existing operation in Belper, and then, in 1809, opening a pottery adjacent to the seam, utilising nearby sources of water and coal for his kilns and bringing salt for glazing by pack horse from Cheshire.

His son, Joseph, was given the task of running Denby Pottery and by 1830 bottles and jars produced at the factory were being exported all over the world.

Denby's ethos for more than two centuries has been 'Styled by Life' – which means the business observes real life and designs for the needs of the era.

In its early days, the firm's products were salt-glazed kitchen and houseware essentials, such as mixing bowls, baking dishes and hot water bottles, and, importantly, bottles and jugs to hold water, ink, polish, food and medicines.

As glass was considered too expensive for producing everyday items, Joseph's stoneware pottery was in much demand and Denby was recorded as the biggest producer in England by the customs and excise in 1832.

Bottles and jars were the backbone of the business for more than 100 years but as early as 1884, when Joseph's daughter-in-law, Sarah-Elizabeth, was running the pottery, she realised that diversification was required, introducing a coloured glaze, stepping up decorative ware and producing telegraphic insulators to meet the demands of a burgeoning communications industry.

By the 1920s, Denby was still producing kitchen and housewares but also beautifully hand-decorated tube-lined ware, in the form of vases, bowls and tobacco jars.

These ornate pieces ultimately became too expensive to produce and so Denby turned its attention to creating simple shapes, adorned with stunning glazes, which, during firing, underwent a reaction – and striking looks, such as Electric Blue and Orient Ware, became the pottery's signature pieces.

"Although Denby is known for its tableware today, it wasn't until after the Second World War that the pottery produced plates, bowls, teacups and saucers – and generations would now recognise

some of the truly iconic Denby designs, some of which have featured in the V&A, which graced tables through the seventies, eighties, nineties and beyond," says Hayley.

The company's early tableware included the hugely successful Greenwheat collection, with each piece a hand-painted work of art.

In the 1970s, Denby pioneered the oven-to-tableware revolution, which meant that pots used for cooking were designed to be elegant enough to grace the table, and the firm prospered as a fashion for home dinner parties developed amongst the 'Abigail's Party' generation.

In the late 1980s, Denby developed its instantly-recognisable Imperial Blue range – a portfolio so popular that it is still going strong today – and more recently added Halo, which has become its most 'Instagrammed' collection and is well-loved by chefs and consumers.

"The ethos of 'Styled by Life' continues to this day," says Hayley.

"And, these days, consumers want versatile, beautiful and durable ceramics and homeware. They want items that can be used in the kitchen and dining room but also beyond. They want to be able to use them every day but also for special occasions. They need items to be able to go in the oven, dishwasher, freezer and microwave but be beautiful enough to have on display or to give as a gift – and these need to come with all of the sustainability credentials of our made-in-England hand-crafted ranges."

Hayley reveals how a mixture of science and emotion is used to ensure the company's designs hit the right mark with buyers.

"Pottery is not just clay. It's not just something to eat your food off. It's much more than that," she says.

"People develop relationships with their crockery on a deep, subconscious level because it's about the emotions you share around it. It's particularly true with mugs because you put them in your mouth and because of the way you hold or hug them.

"Our team observes the way that people use our products. The 'Styled by Life' approach ensured that the height of some of our mugs was just right to fit under a Nespresso machine and our cereal bowls were the perfect size for two Weetabix.

"Denby has done that since day one – from the brown, utility products that were typical of our early outputs, through the generations since, through the seventies dinner parties, through to today, when we now sell more bowls than plates because people are eating more meals from bowls.

"It's about researching change and designing for the era. That's why we have stood the test of time."

Throughout its 213 years, each of Denby's pots has been made from clay dug from that original seam.

The firm has a clay stockpile 100 metres long, 60 metres wide and 12 metres high that should keep it going for the next 20 or so years but every time excavation takes place on a site along the line of the seam, it sends its experts to assess the quality of what is being unearthed in case it is worth adding to the hoard.

Rich in iron, the clay reacts with the company's famous glazes – the firm has developed 5,000 recipes for its famous finishes and each is a closely-guarded secret – during firing to produce an incredibly durable product.

Denby is so confident of the strength of its pottery that each piece comes with a 10-year guarantee and it is said that you could balance a double-decker bus on top of four of its upturned mugs and they would not break!

Every item goes through an intricate production process where more than 20 sets of hands ensure a perfect finish. Some of the techniques used have spanned the centuries and industry terms such as pugging, jolleying, sponging and fettling evoke a feeling of deep appreciation of crafts honed by generations of workers.

"Many of the processes would still be recognisable to our founders, William and Joseph Bourne, says Hayley.

"They would, though, be perplexed by the CAD and 3D printing in the design department and would be amazed by the size of the cylinders that hold our liquid clay."

Denby is grateful to have an incredibly committed and proud workforce of more than 700 – many of whom have been with the business for decades.

"The workforce at the Denby site is predominantly local, with the





**'POTTERY  
IS NOT  
JUST CLAY.  
IT'S MUCH  
MORE  
THAN THAT'**

HAYLEY BADDILEY, DENBY GLOBAL MARKETING DIRECTOR

majority living within a five-mile radius, although we also have a number of colleagues working in sales, marketing and our retail stores from further afield," reveals Hayley.

"Historically, Denby has been very much a family business and there have been two or three generations of a family employed at Denby Pottery simultaneously. Many employees can trace five generations of their family being employed within the business and some skills have been passed on to younger generations within the same family.

"It is not unusual for long-serving employees to achieve 40-plus and, in some cases, 50 years' service with Denby."

The excellence of those workers' outputs has ensured the company has become a household name and its products have attracted celebrity admirers – from footballers to royal florists.

Denby products also regularly appear on our TV screens and have featured on the Great British Bake Off, in scenes from Emmerdale and in the Queen Vic' – although its Emmerdale role caused the cast and crew a few issues!

"It was part of a big, dramatic scene where characters were having a row and one of our mugs was to be thrown crashing to the floor," recalls Hayley.

"Unfortunately, they had to do it seven times because they couldn't get the mug to break!"

Denby products also feature on the popular Saturday morning TV show hosted by chef James Martin, with whom the company has had a relationship for more than 15 years.

"We originally invited James to open our new Denby Home Store, at Denby Pottery Village, in 2006," remembers Hayley.

"It was clear from this first meeting that James had an affinity with Denby products. He had been using Denby for many years on his TV shows. We were going through a period of development of cookware and valued the input from a professional chef. James had some great ideas for cook and serveware to bring a spark of innovation to challenge traditional designs.

"It was obvious from the offset that James would be a perfect match for the Denby brand and that a collaboration was well worth consideration."

The Denby James Martin Cook and Serve range was launched in 2008 and a number of other lines have been introduced since. The chef continues his association with the company and has been a regular visitor to its Derbyshire home.

Another celebrity that Denby has welcomed through its doors is Gregg Wallace, whose Inside the Factory BBC 2 show recently followed the production of a mug, step by step, as it made its way from clay roll to finished article.

Gregg's mug is one of more than six million pieces that are created at the pottery each year for sale in more than 30 territories worldwide.

Key overseas markets include Scandinavia, Australia, Japan, Russia, France and Germany, plus North America, where the firm has a subsidiary office and a team of 10, but it is in the Far East where Denby has achieved iconic status. Korea alone now accounts for around a third of the group's business.

Hayley describes how the company managed to establish itself as a must-have product with trend-driven Korean consumers.

"We were working with a Korean distributor at a time when well-





01/04/05/06/08: DENBY PRODUCTS HAVE GRACED TABLES FOR GENERATIONS - THEIR STYLED BY LIFE APPROACH ENSURING THEY CAPTURE THE NEEDS OF THE ERA.

02: DENBY POTTERY HAS STOOD ON THE SAME SITE FOR MORE THAN 200 YEARS.

07: JOSEPH BOURNE WAS GIVEN THE TASK OF RUNNING DENBY POTTERY BY HIS FATHER, WILLIAM.

made British products were hitting a real high in Korea. They have a rising middle class, with more disposable income, and they are investing in their homes.

"Suddenly, we were finding ourselves on the front covers of magazines, alongside Chanel handbags. So, we established a subsidiary, with our own team in Seoul in 2016, and leveraged what had become this really important brand in the Korean market."

The team invested heavily in marketing, recruited brand ambassadors and recognised the importance of TV home shopping channels to Korean consumers.

"We became really big on those channels. We use them to tell our brand story and the Koreans love the story and our history. It's an incredible thing. When you walk through Gangnam, Denby is in these amazing displays in the high-end department stores."

The company is now hoping to recreate that success in another important Far East market - China - and set up a nine-strong team in Shanghai in 2020.

But while international markets are important, the company is careful

not to take its eye off its core UK audience. And sales at home have remained strong - even through the pandemic.

"For much of 2020, we all had to stay at home. That became our place of work, of home-schooling and of leisure and, as a result, many people decided to invest in their homes and they looked at their crockery and decided they would like something new," says Hayley.

"They also had more time to browse online. We have a great digital presence. We are a highly visual brand and we invest a lot in asset creation, content, inspiration and the telling of our stories on digital in particular.

"We were there to inspire people and, because we have such a great story to tell, we had zeitgeist. We attracted new audiences, increased our following and achieved great online sales.

"We wondered whether 2020 would be an unusual year but 2021 remained strong and we grew again - and 2022 is also looking good."

Turnover is now more than £50 million - an increase of 25 per cent in the past few years - and the

company is investing to ensure a continuation of that success.

One of its most exciting initiatives is the development of the porcelain production team, which has led to the recruitment of 20 new staff.

"After 200 years of producing stoneware, the move into porcelain is a really big deal," says Hayley.

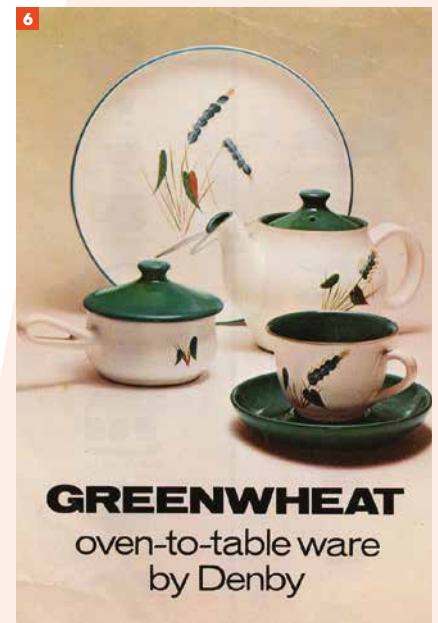
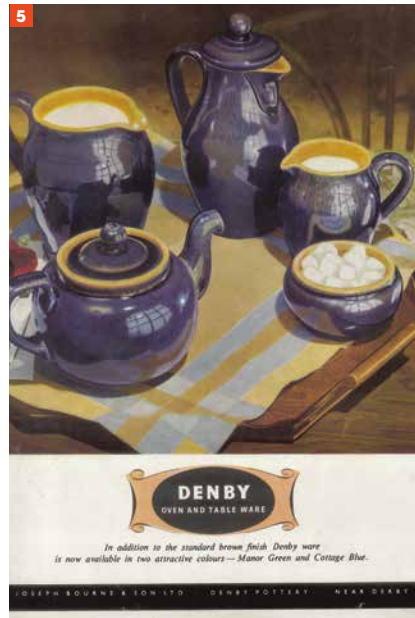
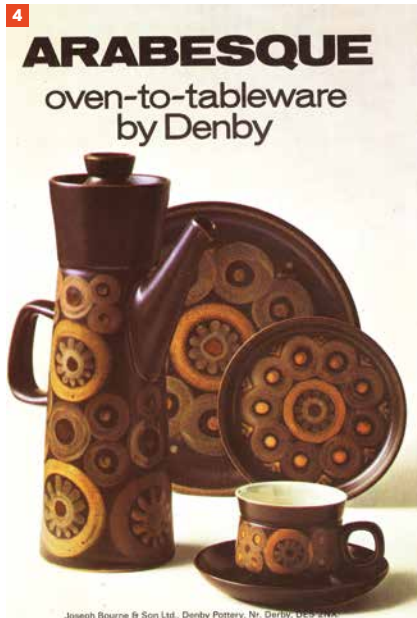
"We did the research and asked our consumers would they want it - and there was an appeal, especially with it coming from Denby, with our reassurances on quality and durability, and with it being made here in England.

"We had the technology and we had the skills and, while there are clearly differences between producing stoneware and whiteware, there is also cross over. What we have come up with is still true to Denby's values. It's hand-crafted. It's durable, won't edge chip and still comes with a 10-year guarantee.

"We have high hopes that it will be a great success."

Denby is also continuing to develop its retail estate, including the popular Denby Shopping Village, which sits alongside the factory.





## DENBY: A 'POTTED' HISTORY

- 1809** A pottery is established at Denby
- 1851** Denby has a stand at the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace and receives a prize medal
- 1884** Denby's first coloured glaze is launched
- 1909** Employees celebrate the centenary of Denby Pottery with afternoon tea and sports
- 1914-18** Denby loses 12 of its craftsmen in the Great War
- 1930s** Denby makes big changes during the great depression and takes out its 22 'beehive' kilns from the fabric of the building
- 1939-45** Denby makes pottery for the war effort, including battery jars, rum ration jars, NAAFI teapots and telegraphic insulators, and produces only essential domestic ware for the home
- 1946** Denby begins production of tableware
- 1970s** Denby spearheads the oven-to-tableware revolution – meaning only one cookware/tableware range is needed in the home
- 2009** Denby celebrates its bicentenary
- 2020** During the pandemic, Denby builds a separate production unit to produce porcelain. It also creates its own company, Denby China Ltd, in Shanghai – taking china to China!







01: HAYLEY BADDILEY ALONGSIDE EXHIBITS THAT TELL THE DENBY STORY SINCE THE FIRM WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1809.

02/03: PRESENTER GREGG WALLACE VISITED THE FACTORY TO FILM THE STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS OF PRODUCING A MUG.

04/05/06/07/08/09: SOME OF THE STEPS IN DENBY'S PRODUCTION PROCESS.

"It has grown hugely in importance as place to shop, eat but, most importantly, experience the brand – take a tour, visit the craft studio, try pottery throwing, look around our museum or attend events," says Hayley.

"Denby Pottery came early to industrial tourism. It was in 1952 that a local women's institute asked if they could come to the pottery and look around and, following this visit, Denby decided to allow a few visits a month as interest in seeing craftspeople at work grew.

"When visitors asked if they could buy pottery after they had seen it made, a temporary counter was set up at the end of each tour. Eventually, in the 1970s, this grew into a shop in the outbuildings and was followed by the full visitor centre and Pottery Village we have today."

For a company that has a 200-year history of studying and reacting to trends, it's no surprise that Denby's radar is keenly tuned to current consumer thinking.

Three areas, in particular, are central to its planning: the changing use of our homes – with more home-working and as a place of leisure and entertainment; conscious consumerism – with an increased customer emphasis on sustainability; and evolving shopping behaviours – with accelerated online purchasing habits.

Denby is developing plans in response to all of these – although it already seems well placed.

Its digital channels are impressive, its audience understanding and engagement enviable and, on sustainability, the business could

justifiably position itself as a polar-opposite to 'fast fashion' – citing as evidence its 10-year product guarantee and achievement of zero process waste to landfill.

Denby's future looks exciting. Hayley certainly thinks so.

"We are well positioned to harness consumer sentiment and changing behaviours and the brand has so much going for it – how it is designed, how it performs and our sustainability credentials," she says.

"Even though the company is more than 200 years old, it still feels fresh and, with renewed impetus and momentum around the business, it feels like a new generation in the UK and overseas is now discovering the joys of what this little Derbyshire pottery has to offer!" 🍷



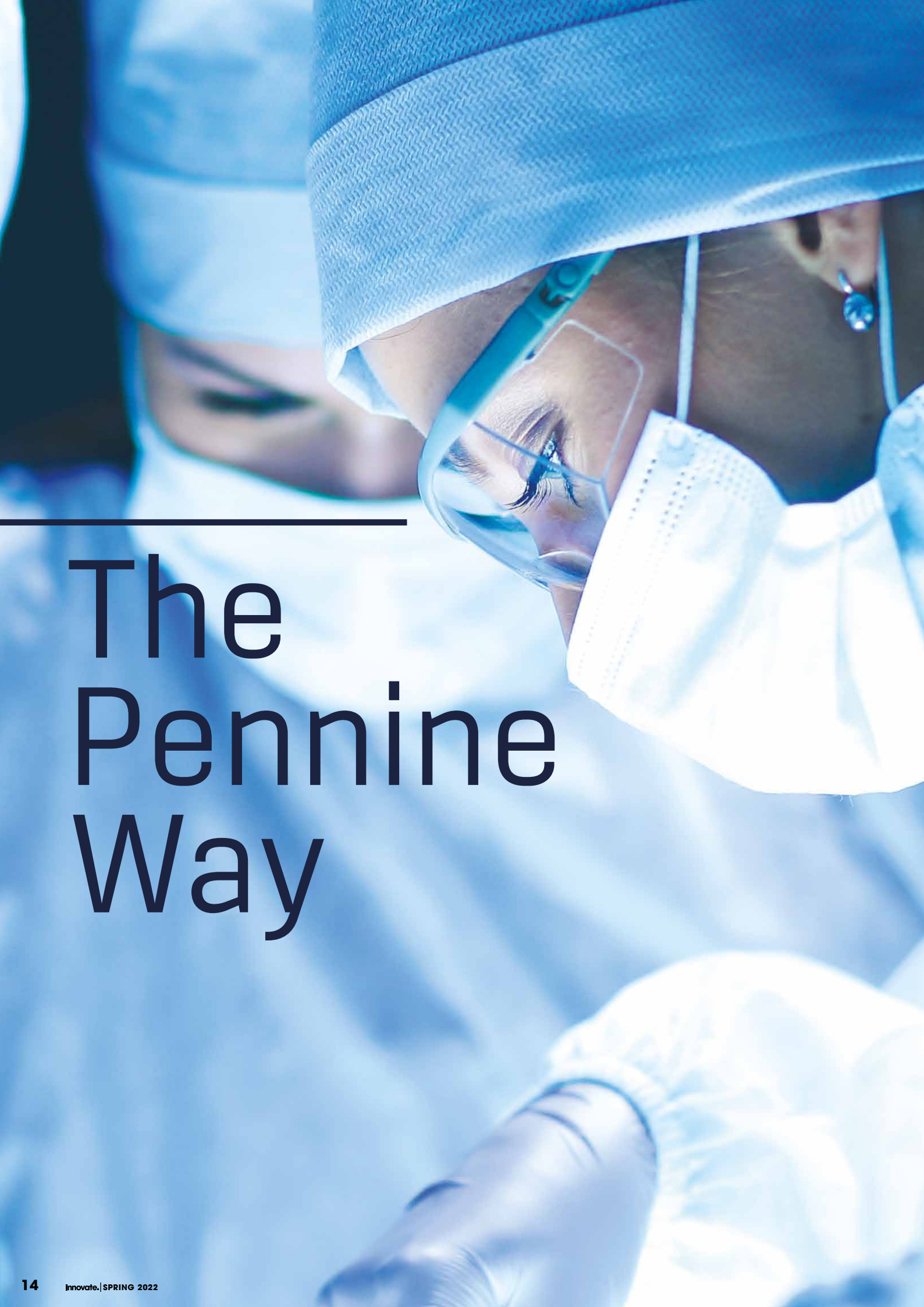


## THE PROCESS FOR MAKING A DENBY HERITAGE MUG:

- Manually load a roll of clay onto a 'Jolley' machine. The mug is made by a mould forming an outer shape and a roller tool forms the inner shape
- Unload the formed mug and any surface imperfections smoothed away using a sponge
- The handle, which has been cast separately, is applied by hand using liquid clay
- The mug is placed into a dryer to remove excess water
- The mug is then removed from the dryer and inspected
- Any imperfections in the surface are smoothed away
- The mug is loaded onto a trolley to be taken for its first firing in the kiln at a temperature of 900°C. Eighteen hours later the mug is taken out of the kiln
- The mug receives its first glaze colour on the inside of the mug
- The mug then goes into the dryer again for the glaze to dry
- The glaze colour for the outside of the mug is achieved by hand-dipping the mug into a vat of glaze
- It is returned to the dryer again for the second glaze to dry
- The mug is then unloaded from the dryer and put onto a trolley. It is inspected again and any excess glaze colour is trimmed off
- The mug is taken for its second firing in the kiln for 18 hours at a temperature of 1,200°C
- It is removed from the kiln and placed on a trolley ready for decoration
- The lithograph (transfer) is applied. The pattern is produced by Denby glazes suspended on a transfer sheet
- The mug is then taken for its third firing, at a temperature of 1,200°C for 18 hours
- The mug is unloaded and receives its final inspection
- The backstamp and labels are applied
- The mug is despatched to the Denby warehouse and placed into stock
- When an order is received for the mug, it is taken from the shelf and packed and despatched to the retailer or consumer.







# The Pennine Way





## PIONEERING HEALTHCARE COMPANY SHAPES UP FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE WHILE STAYING TRUE TO ITS DERBYSHIRE ROOTS

### **Pennine Healthcare's pride in its Derbyshire origins is obvious.**

The medical manufacturing business is named after one of the county's best-known geographical features. Its logo is a graphical representation of those stunning hills.

And, in truth, it is hard to think of a company that better exemplifies Derbyshire's industrial heritage – our proud history of innovation and our reputation for high-quality manufacturing.

Pennine's founder, Ivor Shaw, launched the business after inventing a three-pronged pick-up stick as an aid for his mother.

The idea for the device, which Ivor called The Robot, came after he watched her knitting and noticed how difficult it was for her to pick up a dropped ball of wool because of her severe arthritis.

Placing the prongs of the stick over the fallen item allowed Mrs Shaw to capture and retrieve the errant yarn.

The Robot became the company's first medical device.

And in the 60 or so years since, the firm has continued to pioneer and engineer – and to cement its strong Derbyshire identity.

For a number of those years, the business was led by Ivor's daughter, Elizabeth Fothergill, who is now the county's Lord Lieutenant.

And in 2021, ownership was transferred to an employee trust, in part, to ensure that the firm remains locally based.

Chief executive Graeme Cameron is a Scotsman by birth and has a family home in Leeds but, in the few months since being appointed to lead the Pennine team, he has already understood the big part that Derbyshire plays in the company's DNA.

"The sense of community and pride in Derby and Derbyshire is something I have not really felt elsewhere before," he says.

"There's a passion for the area, for its heritage and a real desire to ensure that innovation and high-quality manufacturing continues in the region for years to come."

Graeme now oversees a business which employs around 200 staff at a purpose-built site covering

100,000 square feet at City Gate, off London Road, in Derby.

The building includes two state-of-the-art clean rooms, ensuring that medical equipment can be manufactured to the highest clinical standards.

Around 50 per cent of Pennine's products are exported to more than 60 countries around the world, with the other half supporting UK healthcare providers, including, of course, the NHS.

Pennine specialises in sterile items for urology, gastroenterology and surgical settings, assembles customised surgical packs for both medical and veterinary procedures, buys and sells medical devices, surgical supplies and personal protective equipment and provides contract manufacturing capacity for other companies.

And it is recognised as a leader in its field, at home and abroad, scooping major industry accolades and attracting VIP visits from such luminaries as The Princess Royal and Duke of Kent.

It's a long way from Ivor Shaw's early endeavours, tucked away behind an old garage in Abbey Street.





01/02: CHIEF EXECUTIVE GRAEME CAMERON OVERSEEING OPERATIONS AT PENNINE'S HQ IN DERBY.



But the founder would no doubt be happy that the principles he held so dear remain at the heart of Pennine's thinking.

"Ivor was very entrepreneurial and innovative. After coming up with his invention to help his mother, he started looking at other medical technologies and how the company could benefit life," says Graeme.

"That commitment remains fundamental to us and is a core part of our values today. What we have seen come out of workshops we have done with the team over the past six months is a real feeling for protection of life and saving life.

"Another thing is community – there is a real sense of community in Derby and the people at Pennine have a real passion for that community

"That's where we are a bit different from our peers in the industry. A lot of them are big, multi-national manufacturers. We feel we have a really special part to play by having Derby and the community of Derby at the heart of what we do in developing medical technology that can help protect and improve people's lives."

Another of Ivor's legacies is the firm's continued commitment to innovation.

Its determination to constantly look for ways to help healthcare providers do their jobs more effectively led the company to develop customised, single-use medical packs, which give hospital and veterinary teams all the sterile equipment they require to carry out individual procedures.

These were first introduced in the 1990s and have formed a substantial part of the business ever since.

"We are very much leaders in theatre devices which are really core to operations happening," says Graeme.

"We are leading the way on breathing technology, airway management technology, suction devices and procedure packs. We were the first people to bring procedure packs to the UK market and they make the whole process more efficient and a lot better experience for the clinicians.

"That kind of innovation has led the way for the company over the years, along with our proud heritage of manufacturing here in Derby," he adds.

"That's how it remains – and I'd almost say that we are moving even more that way now because of what we have seen over the past 24 months, with global supply chains really disrupted.

"A lot of the medical technology and equipment you will see in the UK is brought in from other parts of the world but the lead time can be many, many months and the cost has really increased because of the logistics of bringing them in and increased labour charges.

"So, what we are more and more thinking is how we can bring more manufacturing to the UK and to Derby, the home of manufacturing within the country, which means the city is ideally placed to be a key partner for the NHS and for international partners, who really appreciate UK manufacturing.

"Of course, we already manufacture our own products here in Derby but we also do a lot of business-to-business work with other manufacturers. If they want to innovate and develop new products, we help design them and bring them to market."

It's clear that despite its status as a major global health tech player, local focus really does remain of



utmost importance to the Pennine team – and that was a key driver of Pennine’s decision to move ownership of the business to an employee trust last year.

“Our CEO for many years, Liz Fothergill, is so passionate about the region and she was determined that we would stay here and she was determined that we would keep manufacturing and innovation in Derby,” says Graeme.

“She really impressed upon us that she wanted the organisation to remain in Derby and remain in control of its own future. The employee ownership trust is very important to that.

“Clearly, we could have sold it to multi-nationals, who wanted to look at acquiring this business, but when all options were put on the table, the previous owners really felt that employee ownership gave the organisation a lot more control, that we could remain based here and that the employees could be involved in that decision to stay within the community of Derby.”

The move to trust ownership has placed staff at the heart of decision making and, through a profit-share scheme, they also now have a direct financial stake in the success of the business.

“We have done a number of core things since we became employee owned,” says Graeme.

“We recently set up a colleague council, which we call We Matter. There are 18 colleagues on the council. None of them are managers. And we really set this up to bring ideas out of the business about how we could improve and develop.

“We’ve also have our cultural champions club, so colleagues can start setting the pace of how they see the culture of the organisation in the future.

“We have a trustee board, which is chaired by Liz, and on that board will be two employees of the organisation as well, so, right at the top, we will have colleague voices in the decision making and this gives empowerment and ownership rather than it just being a superficial approach to how we are structured.

“People can benefit every year as well through a profit share, so there is emotional and financial benefit if we are run in a prudent and successful way.”

Guiding operations is a company purpose and clear set of values and behaviours – The Pennine Way – that have been developed by the team over the past few months. Graeme is proud of the results of that process.

“The Pennine Way is our guiding star,” he says.

“We built it as an organisation. We like it and it’s important that we never lose sight of it. It’s the way we operate. It allows us to check our behaviour. It allows us to look at our past and ask, ‘Have we behaved in that way?’ And, very importantly to us, we set this up so every single person knew why we were here, what we stand for and they could see if we are making the right decisions?”

**OUR CEO FOR  
MANY YEARS,  
LIZ FOTHERGILL,  
IS SO PASSIONATE  
ABOUT THE  
REGION AND WAS  
DETERMINED THAT  
WE WOULD STAY  
HERE AND KEEP  
MANUFACTURING  
AND INNOVATION  
IN DERBY.**

“We have our values – continuous improvement, accountability and honesty – but what’s really important to me is the behaviours under these. The Pennine Way articulates how we want to behave as an organisation, ensuring we deliver on our core purpose of protecting life, empowering people and enriching communities.

“We want to supply our customers with the best quality medical devices at a fair price but we can only do this through our people. We can’t serve our customers unless we look after our colleagues.

“It’s also ensuring we service the communities of Derby and leave a positive environment for our children in the future.”

The business is so determined to ensure this new code is ‘lived’ by the team, that it has appointed a new head of people and culture to oversee the process.

There’s certainly a buzz in the corridors at Pennine HQ.

The team is investing in the Derby site, taking on more staff and even looking to launch an apprenticeship scheme to bring more young people into the sector.

But global events over the past two years have provided plenty of difficulties for the firm to overcome.

“Brexit has been a pretty big challenge,” reveals Graeme.

“We have found challenges with customs and customs processes, which has been very frustrating.

“Our biggest challenge is with global logistics – getting products to customers and getting products here has been a big issue. It costs a lot more money. Compounding that, plastics have gone up in price, electricity has gone up in price and we have also found, with Brexit, that you have to fight harder to get people to work here.

“We are expanding our workforce at the moment but the big problem is sourcing the people to do the work for us. It’s why employee ownership helps. It attracts more people because they have skin in the game and, I think, that’s why we also have better retention than some other businesses because it’s really baked in that people want the business to achieve.”

And then there’s the Covid pandemic!

In early 2020, Pennine had to reconfigure its business over a matter of weeks – moving away from producing kit to carry out routine operations, which were put on hold, and ramping up production and sourcing of equipment needed to help the NHS deal with the coronavirus emergency.

Pennine’s output of oxygen tubing, for example, went from 3km produced in a month pre-pandemic to 20km a month at the height of the crisis.

Pennine also set up a new operation, ARMA Health, to supply medical grade PPE to consumers outside of the healthcare sector.

“The pandemic was a terrible event but we were asked by our customers to help provide PPE and we scaled up effectively to help support them,” Graeme recalls.

“We really felt that we did our bit in terms of helping our customers and that gives us a lot of pride.

“It was a huge logistical challenge. We did deal in some PPE previously





01/02/03: PENNINE'S 100,000 SQUARE FEET OF OFFICES AT CITY GATE IN DERBY ARE HOME TO AROUND 200 STAFF.

04: CHIEF EXECUTIVE GRAEME CAMERON UNDERSTANDS HOW IMPORTANT THE REGION IS TO THE COMPANY'S DNA.

but not on the scale that was required for Covid. We put together a taskforce and worked night and day with our international partners to bring products into the UK that were of the highest quality so that our NHS workers could be protected. It was a huge piece of work.

"NHS supply chain were a very good partner but there was a lot of heavy lifting, pulling in as many favours as we could to get products into the UK to help the NHS.

"We had to reconfigure our plant from producing products that were ordinarily used day to day but were not required because of the temporary halt on elective surgeries. We had to transfer the people, space and capacity."

While the pandemic has clearly taken a dreadful toll on individuals and communities, Graeme is hopeful that some positives may yet emerge – including inspiring more people to work in the health sector.

"Hopefully it has shown the importance of healthcare and medical supplies. We are now saying to people, come and join

us because we do have a higher purpose. We are selling something that is really positive for patients, the NHS and for international partners. You can be part of something and help people live better lives."

He also hopes it will force the Government to rethink supply chains, creating more opportunities for UK manufacturing of essential items.

"We have already seen that the British government wants to build resilience into supply chains and medical technology is recognised as an area that should be a priority for resilience," Graeme says.

"Traditionally, to save money, you have found that the NHS has bought in from the Far East but now we have started to see the big challenges, as we saw with PPE, in getting those products on time to the NHS and to patients.

"There is no doubt that the Government has recognised this but we have to have open and honest conversations about how we are going to fund it and how you can work in partnership with the industry to invest in automation and domestic manufacturing.

"The Government does have a social value measure built into tenders and, from April 1st, the NHS will have to have social value as a ten per cent part of any tender. That involves supporting sustainability and communities. It's about seeing not just the short-term pounds and pence but the longer-term impact on local communities by domestically manufacturing here in Derbyshire and the UK.

"I was on a Westminster call a short while ago and all the narrative was about needing to do more in the UK. We have to learn our lessons from the last 24 months."

Although Pennine's Covid reaction was driven by its core philosophy of helping to protect life, its efforts also resulted in a positive increase in turnover.

This injection helped facilitate the transfer in ownership to the firm's employees and is allowing further investment into the business's future.

"We'll never have a year like that again for a long time but it gives us the opportunity to think about where we need to invest for the future - to really think about this site, our employees and, most



importantly, it gave us the chance to transfer the business into the employee-owned trust," Graeme says.

That future thinking also includes a continuing focus on sustainability – in the widest sense.

"We are doing a lot of work on how we use less electricity, less water, less plastic and less packaging. We are also moving to electric-only company vehicles," Graeme says.

"But sustainability is not just about the environment - it's about helping the community as well, creating social value. We do a lot of charity initiatives and we're trying to support young people into work in our sector. We have a real passion for healthcare and we think it's a great career for young people across our business."

Pennine's charity commitment includes becoming a sponsor of the Derbyshire Institute of Sport and donating ten per cent of ARMA's first-year sales to NHS charities.

"It's the right thing to do," says Graeme.

"We are in the business of supporting life so how, by

extension, can we support the communities that we live in? This is just the start. We want to do a lot more. It's not just good business practice but it's why we are here as an organisation. We are employee owned and, for me, that means there's a responsibility to give back."

Graeme is clearly relishing his new role and reveals how, after a long career in health tech, the goals of the Pennine business and its move to employee ownership helped tempt him to make the move to Derby.

"I'm passionate about healthcare. I love medical technology," he says.

"I chair the Association of British Healthcare Industries commercial policy group, looking at how we can help technology improve the life of patients.

"I want Pennine to be the pride of Derby and I want us to be an exemplar in the UK for manufacturing and medical technology.

"The best thing about my time here so far has been the people. My colleagues have been great and they really do want to make a difference."

Graeme passionately believes that the Pennine business – and health tech more generally – has a bright future in Derbyshire.

"Life sciences is worth about £27 billion to the UK and employs 252,000 people. We can do more in Derbyshire to develop that. You have to remember that Florence Nightingale lived here! It's not just engineering but healthcare has a real history within the county," he says.

"As for our future, we are looking more and more at how we develop our manufacturing capacity on site, how we further develop our manufacturing solutions partnerships with other companies and at developing and innovating technologies. That might be working with partners who have technology that we could help scale.

"We have a great brand, that's well known, and we have a great site in a great place like Derby. That's the foundation we have, along with employee ownership."

It seems that Derbyshire innovation and manufacturing have a committed champion while ever Graeme and the team keep doing things the Pennine way. **1**





RICHARD KENWORTHY INSPECTS ONE OF THE BURNASTON MODELS.

# Drivers of change

**RICHARD KENWORTHY,  
MD OF TOYOTA MOTOR  
MANUFACTURING UK,  
DESCRIBES HOW THE COMPANY  
IS HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE  
AUTOMOTIVE LANDSCAPE**

**Q:** You were appointed to your role just over a year ago, in the midst of a pandemic and the wake of Brexit. How challenging have the past 12 months been and how are things now?

**A:** There have been challenges this year. We had disruption at the start of the year as the new arrangements after Brexit bedded in and, obviously, the pandemic continued in waves and we, additionally, had disruption from suppliers effected by Covid or chip shortages - but the team here is fantastic.

There was a huge amount of learning taken from the first Covid wave last year, so all credit to my predecessor, Jim Crosbie, who is now managing Toyota's Yaris plant in Northern France, and the whole Burnaston team.

Each challenge has been taken on and we have managed to finish the year on plan - despite everything. It is testament to all the team members here and in our engine plant, in Deeside, in the way that TMUK has been able to manage the different situations and the unique set of challenges that we have had to face. The solid building blocks of how Toyota works and the dedication of our members have shown true resilience.

**Q:** You have worked in various roles at Toyota for three decades. What is it about the company - and the industry - that has encouraged such loyalty?

**A:** To start with, I am proud to work for Toyota because of its philosophy and values. The company truly has respect for people and society. I see this continuously. This also transfers to the working environment. It is inspiring to work with people who are continuously improving what we make and how we do things. These are things I have never experienced elsewhere.

I have also been very fortunate to work with great people everywhere I have worked within Toyota. There have been challenges and, occasionally, hard times, but there was always support from all parts of the company.

Somebody once told me: "You know when you have a problem in Toyota because everyone is there to help". That's true. Toyota's aim is to ensure that members develop and can experience a number of different areas of the business to continually develop their skills but help is there when you need it.

I have been able to grow both professionally and personally and it is these founding principles which have encouraged me to maintain and continue my career with Toyota.

**Q:** Toyota has made a huge contribution to Derbyshire life and the region's economy since the first car rolled off the production line at Burnaston 30 years ago. What would the company consider its greatest achievements in that time?

**A:** The people.

We have seen many vehicles developed and produced here over those 30 years - more than 4.5 million and counting - and we are now looking into additional activities, such as greater vehicle customisation and vehicle remanufacturing in our Business Revenue Centre (BRC) that supports the complete lifecycle of the vehicle; a goal that is in line with our carbon neutrality objectives.

But it is the opportunity that Toyota has given to the people of the region that I feel is its greatest contribution. We have seen members start as apprentices on the production line and go on to develop their careers around the world - the possibilities truly are wide ranging, and I feel that this is our greatest achievement.

**Q:** Will you be celebrating the plant's 30th anniversary later this year - and how do you think the next 30 years looks for the business locally?

**A:** Thirty years is certainly a milestone and needs to be acknowledged as a testament to the members that have been with us throughout this journey.

Did you know we have 19 members who have been with us since the start and are still with us today?

We are currently in the process of planning our celebratory activities - obviously taking into consideration whatever the requirements will be at that time, but we intend to make it a memorable event.

As for the next 30 years; we have a time capsule in our reception that is to be opened in 2090, so we do intend on being here for the long game, but over the coming years we can expect to see a radical transformation in the types of vehicles and mobility solutions that will be required going forward.



**Q:** You have announced an upgrade on the Corolla model produced at Burnaston for 2022. How excited are you about the new vehicle and what should customers expect?

**A:** The Corolla is a great car and this range of vehicles has been a fantastic sales success as the top seller in Europe in 2021, with over 200k sales - the majority of those vehicles coming from Burnaston.

I don't want to reveal too many of the upgrades - you'll have to wait for the Sales Press Release to discover those - other than it builds on this success and, having listened to customer comments and recommendations, takes into consideration a number of these improvements.

**Q:** Toyota has played a leading role in the development of cleaner technologies to protect the environment during the manufacturing process and over the entire lifecycle of vehicles. Tell us more about the company's commitments in this area.

**A:** As a company, the environment is at the heart of everything we do and has been for many years. Our first environmental committee was set up in 1963 and since then we have adopted numerous initiatives to help protect the environment and its precious resources.

A major milestone was the creation of our Environmental Challenge 2050, set up in 2015.

This identified six key areas that we focus on on a daily basis to try to minimise our impact, carbon footprint, energy use, waste levels, water use and biodiversity.

This is not an easy task and we don't have all the answers yet but we are making significant improvements over time.

Our kaizen (continuous improvement) can deliver considerable gains. For example, we don't use so many powered conveyors anymore. The systems are almost Heath Robinson. Parts and boxes now move around on gravity elevators, using their own weight to supply the energy and return by springs and rope pulleys.

It's ideas like these that come, in the main, from our team members that help to continually reduce our energy use and, consequently, our emissions. Our carbon footprint has reduced by 70 per cent in the last seven years through a mixture of usage reduction and green sources.

We have increased biodiversity on our site, with links to Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, and the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. We will make the final reductions by 2030 so Burnaston will be carbon neutral by adopting new technologies to our manufacturing processes.

**Q:** The company has been a pioneer in hybrid, electric, battery and hydrogen technology to provide greener driving options. What major developments should motorists expect to see over the remainder of this decade - and beyond?

**A:** Our roadmap for sustainable mobility has been displayed for more than 25 years. It shows the evolution of various low-emission technologies, from battery to hybrid to hydrogen. Each has a place depending on the needs of the customer and their situation.





01/02/03/04: TOYOTA TEAM MEMBERS HARD AT WORK WITHIN THE BURNASTON PLANT.

From the beginning we saw the hybrid model as a foundation that can be built upon to develop a variety of other options - be that pure battery electric, plug-in hybrid or hydrogen fuel cell.

Toyota has continually had the lowest fleet carbon emissions of any major car company in Europe for many years. Carbon is the enemy and our solutions must, in the final analysis, reduce society's carbon footprint.

You will see many more pure electric vehicles, as was recently announced by Akio Toyoda, so you can expect to see some exciting models coming off production lines around the world over the coming years.

**Q:** Toyota is evolving from motor manufacturer to mobility service provider, through its Kinto brand. Describe the philosophy behind this development and what its impacts might be for the travelling public.

**A:** We have described the current automotive landscape as a once in a hundred-year transformation. Shifts from ownership to usership, new forms of mobility, changes in the way we live and work are all contributing to this automotive "revolution".

Kinto has been developed to provide users with flexibility in line

with their mobility needs. With this brand, we are aiming to increase mobility services, in addition to the traditional private and fleet vehicle sales. This builds on a four pillar strategy: -

- It uses a distinct, dedicated brand to appeal to new categories of mobility users, from individuals to corporate clients and cities.
- We aim to increase our share of the full-service leasing market, which provides multi-brand, all-in-one vehicle and services offers to corporate and individual customers.
- Using the power of data and vehicle connectivity, we will develop and launch services such as car sharing, car-pooling and subscription services where viable.
- And finally, this acts as a stepping-stone to integrate future advances in automated driving and to market-test automated mobility-as-a-service transport, for example using the e-Palette concept currently under global development.

The recent launch with Derby City Council and the University of Derby will act as a live lab to test some of these concepts and ideas and we are incredibly grateful to the involved representatives in giving Toyota this opportunity to support

their strategy for modal shift within the city.

**Q:** Toyota has been a key supporter of the East Midlands Freeport - a scheme which will create thousands of jobs across three sites and accelerate the region's commitment to decarbonisation. One of the sites, the East Midlands Intermodal Park, is next to your plant at Burnaston and is earmarked as a potential centre for hydrogen production, storage and use. How will the company be involved in this initiative moving forward?

**A:** We have been supportive of the Freeport bid from the beginning. We see it as a great opportunity to develop the region, upskill the workforce and transform some of the sites into thriving centres of economic activity.

That said, this should not be done without taking into consideration the environmental impacts that increased development can have.

Throughout our discussions with the Freeport board and, in line with the city and county's sustainable initiatives, we have clearly put hydrogen development and use on the map.

The East Midlands has an incredible opportunity to increase the use of hydrogen - be that in

building use or for transport. We see opportunities not only for our own plant, in terms of possible modal shift from transporting our products by road onto trains, but throughout the wider Freeport landscape. Taking advantage of this unique central location, we envisage the adoption of sustainable technologies, for example in the world of logistics, that could potentially see a considerable reduction in emissions.

**Q:** Toyota has helped Derbyshire continue to build its proud heritage as a capital of innovation and centre for high-value engineering. How would you seek to encourage the engineers of tomorrow that the mobility sector – and Toyota in particular – would be good career options?

**A:** Our academy has been a key player in developing not only the skills of individuals for our own site but also for a variety of companies in different sectors throughout the East Midlands.

As mentioned, we expect to see considerable change in the automotive and mobility landscape over the coming years and, as such, it is an incredibly exciting time to be involved and develop those new technologies.

Solutions that are cleaner for the environment, make our lives easier and support the future of mobility for all users is our goal and we would hope that engineers not only from the East Midlands but also from the UK and potentially around the world would see Toyota and Derbyshire as a fantastic place to live and work.

**Q:** You have a history of supporting education locally and recently helped promote the successful bid to establish an East Midlands Institute of Technology, which will equip students with skills to power the digital and data-driven economies. Why do you think this project is so important?

**A:** Continually evolving a skill base is incredibly important if the East Midlands and UK plc as a whole are to be seen and respected as places to develop and build the technologies that are required today and in the future.

At Toyota, we see investment in people as a key driver that helps to motivate people and help them develop, but also demonstrates significant benefits for the business.

Building on the foundations that the partner academic

organisations, as well as other major local employers, have put in place will enable us to improve collaboration and take the skills requirement that is necessary, particularly in the manufacturing industry with the advent of Industry 4.0 and greater digitalisation, to the next level.

**Q:** Returning to the county's history of innovation, how pleased were you that a Burnaston-built vehicle was chosen to be a spectacular exhibit in Derby's stunning new Museum of Making?

**A:** It was truly a great honour not only for Toyota but for all the members here to have one of our vehicles chosen as a display in the museum.

It demonstrates the sense of pride we all take in producing vehicles here in a region that has such a history of manufacturing excellence.

The exhibit is accompanied by a number of stories from our members that show the human side of our business. The museum is a great asset for the city and the region and has been brilliantly curated in the way that it not only has resurrected a building with such a history but in the way the story of 'making' is told, with the emphasis being on encouraging people to get involved. We'd like to take this opportunity to, once again, thank and congratulate all those that were involved.

**Q:** Toyota has been a major supporter of local charities during its 30 years in Derbyshire. The Toyota Manufacturing UK Charitable Trust has distributed more than £7 million to good causes during that time. Why is the company so committed to this kind of activity?

**A:** Wherever Toyota is present in the world, our aim is to make a meaningful contribution to society. The creation of the Charitable Trust has allowed us to support many national and local charities with donations of money, food, toys and games, through to providing critical mobility.

This is the tireless work of a dedicated number of members here in Burnaston and also in our engine plant in Deeside, to continually promote and find ways to support our local communities.

This can even extend to volunteering and, most recently, a number of our Lean Manufacturing experts have been on hand to

support vaccine roll-out at a local medical facility during the pandemic.

The pandemic had a major impact on our ability to raise funds but once again, through innovative thinking by our members, events that used to take place in person went virtual. We have, therefore, still been able to be in a position to support our local communities with a number of grants over the coming weeks - we will be making over 40 donations to charities and good causes local to both Burnaston and Deeside, each ranging from £1,500 to £5,000.

**Q:** The pace of change within your sector is extremely challenging but, presumably, is also tremendously exciting. What are you looking forward to most as you continue to guide Toyota Motor Manufacturing UK into the future?

**A:** You are right and I think we can all expect to see some exciting developments in terms of mobility solutions and products in the coming years.

However, I still come back to our members. I am encouraged to see how our teams develop and grow over time. The challenges that we have all faced over the past couple of years have been incredibly testing for everyone and I am incredibly proud of the way our members have faced these challenges, proposed ideas and solutions and helped us to continue to grow as a company – my thanks go out to them all. I want to ensure that, during my time as Managing Director, we can support everyone that works or will work here, not only professionally but also personally. Work should be a place that you can feel valued and secure and, through the work that our D&I teams have been doing, we have focussed on this as a priority.

Inclusion and diversity is one area that we address but I also want to ensure that mental health, as well as physical health, are treated equally and that we can build on a mutual culture of trust and respect present within the business.

Our employees are the greatest credit to our company, and we want to ensure that their health, safety and wellbeing are paramount when they come through our doors each day. 📌





## ALSTOM JOINT VENTURE LANDS £2BN HS2 CONTRACT

A joint venture involving Derby train-maker Alstom has landed a £2 billion contract to deliver the new fleet of trains for HS2.

The firm, along with fellow train-builder Hitachi Rail, has been awarded the deal by HS2 Ltd to design, build and maintain 54 state-of-the-art high-speed trains, which will operate on the new line between London, the West Midlands and Crewe.

The work to build the trains will be shared between Alstom's factory in Litchurch Lane, Derby, and Hitachi's facility in County Durham.

Nick Crossfield, Alstom's managing director for the UK and Ireland, said: "HS2 is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform Britain by building a sustainable transport system fit for the 21st Century.

"I am delighted that Alstom's joint venture with Hitachi Rail has been selected to develop, build and maintain in Britain the next generation of high-speed trains."

The awarding of the contract to Alstom and Hitachi Rail has been welcomed by leading figures in Derby.

Councillor Chris Poulter, leader of Derby City Council, said: "We are really delighted with this news and congratulate the whole team at Alstom - and their partners at Hitachi - on winning this £2 billion contract.

"We have always had an active and supportive relationship with the company and will work with them to ensure they can deliver the new assembly line and have the local skills and supply chain to underpin this whenever possible.

"Derby has been synonymous with the rail industry since its inception and this announcement will greatly enhance our bid to secure the headquarters of Great British Rail for the city."

John Forkin, managing director of Marketing Derby, said: "This is fantastic, simply brilliant, news for Derby and we congratulate the team at Alstom and partners in winning the £2 billion bid to build the HS2 trains.

"It's a massive vote of confidence in the technology and workforce and will provide a positive platform for greater

investment in the local rail supply chain, as well as in the wider Derby economy."

A study commissioned by the joint venture estimates that the award could generate benefits of £157 million per year across the UK and support 2,500 jobs, including opportunities for apprenticeships and graduates.

Capable of speeds of up to 225 mph, the fully electric trains will also run on the existing rail network to places such as Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester and the northwest.

Building on the latest technology from the Japanese Shinkansen 'bullet train' and European high-speed network, they will be some of the fastest, quietest and most energy efficient high-speed trains operating anywhere in the world.

They will be designed to operate seamlessly between HS2 and the existing rail network.

Each train will be around 200 metres long, with the option to couple two units together to create a 400-metre-long train with up to 1,100 seats.

### NEW TRAIN FLEET SUPPORTS LOCAL SUPPLY CHAIN JOBS

East Midlands Railway is supporting jobs in the local supply chain after the awarding of contracts linked to manufacturing its new train fleet.

Hitachi Rail is currently building the new Aurora trains for the Derby-based train operator - and is using some local firms for the project.

Among them is Mors Smitt, which manufactures automatic warning systems, train protection and warning systems and automatic power control systems, at its factory in Burton.

The contract with EMR and Hitachi Rail helps supports Mors Smitt and the 65 employees it has across the Midlands.

The TPWS safety systems it produces assists the driver in the safe operation of the train, providing them with information about the upcoming signal status and applying the train's emergency brake if the train passes a restricted signal.

The APC safety system ensures the train is not drawing power from the overhead line when it passes through a neutral section - preventing electrical arcing that can damage the overhead line and the train.

Another Midlands company, Ripley's Forbo Flooring Systems, was also chosen to supply parts for the Aurora fleet.



## NUCLEAR POWER STATION BUSINESS GETS £85M BOOST FROM QATARI INVESTMENT

A new business set up by Rolls-Royce to develop a new generation of mini-nuclear power stations has received an £85 million boost from the State of Qatar.

The emirate's sovereign wealth fund - the Qatar Investment Authority - has signed a deal with the engineering giant to take a ten per cent stake in the Rolls-Royce Small Modular Reactor business.

Rolls-Royce, which has its civil aerospace and defence divisions in Derby, wants the subsidiary to play a big part in the UK's net zero agenda.

Rolls-Royce chief executive Warren East said: "I am tremendously pleased that we have further strengthened our relationship with Qatar, through QIA's investment in the Rolls-Royce SMR business.

"We have successfully raised the capital we need to establish Rolls-Royce SMR and it is encouraging to confirm that the business is now set up to succeed."

Rolls-Royce has said that a single mini power station could occupy around a tenth of the size of a conventional nuclear plant and generate enough power for around one million homes.

Its plans could create 40,000 UK jobs when fully operational by 2050 and generate £52 billion in economic benefit.

In December, Rolls-Royce announced it had agreed much of the funding to develop the low cost, low carbon, reactor - with that money coming from the Rolls-Royce parent group, BNF Resources UK and Exelon Generation.

The consortium behind the plans - which includes Laing O'Rourke, the National Nuclear Laboratory and the Nuclear AMRC - has now secured a total of £490 million through commercial equity and through UK Research and Innovation grant funding.

It has started identifying sites for factories to make the modules for on-site assembly of the plants, with up to 80 per cent of the components made in factories in the Midlands and North of England.

Reacting to the investment from Qatar, Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said: "This investment is a clear vote of confidence in the UK's global leadership in nuclear innovation and follows the £210 million of government investment in the development in small modular reactors.

"It represents a huge step forward in our plan to deploy more home-grown, affordable, clean energy - ensuring greater energy independence for the UK, highly skilled jobs and bringing cheaper, cleaner electricity to people's homes."

## TEAM TURNS TO ROBOTICS TO TACKLE NUCLEAR CHALLENGES

Nuclear AMRC Midlands has taken delivery of an unmanned ground vehicle to help tackle a range of nuclear industry challenges.

The Derby-based team has bought the piece of equipment called a Husky, a robot produced by Clearpath Robotics in the US.

In recent years, unmanned ground vehicles, or UGVs, have been deployed in a variety of civilian, industrial and military applications, to work in hazardous or unpleasant conditions, or carry out tasks which are too risky, difficult or dull for humans.

But according to Nuclear AMRC, so far, they have not been widely used in the nuclear sector.

The project, funded by the High Value Manufacturing Catapult, aims to develop an intelligent control and guidance system for unmanned logistics vehicles, based on proven artificial intelligence concepts.

The first challenge for the Nuclear AMRC's Husky is developing its capabilities for safely patrolling a potentially hazardous site, to monitor radiation levels and collect environmental data.

The Derby-based team will integrate a selection of advanced sensor systems to the Husky platform, including light detection and ranging and gamma ray spectrometers, along with satellite navigation and positioning devices.

The researchers will also develop software for combining radiation intensity and geolocation data to create a live map of radiation levels and test the system in a safe environment before the Husky is let loose on a real nuclear site.

Dr Ali Imam Sunny, technical lead in the Nuclear AMRC's control and instrumentation group, said: "For the nuclear industry, the UGV has the potential to provide real-time location measurement and mapping of radioactivity with isotope identification.

"In the near future we will work on routine and repeated monitoring of the site to actively provide data, to highlight anomalous changes in radiation, as well as other anomalies within the ground, with the help of ground-penetrating radar and other sensor elements."

As well as monitoring operational sites and decommissioning sites, Nuclear AMRC said that the Husky could also have a role to play in the development of new reactors.





TALKING  
BUSINESS

# SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MAKING

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# A PANEL FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY DEBATES THE QUESTION: IS MANUFACTURING AN ART OF THE PAST OR THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE?

**John Forkin:** We thought of the title 'Is manufacturing an art of the past or shape of the future?' and the location where we are holding this discussion, the Museum of Making, could not be more appropriate.

Often Britain was talked about as the workshop of the world and this was where it all started – right here in this space. Three hundred years ago, the world's first factory was here and, if you wanted to see technology, this was the only place you could come to. And people did – Benjamin Franklin came here. Daniel Defoe came here.

So, the UK had this reputation as a place of thinking, invention and production and Derby was right at the heart of that.

Eighty per cent of our inward investment inquiries have a manufacturing tone to them, so it still is a key sector for the place. Forty three thousand engineers live in the greater Derby area, so this is engineering grand central in the UK and, possibly, Europe.

However, if you talk to the man in the street, they'll talk about how the UK has lost the plot – that we don't make anything anymore. They will talk about closures, out-sourcing and think that everything is made in China and, yet, we are still, as a country, ninth in the world league table as a base for manufacturing.

Our exports in manufacturing add up to £191 billion and 2.7 million are employed in the manufacturing sector – and so it's not dead!

In addition, the salaries in manufacturing are 13 per cent higher than the average salary. So, if you're young and you're looking for a good job that's going to pay well, there's probably no better role for you than one in manufacturing.

But it has changed. It has moved up the technology ladder, through

automation and digital, and I want to get an insight into that from you guys.

The questions I want us to kick around are: what are our strengths and opportunities? And why don't people feel that manufacturing happens here anymore? What are the challenges moving forwards – supply chain challenges, cost challenges, Brexit challenges? What are the head winds?

And, then, I also want to touch on the image of manufacturing and how it is perceived. Just looking around the table, it's a bit 'blokey'. I Googled manufacturing last night and 249 million images came up and I had to scroll down quite a long way before it wasn't a bloke in a boiler suit.

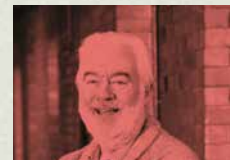
So, there is still an image issue. I know the jobs that you guys do and the people that work for you aren't necessarily like that.

I'm going to ask Chris, from the chamber, to kick us off with a big picture look at the state of manufacturing.

**Chris Hobson:** It's a bit of a tricky one because manufacturing is such a broad church. As a chamber, we represent people who manufacture jet engines through to sandwiches, so it's difficult to sum up manufacturing in a few words.

But, that said, the challenges people are generally talking about at the moment, for sure, there's access to raw materials and the impact that has on lead times and pricing. It's become much more choppy in terms of managing orders and activity.

On the plus side, demand is very much still there but we're having lots of conversations where people are saying their capacity isn't what it needs to be in order to meet demand.



**Chair:**  
**John Forkin,**  
Marketing Derby



**Martin Jinks**  
Nelsons Solicitors



**Mo Suleman,**  
Derby Museums



**Michael Fearn,**  
Denby Pottery  
Company



**Robert Bokros,**  
LOBO Systems



**Ian Cuddington,**  
Rolls-Royce plc



**Jim Campbell,**  
Surescreen



**Bob Betts,**  
Smith of Derby



**Chris Hobson,**  
East Midlands  
Chamber of  
Commerce



**Jay Shaw,**  
Nuclear AMRC



**Warwick  
Adams,**  
Tioga

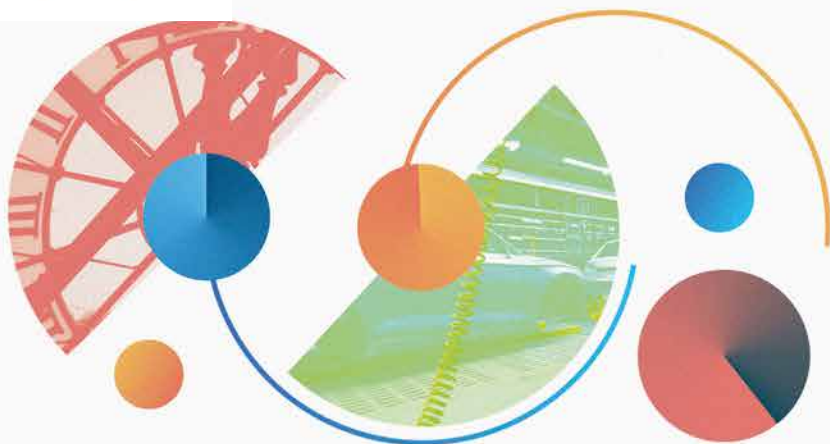


**Sarah Ball,**  
Balls 2 Marketing



**Alan Weir,**  
Toyota Motor  
Manufacturing UK





## 'INNOVATION HAS ALWAYS TAKEN PLACE BUT, FOR SOME, IN RECENT TIMES, THAT HAS REALLY BEEN FAST-FORWARDED AND PEOPLE ARE DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY TO UNLOCK POTENTIAL NEW MARKETS OR ENHANCE COMPETITIVENESS'

There are ways to try to get round capacity issues – you can find efficiencies to free up capacity; you can find investment – but investment has started to be paired back; you can recruit more people but there are skills shortages. So, there's something that needs unlocking in terms of capacity issues.

On top of that, there's the pricing issues. Our most recent survey showed nine-in-ten manufacturers felt they would have to put their prices up over the coming period. Many of them had already done so. Many had tried everything not to do that and to absorb pressures in their own margins but had nowhere left to turn.

They are some of the challenges – but what about the opportunities?

When you have big, complex global supply chains, there are lots of pluses but, in terms of resilience to shocks, there are vulnerabilities that have been shown up over recent times and there are more conversations taking place about shortening supply chains and doing things locally.

And that presents opportunities for places like Derby and Derbyshire and it will be interesting to see how that develops.

Secondly, innovation has always taken place but, for some, in recent times that has really been fast-forwarded and people are

doing things differently to unlock potential new markets or enhance competitiveness.

There's also diversification – perhaps someone who supplies into Rolls-Royce looking to take their process and turn it to work with someone else.

And, the final point, while there was an initial slowdown in investment, there has been an uptick in some sectors to help drive the move to automation, bringing in more capacity and reducing the reliance on bringing in staff when there are skills shortages.

Real strengths have come out of the last couple of years, such as the relationships that exist within supply chains.

And, it seems apt to mention, the Levelling Up White Paper has just been published. The words in it feel really bold. The reality of it, we'll have to wait and see. But is there something in a re-imagining of how the UK economy works and is focused that gives an opportunity for somewhere like Derby and Derbyshire to say this is a massive strength that we have?

**JF:** We have some of the biggest names in the world sat around this table but I'm going to start with some of the SMEs. Warwick, you run Tioga. Tell us a little bit about the opportunities and future for a company like yours.

**Warwick Adams:** We're a contract electronics manufacturer, so, we are basically making either a finished product or parts of products that will go to a customer and they will finish it.

Our industry is in serious trouble through supply of parts. It's the biggest industry in the world and it has the biggest issues at the moment. We are looking at horrendous lead times – with years before we see parts and allocation of parts, which, basically, means we place an order and have no idea when we are going to get them.

We have non-cancellable, non-returnable rights, so when we place an order for the parts, they cannot tell you what price they will be or when you will get delivery but you have to take them whenever they decide to give them to you – whether you still want them or not.

In regards to us and what we do, probably three or four of our top customers were all developed in the UK. All those came out from university spin-outs. They were acquired by big companies. Around 75 per cent of our turnover is finished product and probably 75 per cent of that is with businesses that have grown out of local universities.

That has worked well for us. It's where we develop our business, where we target. It takes a long time. Some of our business is medical and so you are looking at a two to three year lead-in. But it gives you the longevity with the customer; it gives you the relationship. You can generally contract a customer more easily because you will tie yourself in in the early days.

If you are just building a printed circuit board for someone and don't offer anything else, well, they will go to wherever the price or the lead time is best, so, it's a very tough industry.

If I walked up to someone in the street and asked where are electronics made, probably 99 per cent would say China. And in the consumer world that's absolutely true but outside the consumer world, it is not accurate at all.

That's the problem. People only see their phone, laptop or television. In percentage terms, there are a lot of people here in automotive or transport, well that's only three per



cent of the world's electronics. But that three per cent, as a global economy, makes very expensive things.

Industrial electronics is probably another two per cent and so 95 per cent of the world's electronics is consumer. So, all the consumer companies control it - and that's why we are in the mess we are in at the moment.

**JF:** Where do you export to?

**WA:** We have a few customers abroad but they came through the UK. GE Medical is one of our biggest customers. They are American. Most of our business is UK but I would think the value of the products that we make ends up somewhere around the world. It's a big variety. We build monitoring systems for wind turbines, we build freezers for pharmaceuticals, we build baby and foetal heart monitoring equipment - but all these were developed in the UK.

**JF:** You are describing something that most people walking down the street wouldn't know happens here and I want to come back to that image and how people connect with it, but I'll come to you now, Michael. You have just been featured in a television programme, *Inside the Factory*. Denby is a company with a long heritage. Just give us a quick heads-up on what you are up to and what that TV programme showed.

**Michael Fearn:** The programme was centred around the production of mugs, which is something that's been a staple for us for a long time, but it also highlighted some of the innovation in design that has been really important for us over the past ten years.

We can all say that design is crucial within our products always but the consumer wants something new, they want it quickly and that puts a strain on manufacturing to constantly be able to deliver that and our design department to be constantly coming up with something fresh.

So, when we create such a broad product offering as we currently have, to service that demand, it does put strain on us and our ability to automate to reduce costs.

Our other big USP is the hand-crafted side of things and that creates a problem for us here and now with the skills shortage that we are all suffering.

We are very busy. We are doing very well and we've recently added to our portfolio with the production of a porcelain product, which is a world apart from our heritage of stonewear, but we have had some good investment in the business from our current ownership and we have been able to create this stand-alone factory within a factory to offer something completely different and something completely new under the Denby brand.

**JF:** And what's your export picture? I went to a wedding once in New York and on the wedding list was Denby!

**MF:** We export approximately 50 per cent and our big markets are Korea and the US. The business plan over the past five years was to manoeuvre the product into a more premium bracket, so it now sits alongside brands like Chanel. In Korea, Denby is seen very much as a premium product and it's very popular. We have our own distribution network, Denby Korea, and we are also now branching into China and seeing similar levels of popularity.

The USA has always been strong for us and we have our own distribution network over there as well.

**JF:** So, what are the challenges for you? You're in growth, it's a popular product - but what are your big challenges?

**MF:** Thankfully, the supply of raw materials has held up okay. The main challenge is that we are trying to meet this growing demand, which really started for us back in lockdown in 2020. We shut manufacturing down and kept a skeleton team in the warehouse but very quickly we had to return resource because we could not keep up.

And the demand hasn't been a short-term thing. It's on-going.



But it all comes back to skills, at the moment. I have been trying to recruit 30 people since July last year and I'm still not there yet. It's a slow process.

**JF:** When was Denby formed?

**MF:** 1809.

**JF:** And when was Smith of Derby formed?

**Bob Betts:** 1856.

Warwick talks about some of the issues in the electronics sector today. Some of our products have chips and Warwick is one of our value-chain suppliers. Michael's story is about innovation and design – things that we try to embrace at Smith of Derby as well. But he ended on the note of a skills shortage. To us, it's all about that.

We have to recruit. We have to get apprentices in. We have a very successful apprentice programme but we can't find them.

It goes back to Whitehall, the image and the story and kids just not getting it.

We do have supply issues. Even raw steel. We can only get pricing fixed for 24 hours and, of course, in the value chain of the customer, we have now reduced the validity of our proposals to 30 days. It used to be 90.

The world of manufacturing now is very tough and it's going to take all of our ability to be successful and be leaders in the future. No doubt we will get there but it's not a pretty time right now. We are working the hardest we have ever done for very tight margins.

**JF:** So, how have we ended up in a position where there's headroom for growth but there's a fundamental skills challenge and we have full employment?

**Sarah Ball:** I think this drive for people to go to university has messed up the whole system. We don't allow our young people to understand what a career plan looks like. You don't have to have an intellectual career plan, you can have a physical career plan and that physical plan can give you as much benefit as a different pathway.

And because we force children to go to university, everyone

who doesn't is perceived as a failure. We have got to change the perception of what is a good career plan.

**JF:** So, I'll put out a challenge to the table then, why haven't you guys sorted this? We could have had this conversation ten to 20 years ago.

**Jim Campbell:** I think it comes from the schools. I work with one of our local schools and they don't have to compete. There are no exams. You can't tell somebody that they are better than someone else. The school is excellent but that element is missing – the element that I had when I was at school; that you strive to be one of the best.

**JF:** Rolls-Royce, you do quite a lot in schools.

**Ian Cuddington:** It's a good challenge about why it's not been sorted yet. Most of the emphasis we have might be making the problem slightly worse because, the skills shortage we see most keenly, is the design engineering skills, so, it's not exclusive, but we have a very large STEM ambassador programme that has helped influence over a million school kids in the UK in respect of careers in science, technology, engineering and maths.

It takes a long time to grow world class aerospace engineers and we need to intervene early in the education system to ensure there's a good crop coming through universities.

The scheme does touch on manufacturing skills and show those careers are available but the emphasis is on where we see the pinch point most.

One thing I was reflecting upon, in terms of strengths and opportunities, we have gone through a very large restructuring programme, which was very painful after Covid 19 decimated the market.

In net terms, the UK benefited from that. Our global operations had to shrink. They shrunk everywhere but, relatively, they shrunk towards the UK. The reason that happened is, if you think very crudely, you have capacity and capability. Capacity is everywhere, the capability, broadly, is in the UK.

So, you shut down the capacity and bring it home to where your capability is because, when you

have a complex product, you need to have your supply chain, internal and external, engage with your design method. People learn how to make things better and they learn how to design it better. It helps if you are reasonably close to each other.

There's another opportunity in net zero. We talked about perception and one of the perceptions, I think, manufacturing has it that's it a bit dirty – not green. More than 90 per cent of our products burn fossil fuels. We are trying to change that but, if you are a kid today, looking at where you want a career, do you want it in something that seems very 20th Century?

**'It all comes back to skills. At the moment. I have been trying to recruit 30 people since July and I'm still not there yet. It's a slow process'**

So, there is a perception issue. But there's an opportunity. We are investing a lot in technologies that will help solve decarbonisation – and that brings with it new supply chains, new products that could land in the UK if it has the right set of skills and capabilities.

**JF:** I'll let Alan come in.

**Alan Weir:** For the past 70 or 80 years, we have made and sold cars but we are going through a huge transformational change now and the buzz phrase that everyone is talking about is mobility business.

Of course, you have all the power chain changes, the connected features on the car, autonomous vehicles are maybe not far away, but it's probably the mobility business that is the big driver of change at the moment.

One of the big elements is looking at the vehicle lifetime value. That's not just making and selling a car now, it's Toyota, or whoever it is, owning the vehicle throughout its entire lifetime and getting the complete value of the vehicle in that lifetime.

That may mean us making, selling or leasing the car, and then bringing it back after a few years, doing a refresh of that vehicle. It goes out again. This time it may be to shared services or a university campus. It may come back for a third time and is refreshed again before going back out. That's a huge change.

Even at Burnaston, we are now taking the first steps towards that where what we are doing, not just for the vehicles we make in the plant but for every Toyota that comes into the UK, we will take those cars and add value in terms of accessories or customisation.

That extra value, previously we would let someone outside take that.

We are almost now in the process of doing the second-hand car refurb, taking the cars that have been out on lease, bringing them back and doing that refresh so they can go out again and you extract the value of that.

In terms of recruitment, if you take the shopfloor, we are struggling like everyone else. If you talk about the more skilled apprentices or maintenance, we have to grow our own – and that's where the partnerships with the schools and colleges comes in. That's a really good pipeline.

If you talk graduates, we are in quite a fortunate position and we are attracting them. But if you are looking for very specific roles, like a data scientist, that's where you can struggle.

**BB:** It's amazing, John, that we haven't got full employment, listening to this table. There are jobs out there.

**JF:** We kind of do have full employment.

**MJ:** I had a couple come in to see me yesterday with their 16-year-old daughter. I asked her what she liked at school and she said maths and Spanish but she felt she wouldn't be able to do anything with those skills.



I had a sharp intake of breath because the world is her oyster with maths and a language, but she didn't know that

We know high-tech and innovation generates wealth. We know that Derby is a magnet for engineering businesses.

My son-in-law works for a company – a start-up a few years ago, based in New Mexico, building solar field equipment – and they have created their European base in Derby.

We know that's where the wealth is going to come from and, yet, a 16-year-old at school doesn't know what she can do with maths and Spanish.

**JF:** I want to bring in Robert. What are the challenges in your business?

**Robert Bokros:** LOBO is a product developed over the past 25 years that's like a Meccano set for big boys. Toyota and Rolls-Royce are among our customers and today I sell it globally.



As an SME, the huge disadvantage for people like me is competing with the big guys because they will say to their HR director, recruit me 50 people and I will say to my wife, who works in the same office, let's recruit somebody. They can pass that on to a group of people who are professional at recruitment, I have to do it myself. There's also the benefits that they can offer that I can't.

That might be something that could be reflected in assistance from the Government in terms of taxation differential.

I am suffering from price increases but, fortunately, because the product is a value-added product and actually saves people money over time, I can get away with reasonable price rises. So, we put our prices up at the beginning of the year and we will see what happens.

The skills shortage is the big one for me. Shipping is another. We ship containers into the US frequently and prices are ridiculous. So, we



have gone for a consolidation model where we now have a warehouse in Pittsburgh and we ship into there and then into our customer base. That's working at the moment.

There are problems getting products into Europe in terms of compliance getting through the borders. I think they are being very awkward and making things as difficult as they can to get product into Germany and France.

But, having said that, we've had a great last six months, so I don't want to be all doom and gloom. I think that was due to the work we did since we got locked down. We worked with a number of huge companies to go through the approvals process, which seems to get worse every day.

**JF:** And your story, Jay, at NAMRC?

**Jay Shaw:** We're the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre and we do components for the civil nuclear sector and nuclear defence but we also work across the energy sector as well.

We are heavily involved in net zero initiatives, such as carbon capture, utilisation and storage, hydrogen and offshore renewables.

How we do that is through manufacturing innovation and supply chain development and these two come together to create the 'three Cs' – capability, capacity and competitiveness.

We work with about 3,500 companies throughout the UK and we have helped them win about £1.75 billion of contracts in the last six years. We were created in 2010 because we believed there would be a major nuclear renaissance.

It's been very interesting listening to some of the discussion on skills.

I was an advanced modern apprentice in manufacturing and engineering just over 20 years ago and I have a young daughter now. One of the things I have seen by going out to schools and working with industry is the major skills gap – I'm talking tens of thousands of people – but it starts at nursery.

I went into nursery to pick my daughter up. It was almost like one half of the room was pink and the other blue.

There was a toy drill set on one side and on the other was a kitchen and my daughter crawled across towards the drill and the woman picked her up and put her back near the kitchen.

I asked what she was doing and she said the boys liked playing with the drill and my daughter liked playing with the kitchen. I said I wanted her to also play with the plastic drill.

She said, 'We don't want to encourage that!' I said, 'We do. I'm an engineer. I want her to take things apart and put them together and do what she likes doing. If she crawls to it, let her crawl to it'.

So, it starts in nursery and we are segregating kids out.

I went to a junior school to talk about my career and science, engineering, technology and maths and I walked into the room and it was all boys sat there. They had split the girls from the group. We pulled them all back in and got them working on stuff.

We need to educate the educators and say that manufacturing isn't dark and dingy. It's high-tech, it's digital. It's a great career.

I did my degrees through distance learning didn't pay to do any of them. You can get the same level of education, have a great career, it doesn't cost you a thing and you get paid along the way. I've been around the globe with my career.

Kids now are consumers of education; they are buyers of education. We need to tell them why manufacturing is great, why manufacturing is the career to choose, because they are buying that education.

We have an apprentice training centre and, as part of the net zero holistic view, we have identified across nuclear, offshore renewables and carbon capture, utilisation and storage, there's going to be a demand for around 250,000 highly-skilled individuals just in those areas up to 2030.

So, what we are looking at doing is bringing a more holistic approach to educate children – and adults – to what that skillset demand is.

We're also looking at how we can take someone from, say, the oil and gas sector, which is flat-

lining/declining, and look at the skills gap to enhance their career opportunities.

And we are talking to people in the Derby region about how we can do some post-apprenticeship development and skills knowledge exchange.

**JF:** Mo, a lot of stuff has been said about image and perception, here we are in the Museum of Making, what are you noticing? Does this help the agenda we are talking about?

**Mo Suleman:** I'm not surprised that skills shortage has arisen as a subject – although I am surprised it's at the level it is. What has been said about starting young, you really need to inspire kids at a young age.

We see the Museum of Making as a place where we can inspire young kids. You walk through the door and you see an exploded Toyota Corolla and, further forward, there's a huge Rolls-Royce engine. On the second floor, it's full of stuff you can touch and feel.

We engage with schools and colleges but we do struggle to engage with some manufacturers to help us inspire kids. We want to tell more stories of current manufacturers so that we can really engage with young people.

We are the country's only museum celebrating making. This is of national significance. We can really celebrate, engage and inspire.

We have lots of communities in Derby where the education system has failed them. We are trying to help them. We do all sorts of lifelong learning here and there's a whole load of resource available to help them see themselves as a future maker and innovator.

**JF:** It's early days yet but is there any evidence that when young people leave the museum, something has changed in their heads?

**MS:** Anecdotally, we got lots of comments that talk about how the kids love it and saying they didn't realise what was going on in Derby and how the city had inspired the world.

**SB:** The skills gap is vital and the issues Jay was describing with his daughter at nursery is diabolical and yet we see it every day.

I went to talk to a local junior school about building our own house and they were going to put the boys in the room and not the girls and I said 'no'.

My daughter is an electrician. She is still counted as a female electrician, not just an electrician. We need to be in a position where we can have men and women being treated equally within factory life and, let's face it, historically, women were the major part in factory life.

They did a lot of the intricate work. There's no reason why a woman should not be in a modern factory. But we have a really negative perception of women in factories and this would be a way of opening up a conversation. Maybe, we need a diversification programme in factories?

We have 50 per cent of the population that is being excluded from many factory jobs because they don't identify with it as a place that they can go.

**AW:** Just looking at Toyota, our situation compared to some of our European plants, it's not something to be proud of at all. It's something we need to work on hard to attract females into manufacturing. It's not the dirty place you talked about before. It's clean and almost every process, females can do but we still struggle to attract them.

**JS:** This table is a good example of it.

**SB:** And, bear in mind, that I work in marketing. I represent a lot of manufacturing companies, but I work in marketing.

**IC:** It's not that long ago that Merlin engines were assembled almost exclusively by women just up the road.

**MF:** We have got, arguably, more women on our shopfloor than men and it's always been like that. But the point you raise, Sarah, about the pre-determined path from leaving school is probably a bigger issue.

All of the skills that we need are not learned in university but on the job in training and apprenticeships but, while we are diverting people to university, we are not doing enough to encourage things at the grass roots.

**JF:** I want to ask Jim, your company has grown a lot during the



pandemic, how have you met the recruitment challenge?

**JC:** It's been very difficult because we have gone from 70 to 700 in three months. We have had to bring in a lot of agency people and train them. Some of those only stay a short time and so we are always training.

**WA:** Just one other point, having the big companies is brilliant for the region but, for a small engineering company, you're a pain in the rear! From one department of nine people, I've just lost five staff in one go to one of those businesses.

**JF:** I'm going to bring things to a close. There's a thousand years of experience around this table and it's some brains trust. I'm thinking, maybe, we should run a whole day conference and pick off some of these issues in more detail.

We started off with some of the things I thought we'd begin with – the challenges, materials, costs, capacity, shipping, and then the

opportunities around diversification, innovation and the green agenda.

But, really, where we rooted the conversation was around recruitment, skills and people. That's at the heart of this.

It's around the image, the education system, careers advice and aspirations. And this segregation – almost like an apartheid of low pay, high pay, good job, bad job, clean job, dirty job, male job, female job.

There's this thing about educating the educators; that the kids are consumers of education.

We're not dealing with a skills shortage. We are dealing with an appreciation shortage. I don't think enough people out there know that these jobs exist and there is this diversity from making aero engines to mugs and everything in between.

There's a real marketing challenge for the making sector. **1**





# A 'force' to be reckoned with

Star Wars-themed funeral is all in a day's work for trail-blazing Wathall's and their inspirational MD

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**Helen Wathall's family business has been arranging funerals for 164 years but they don't often receive requests like this one.**

Star Wars fan Paul Wadley had decided he wanted his send-off to be themed around his favourite movies.

He was such a big fan of the sci-fi series that he even named his two children after actors from the films and set down how he'd like his funeral to be handled after being diagnosed with motor neurone disease.

"It meant we had 50 storm troopers and someone dressed as Darth Vader leading the procession through Ashbourne," reveals Helen. "Our funeral conductor is not very tall and he was joking that he should have been dressed as R2D2."

Paul's ask may have been unusual but Helen's team will always do their best to meet family wishes.

"I absolutely love it when we get to do things like that because it was so clearly very personal to those involved," she says.

But Star Wars themes are light years away from Wathall's origins.

The company was established in Derby in 1858 when Leonard Wathall diversified his cabinet making and furniture broking business in Siddalls Lane and started producing coffins.

The business had its own horse-drawn vehicle, capable of transporting the coffins, and George Wathall, Leonard's son, decided to start arranging funerals after the loss of his own two-year-old boy, Anthony.

Anthony's twin, William Henry, would take over the business upon his father's death 40 years later and, subsequently, would be joined by his own children, Will and Harry.

The firm survived two world wars – Harry was taken prisoner in France during the Great War and Wathall's Abbey Street premises were turned into a temporary mortuary during the 1939-45 conflict – and the company continued to serve the people of Derby when Harry's son, Bill, joined in 1952.

Bill took over leadership of the business in the 1970s, with daughter Helen becoming the fifth generation of the family to work at Wathall's when she joined in 1985.

"It was only supposed to be for a couple of years, helping with the accounts," recalls Helen.

"I had planned on becoming a farm estate manager but the lady who did the accounts had retired and dad needed some help. We had a conversation at the breakfast table and I agreed to go in for what I thought would be a reasonably short period – thirty seven years later I'm still here," Helen says with a smile.

"My dad never pressured me to join the business. He didn't want me to feel obliged or that it was a given. Of course, I had always been around the business. I spent my weekends trailing around Derbyshire checking graves with dad or sitting in the car outside houses whilst he dealt with funeral arrangements.

"But my abiding childhood memories are of my dad and grandad as people rather than in their jobs. Both were into their fishing. Both liked to be outdoors, which is totally the opposite to the suited and booted funeral director. My grandad was also big on butterscotch sweets and if you were good you would get a slab."

Helen may not have planned to stay with the business for the long





01. WILL AND HARRY WATHALL LEAD A FUNERAL THROUGH ALBERT STREET, DERBY.

02. WILLIAM HENRY WATHALL PICTURED OUTSIDE THE COMPANY'S PREMISES IN GERARD STREET.

03. WILL WATHALL IN DERBY'S MARKET PLACE.

term but, once on board, she quickly realised that it was a role she was born to do.

"It's very much a vocation. None of us have ever seen it as just a job," she reveals.

"I found that I really like helping people. I would see them come in and they would not have a clue about what they wanted or how to go about it and within a week we'd have the funeral arranged. I took a lot of comfort from being able to help families in that way and I enjoyed hearing the stories from behind ordinary front doors of where people had been and what they had achieved over the years.

"So two years became three, four and five years ..."

Over the generations since Wathall's almost accidental entry into the funeral sector, the firm has developed a reputation for innovation.

They were the first Derby undertakers to have a motorised hearse. They were pioneers of pre-paid funerals. And, after Helen took over the reins following her father's death in 1995, they were one of the first funeral businesses to have a woman in charge in what

had been very much a male-dominated industry.

Helen would go on to become the first female president of the Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors, representing more than 800 businesses, and the first woman to join the board of funeral plan provider Golden Charter.

"My dad had been one of the first funeral businesses to employ women. It had very much been seen as a male world," recalls Helen.

"But I didn't set out to be the first woman at anything. I just did it. I think I have a bit of my grandma in me. She just very quietly got on with what she needed to do and was never phased.

"In the early days, some people would ask if they could speak to a man. But things are very different now and, while you will still see a lot of men in public-facing roles at funerals, behind the scenes there are a lot of women, assisting the families and making the arrangements."

Two of the women helping to shape the future of the company – and of the profession – are Helen's daughters, Bec and Charlotte.

The pair began work in the business in 2016 but Helen remembers their introduction taking place at a much younger age.

"They were under my desk from eight weeks old in a bouncy chair," she says.

"The girls and my son, Hugo, all did work experience in the business and, as kids, would wash the funeral cars but, like my dad, I didn't want them to feel obligated or that it was a given they would come into the company.

"There's a big, wide world out there and I've always encouraged them to follow their own dreams."

Seventeen-year-old Hugo is currently off exploring that big, wide world – after deciding to study business for two years in Canada.

But Bec and Charlotte have remained closer to home, becoming the sixth generation of the family to be involved in running Wathall's.

Bec is business development manager and oversees the company's website and social media operations. Charlotte trained as a funeral advisor aged just 18, became later life planning



A COLLECTION OF IMAGES FROM THE WATHALL'S ARCHIVE.

advisor and now heads up Wathall's pre-paid funeral plans.

Both girls are part of the Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors' Next Generation initiative, supporting the development of young funeral professionals.

Helen quite clearly relishes the opportunity to work with her daughters on continuing Wathall's mission to meet the needs of its community.

"Much has changed over the 37 years that I've been with the business," says Helen.

"When I started, most funerals were of a religious nature. Today, most are not. They are more a celebration of life. Most people would have a set order, with two hymns. Now music plays a big part in the service and is very personal to the families or to the person who has died.

"But the core of what we do has not altered in 164 years, let alone 37. It's all about the people, maintaining respect for the deceased and their families – their wishes and beliefs. If people are as happy as they can be and looked after by us as well as we can, then we have done a good job."

The company's dedication to helping families in their darkest hours sparked a number of pioneering initiatives to assist the grieving process – starting with Dandelions Bereavement Support, which was launched in 2014.

"People were asking where they could go for help. The offering in Derby was quite fragmented and it was difficult to find support," says Helen.

"We set up a grief journey programme and a support group to help people to understand that how they are feeling is okay and to help them manage some of the more extreme emotions they are experiencing. Recently we have also added counselling to the service on offer.

"The support group is simply tremendous. We provide the room for them to meet and the tea and coffee but they decide what they do. During the pandemic they made sure that people were not left feeling isolated and were checking up on each other.

"I get huge pleasure from seeing how the group helps so many people," reveals Helen.

The support on offer includes a grief

journal, allowing those who are suffering to record their thoughts and feelings to help process their emotions.

The company's bereavement support co-ordinator and counsellor Fay Bloor also worked with University of Derby graduate Michael Ashley to create an illustrated activity book for children who have lost a loved one.

The book, entitled *Missing Someone Special – Working Your Way Through Loss*, explains practical things, like what happens at burials and cremations, as well as highlighting the importance of sharing emotions following a bereavement.

There is also space for children to write down their happy memories of the loved one they have lost.

Fay explained the thoughts behind the initiative.

"Adults often feel like they must protect children from the harsh reality of death and are obviously mourning a loss themselves. However, avoiding discussions can cause confusion and anxiety for the child.

"The reality is that children are



extremely resilient and can deal with the truth if it is explained to them carefully, in an age-appropriate way.

"The activity book is, therefore, designed to gently explain what has happened and the kind of words and phrases that they have perhaps heard people discussing."

There is also advice for adults on how to break news about death in a straightforward and honest way, the language to avoid and suggestions for working through grief as a family.



HELEN WATHALL IS PROUD TO BE THE FIFTH GENERATION OF HER FAMILY TO LEAD THE WATHALL'S FUNERAL BUSINESS.

Wathall's also offers a corporate bereavement service to businesses and charities, has partnered with The Salvation Army to provide collections of unwanted possessions from the bereaved and each year runs a memorial service at Derby Cathedral, giving families a chance to remember loved ones.

"I hope the families see it as the bit of Christmas that remembers the person they have lost and then hopefully it enables them to move on to create a new Christmas tradition where, perhaps, the empty chair is not the only focus," says Helen.

The company's commitment to its community is further demonstrated by its support for local charities.

The firm's employees have raised tens of thousands of pounds through events such as a sponsored cycle ride from Derby to Paris and a five-day walk from Derby to London and, through the Wathall's Wish initiative, donations have been made to organisations such as YMCA Derby, Me & Dee, Derby Women's Centre and Safe and Sound.

The company sponsors a number of local sports teams, including Mickleover Sports and Clifton Cricket Club, to recognise the value of physical exercise and social interaction for mental well-being.

And last year, Wathall's supported the Derby Ram Trail, sponsoring a statue which was dedicated to bereavement support group members and to families who had lost loved ones during the year.

Helen also plays a prominent part supporting other city businesses through her role as chair of St Peters Quarter Business Improvement District.

When we meet, she is celebrating news that levy-payers in the BID

area had voted to support the scheme's continuing operations for the next five years.

"So many of these things, like my involvement with St Peters Quarter, have happened by accident. There's never been a big plan. Perhaps it's because I still don't know what I want to do for a living," jokes Helen.

"St Peters Quarter came about because I wanted to get rid of the bins on Macklin Street – although we've now got more bins than when I started! But it's the people that have made that such a great role to be involved with and we've made some significant changes. It's fantastic that we've now got a further five years and I'm so looking forward to see how that develops."

Helen's proud of the impact the BID has made over the past decade, establishing the identity of the area, promoting its businesses, making it feel safe and welcoming and offering support to traders during the pandemic.

And she's excited to move forward with the BID's next key themes, which she describes as 'smart and attractive, welcome and accessible and entertaining and promoted'.

"Within all of that there is collaboration with the other core areas, Cathedral Quarter and Derbion, and with Marketing Derby. We all want the same things – to see more people in the city centre," Helen says.

"The high street is changing and, in my opinion, we need to embrace that change. If we try to keep what we have always had, we'll go nowhere. We need to be forward thinking with how the city centre could look.

"We need to incorporate more residential, which brings more people into the city, which, in turn, will create more vibrancy, change the offering and stimulate the evening economy.

"And, where we can, we should incorporate more green space.

"We should also do something with the parking charges. If people only want to nip in to go to the bank, why are we charging £3 to do that? If we made half an hour free, the increase in footfall could only benefit the city centre and encourage more visitors."

Helen believes that St Peters Quarter is now seen as a



HELEN IS A CHAMPION OF BUSINESS IN DERBY CITY CENTRE.

destination in its own right, rather than the route between Cathedral Quarter and the Derbion, and she believes the multi-million-pound development of Becketwell, with its performance venue, apartments and public square, will enhance prospects further.

"For 26 years, I've been looking at the back end of the former Duckworth Square from my office and I'm so excited to see that development move forwards. To have the arena and the residential, particularly, will change the dynamics of this area of the city.

"We've also got Castleward and the Nightingale Quarter, so there's huge momentum."

Helen's enthusiasm for her home city is matched by her continued ambition for the Wathall's business.

She's just steered the company through one of its most testing periods – dealing with the Covid pandemic – which has presented huge logistical and emotional challenges, with many bereaved families facing restrictions on who could attend funeral services.

The firm has responded sympathetically and innovatively to try to provide solutions – some of which will remain for the longer term.

"When lockdown came we had to pivot everything that we did, virtually overnight, and move a very traditional business to an online platform as much as we could, whilst still maintaining high levels of service," says Helen.

"People being restricted from attending services was awful and, in some areas, it has been important that we have gone back to what we always did as soon as we could but there are some changes we will keep, such as video calls which mean that people who cannot get into the office can still be involved in arrangements."

And, despite the challenges of Covid, Wathall's has continued to expand – opening its sixth branch, in Allestree, in November last year, to add to its Macklin Street city centre base and operations in Alvaston, Borrowash, Ashbourne and Burton.

Helen says the move was part of the company's long-standing commitment to serve local communities and support people at the time of their greatest need – and she feels there is opportunity for "a couple more" branch openings in the future.



But she's determined that the business maintains its family ethos.

"We don't see ourselves as a massive profit-making machine. I more see myself as being responsible for 30-odd mortgages," she says.

Helen remains modest about her achievements, both personally and professionally, but her contribution to business and local life was recognised when she was awarded the MBE. She received the honour from the Duke of Cambridge in 2019.

"I thought the letter was a hoax to start off with. I put it on the side and ignored it for a couple of weeks," she reveals.

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The MBE  
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---

But she was "mind blown" when she finally accepted that the accolade was for real and when she lined up to receive her award alongside England football captain Harry Kane.

"It might have been awarded to me but there's a whole team here at Wathall's that make the company what it is and make me what I am," she says.

Surely founder Leonard and the other previous generations of Wathalls would have been mighty proud of everything she continues to achieve. Grandad Harry might even have thought it merited a slab of his butterscotch! 🍫









## NEW HEAD APPOINTED AT LEADING PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Repton Prep, which is part of the Repton family of schools, has announced the appointment of a new head.

Victoria Savage will take up the school's most senior role from September, taking over from interim head Mark Brotherton.

Currently the head of Sarum Hall School, in London, she has a wealth of leadership experience across both boarding and day prep schools, as well as a passion for formative years education.

Mark Shires, Repton Prep's chair of governors, said: "Vicky demonstrates a firm and clear management style, placing the pupils at the centre of every decision.

"Her resilience, coupled with the necessary skills to empathise with and inspire pupils, parents and staff, was evident throughout the exacting interview process.

"The glowing references we received confirmed that Vicky will lead Repton Prep to an extremely bright and prosperous future.

"We very much look forward to introducing her to parents, pupils, staff and the wider Repton Prep community in the near future."

Repton Prep is a co-educational boarding and day school, educating around 400 children, aged three to 13 years.

Following a formal merger in 2020, the

school rebranded from Foremarke Hall to Repton Prep and is part of the Repton family of schools, which also includes Repton, St Wystan's and a further seven schools spanning three continents.

Ms Savage said: "I am absolutely delighted to be joining the Repton community as the head of Repton Prep.

"When I visited the school, I was struck by the inspirational facilities, which enable pupils to learn in a stimulating environment.

"I am passionate about a relevant and hands-on curriculum, that develops all pupils and enables them to achieve their personal best.

"Repton offers a broad curriculum underpinned by a strong set of values, and these elements, alongside a focus on pastoral support and wellbeing, chime with my own beliefs for pupil achievement and development.

"I believe that education has to be constantly moving forwards, reflecting and evolving, in order to meet the needs, personalities and interests of the pupils in an ever-changing and dynamic world; Repton has an exciting future ahead and I am thrilled to be a part of it."



## 'ONCE IN A GENERATION' INTERNET BOOST FOR DERBY AFTER FULL FIBRE SWITCH ON

Derby has received a 'once in a generation opportunity to prosper' following the switch on of its new full fibre internet network.

Internet supplier Gigabit Networks joined forces with the Mayor of Derby, Councillor Robin Wood, to officially launch the service, which will give users near limitless bandwidth and greater download speeds.

It makes Derby the first city in the East Midlands - and among the first in the UK - to enjoy the benefits of full fibre internet technology.

Gigabit Networks, which is operating from an office in Uttoxeter Old Road, is working in partnership with CityFibre, which is installing the all-important cabling that will create a full fibre internet network beneath Derby's streets as part of an initial £45 million private investment.

David Yates, co-founder of Gigabit Networks, said: "Full fibre is only available to around 20 per cent of UK premises, which means that Derby is right at the very forefront of this technology and has a huge commercial advantage because of the internet speeds that are now at its companies' finger-tips."

Thousands of Derby homes and businesses will be able to access the full fibre internet network, which offers download speeds of up to 930 Mbps, compared to the city's current average internet speed of 65 Mbps.

This will enable subscribers to stream TV, take part in video conferencing or use cloud computing quicker and more reliably than at present.

The network uses underground fibre optic cables, which transmit data quicker and more reliably than the traditional copper wire network and have so far been laid outside 8,000 homes and businesses in parts of Mackworth, Allestree, Mickleover, Abbey, Arboretum and Darley wards.

It will take until 2025 to install the entire digital infrastructure across Derby, offering full fibre broadband to virtually every home and business in the city.

CityFibre is laying more and more cable every day, but since it is the installer and not an internet service provider, it does not connect individual properties to the network itself.

Instead, it is working in partnership with companies like Gigabit Networks.

Dan Ilett, co-founder of Gigabit Networks, said: "Our recent experience of lockdown showed everybody how critical good connection speeds are and, with more and more data being shared and received across the internet each day, the need for a fast and reliable connection is only going to grow.

"Derby is now able to handle that growth thanks to its new network, meaning that this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the city to prosper while others are being left behind."

Speaking at the launch event, Councillor Wood said: "I am proud to say that I am now one of the first people to be able to say that they are mayor of a Gigabit city.

"That is very important, because Derby's future plans rely on connectivity, so you are giving us exactly what Derby needs at the right time."



**Dandelions**  
Bereavement Support

**Do you find it hard to know  
how to support your staff  
after a bereavement?**

**Do you find yourself lost  
for words?**

**Unfortunately, grief is something that's likely to affect everyone at some point in their lives, including our employees. Offering understanding and support can give employees the validation and space to work through their grief, meaning a faster return to their usual productivity.**

Our Dandelions Manager's Bereavement Training has been thoughtfully designed by our trained and experienced facilitators to equip your staff with:

- **The knowledge and understanding of how grief can affect employees**
- **Insight into the stages of grief**
- **Expected time frames for grief**
- **Advice on how to sensitively support a bereaved employee**
- **The benefits of effective bereavement support in the workplace**
- **Information on where they can signpost employees on for further support**

Participants will leave the 90 minute session with a greater understanding of what it means to be bereaved, and the confidence to support their staff.

We can also bring our Grief Journey Support Programme into your workplace if you have a number of bereaved employees that would benefit.

For costings or more information, please contact our Bereavement Support Coordinator, Fay Bloor, on 01332 345268 or email [fay.bloor@wathalls.co.uk](mailto:fay.bloor@wathalls.co.uk)

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

In association with:

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**Contact:** 01332 345268





# New chapter enduring love

## £35 MILLION MASTERPLAN AIMS TO SAFEGUARD ELVASTON CASTLE'S PLACE IN OUR HEARTS FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

### Derbyshire folk have long had a love affair with Elvaston Castle.

And their affection is entirely understandable – after all the magnificent gardens at the former stately home were inspired by historical romance.

The fourth Earl of Stanhope commissioned their creation as an intimate retreat for he and his new wife, an actress, after the pair were shunned by London society – who disapproved of their union – and were compelled to seek sanctuary at the family seat.

Almost 200 years on, Elvaston maintains its allure.

Although, over the decades since it became a Country Park, a lack of funding has meant that parts of the 321-acre estate have lost a little lustre

and the public now seldom gets to see inside the grand old house, it is still easy to understand why the place tugs at the heart strings.

The parkland, woodland and formal gardens are a haven of tranquillity from the daily grind; an oasis of calm on the outskirts of a busy city.

Any visit is usually accompanied by the sound of children's laughter, the buzz of conversation between strolling friends or, if you pick your spot just right, nothing but gentle birdsong.

Now the estate looks set for a £35 million makeover to ensure it maintains its charm for generations of future sightseers.

Owners Derbyshire County Council, working together with volunteers from the Elvaston Castle and Gardens Trust, and advised by the

National Trust, have come up with a ten-year masterplan to restore former glories and introduce new attractions.

Their aim is to ensure the park becomes a sustainable tourist attraction, which is no longer a drain on local taxpayers, who currently contribute around £1 million a year towards its upkeep.

A planning application is being prepared and, subject to approval, work will commence on the first phase of the scheme – building a new café and adventure playground and converting former stables into space for retail, catering, offices, exhibitions and workshops.

A new entrance and access drive, routing visitors away from local villages to new car parking in the heart of the estate, would also be created.





for  
story





01/02/03/04/05: ELVASTON CASTLE IS ALREADY HUGE POPULAR WITH VISITORS BUT A \$35 MILLION INVESTMENT WILL SAFEGUARD IT AS AN ATTRACTION FOR YEARS TO COME.

Further phases of work would see conversion of the ground floor of the castle into a conferencing and events venue, the repair and renovation of other historic structures to bring them back into use and provision for caravans, camping and glamping in the castle grounds.

Derbyshire County Council's cabinet member for clean growth and regeneration, Tony King, is excited to be bringing the masterplan forward.

He represents the nearby Ilkeston West ward and so knows the park well. He also understands how important it is to people throughout the county.

"It is enormously beautiful - but we think it can be even more beautiful," he says.

"We want it to be a place that even more people want to visit. We want to make sure that it remains free to access and we want to protect its future for generations to come."

Elvaston Castle and Gardens Trust chair Dr Peter Robinson also sees the regeneration as something of a passion project.

"Like many people, I love Elvaston and visit frequently with family and

friends. These are ambitious plans and we have several years of hard work in front of us, but Elvaston has huge untapped potential that we believe is the key to securing its future and saving it from further decline and dereliction," he says.

"We're committed to bringing the castle, gardens and wider parkland back to life and opening up much more of the estate to the public, including the three courtyards, which include significant former estate workshops, and stable buildings, which include a blacksmith's forge, gas engine and the remains of an original real tennis court."

The masterplan will seek to do justice to the heritage of the site and its development over more than six centuries.

Written evidence indicates that by the reign of Richard II, between 1377 and 1399, there was already a manor established there - with further attestation offered by the existence of neighbouring St Bartholomew's Church, which was, in part, constructed in the early 13th Century.

In the early 1500s, the Elvaston estate was acquired by Sir Michael

Stanhope and his descendants resided there for more than four centuries.

William Stanhope, the great, great, great grandson of Sir Michael, was created the first Baron Harrington in 1730, rising to the first Earl of Harrington in 1742, and, in the early 1800s, the third Earl, Charles Stanhope, commissioned the gothic revival castle that endures on the site today - in place of a previous structure dating back to 1633.

In 1829 the estate was inherited by the fourth Earl, also Charles, who introduced William Barron to Elvaston as head gardener. It was Barron who, more than anyone else, established the character of the park and gardens as can be seen today.

The Earl - something of an eccentric 'dandy' - asked Barron to create a pleasure garden for he and his new wife after the pair were shunned by the London set, who felt the actress had a 'chequered past'.

Barron excelled in his task, utilising his passion for conifers and topiary and creating fantastic elements of rockwork structures.

The Stanhope family continued to live at Elvaston until the onset of





World War II, when they left to live in Thulston so the castle could be used as a teachers' training college. It remained in their ownership until 1964, when it was sold to a consortium which attempted, thankfully unsuccessfully, to obtain permission to demolish the castle and mine aggregates from the grounds.

It then passed to the local authority, which opened the estate to the public as one of the first Country Parks in England.

During recent decades, shrinking local government budgets have meant a struggle to meet rising running costs, while a number of previous bids to provide the site with a sustainable future have proved unsuccessful.

The fixtures and fittings of the castle itself were sold before the estate came into council ownership and the buildings, sadly now under-utilised, cry out to be returned to former glories.

Stunning features like the estate's golden gates, Moorish temple and 'ha-ha' wall, provide a taste of what went before – and what an exciting future could have in store!

The masterplan created to secure that future is based on consultations with the public, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and, crucially, experts from the National Trust, who advised on long-term business planning, funding strategy and the creation of a new governance structure.

The Elvaston Development Board, an embryonic 'shadow' body, was created in 2015 and this later developed into the Elvaston Castle and Gardens Trust, an independent charity committed to creating new jobs and volunteering opportunities, to opening up access to more areas of the estate and to sharing Elvaston's history with new audiences

The council is now working in partnership with ECGT with the ambition of handing the running of the estate to the trust.

The masterplan seeks to identify which projects are seen as high priority. It also sets out where new leisure activities, new retail and business offers and improved interpretation, education and catering facilities will be provided and, in all cases, looks to weigh the potential benefits against the sensitivities of the estate's historic

buildings, gardens and wider landscape.

Key to the masterplan are six guiding principles, which state:

1. Freehold of the estate will be retained by Derbyshire County Council;
2. A competent single management body will control the overall governance of the estate, with a balance of conservation, heritage and access at its core;
3. Financial sustainability will be fundamental to the delivery of the vision, facilitated by a business model that provides on-going reinvestment in the long-term stewardship of the estate;
4. The historic, landscape and biodiversity significance will be protected, conserved and, where sustainable, enhanced;
5. Public access to the gardens, parkland and house will be provided and maintained; the parkland at least will be free at the point of entry on foot;
6. People, community involvement and partnership working will be at the heart of all activities.

The regeneration costs will come from a mix of public and private



investment, including a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and funding from the council.

The business case forecasts that increased activity and rising visitor numbers during the ten years taken to execute the masterplan will lead to the park achieving financial break-even and that 170 new jobs will be created.

Although it is clear that the current method of managing Elvaston is not sustainable for the future, there are some who are critical of the proposed new approach and who worry that increased use of the estate will harm its character.

The trust and the council say they are determined that this will not be allowed to happen.

"We certainly don't want to destroy the character of the park. We have to preserve that character and improve upon it. That's what the masterplan does," says Tony King.

"The ecology certainly won't be spoilt. We are aiming for a biodiversity net gain of over ten per cent on the project and there will be more trees when we finish than when we started.

"There has been some opposition and we understand that – but we hope to win over everyone as we move forward."

Councillor King points out that consultation with the public has helped shape development of the masterplan, including prompting the authority to remove an element of residential development that was originally envisaged. He's also keen to stress that the new entrance and car park will improve traffic impact on neighbouring villages and help protect areas of the historic gardens from visitor footfall.

The trust, too, hopes people will understand that safeguarding Elvaston is the focus of the proposals.

"The trust is determined to protect the unique character of Elvaston and implement positive changes that will future-proof the Elvaston heritage," it says.

"Additionally, there is so much more to discover that is currently off limits to the public. The plans will seek to open those spaces for the public to enjoy in a sustainable way. There will, therefore, be even more of Elvaston to enjoy in the future.

"Yes, we need more people to visit Elvaston to generate sufficient revenue to continually improve the house, gardens and park environments. Whilst we anticipate that annual visitor numbers will increase from around 250,000 currently to over 400,000, these numbers will be spread more evenly throughout the year.

"Improved access arrangements mean the traffic flow will be much improved and the point of access will be closer to a main road. Local highways signage will direct people away from surrounding villages and we are working closely with the county council to ensure minimum disruption to local communities, whilst improving accessibility and enhancing the visitor experience."

**This is an extremely ambitious project. There is much to be done but we have a clear vision. If you walk around the park today, you can see its qualities but you can also appreciate what it could be**

The trust adds that funding generated from developments elsewhere on the estate will help bring the main castle building back into use.

"The house is Grade II\*, which means that any work must be planned, approved and carried out sensitively. Potential uses will include weddings, conferences, art and craft exhibitions. For the upper floors, we are evaluating the possibility of holiday and conference accommodation. This is a big undertaking that will happen over a number of years and developments elsewhere on the estate will help fund this work."

Trust officials also stress that there are limited other options for preserving the park if the current plan were to fail.

"Doing nothing would result in further decline and more restrictions on public access. Selling the estate would be difficult without giving a dowry to the buyer and could result in even more restrictive access for the public.

"The Elvaston masterplan outlines a sustainable solution which secures Elvaston's long-term future, delivers restoration of the park, gardens and castle, and maintains free access at the point of entry on foot. This will secure Elvaston as a valued amenity for future generations.

"Development of Elvaston means 'respecting the past, living in the present and embracing the future'. Continued decline could result in closure of the park to the public and potential sale of the site. Leaving it alone is not an option."

Councillor King is confident that the masterplan offers Elvaston a long – and exciting – future.

"It's the best model to move forward – with the council and the trust working together to improve the park as a visitor attraction, make it sustainable and ensure it is not a drain on the ratepayers of Derbyshire.

"We have an agreed business plan, which has been tested, undergone risk analysis and opens up new income streams.

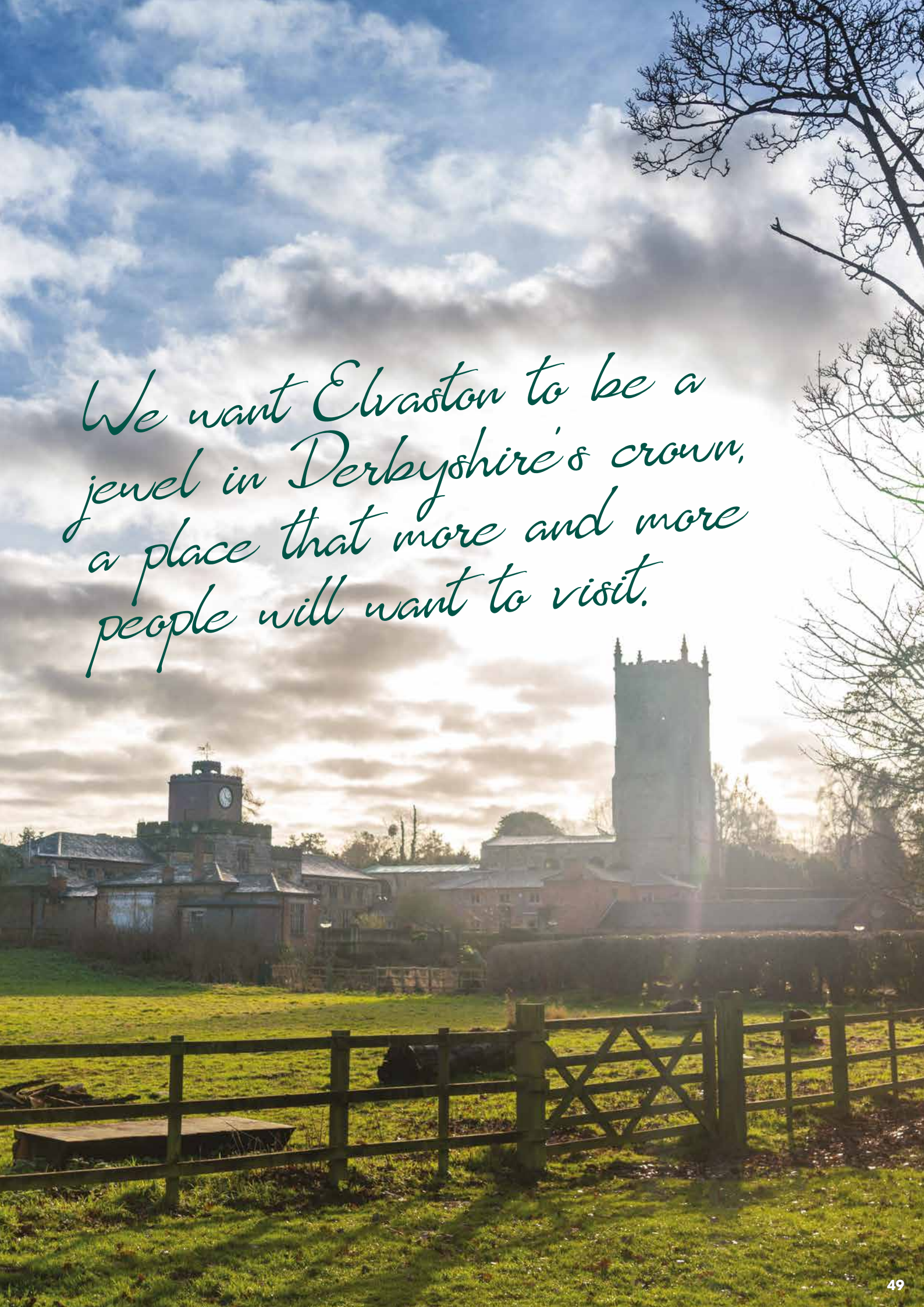
"We want Elvaston to be a jewel in Derbyshire's crown – a place that more and more people will want to visit. This is an extremely ambitious project. There is much to be done but we have a clear vision. If you walk around the park today, you can see its qualities and what it is now but you can also appreciate what it could be.

"It has a character – and we will preserve that character – but we will also make improvements.

"It's a huge project – £35 million to be spent over ten years. But we haven't embarked upon this lightly. We have done our homework and we are sure that it will be successful."

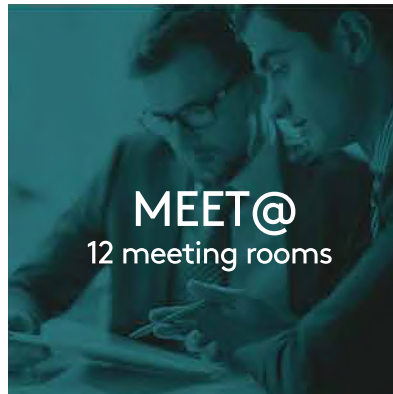
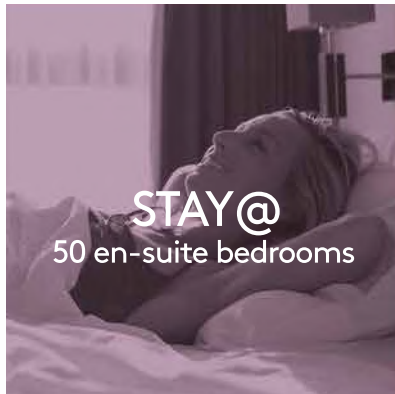
No doubt the fourth Earl of Stanhope and his Countess would appreciate the efforts being made to ensure Elvaston maintains its place in the affections of locals for years to come. **1**





*We want Elvaston to be a  
jewel in Derbyshire's crown,  
a place that more and more  
people will want to visit.*





**The Derby Conference Centre**  
enquiries@thederbyconferencecentre.com  
01332 861 842



## £13M INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PLAN GETS GOVERNMENT GREEN LIGHT

Plans backed by Derby College Group and the University of Derby to create a new £13 million East Midlands Institute of Technology have been given the go-ahead by the Government.

Last year, the college and the university revealed it had partnered with Loughborough College and Loughborough University to submit a bid for the IoT to help create the highly advanced workforce needed to lead the digital revolution.

Professor Kathryn Mitchell, vice-chancellor of the University of Derby, said: "We are delighted that our application for an Institute of Technology in the heart of the region has been selected.

"Through our strong industry links, business experience and experience offering placements and apprenticeships in the engineering and

technology sector, we understand the importance of ensuring graduates are ready to meet the region's skills needs."

Mandie Stravino, chief executive of Derby College Group, added: "By working together across the FE and HE sectors, the development of the IoT will broaden opportunities for both young people entering the world of work and adults looking to re-train or upskill mid-career."

The East Midlands IoT will focus on levelling up the critical engineering, manufacturing and digital skills needed by employers to address the challenges of clean growth.

It will work closely with global powerhouse employers, including Rolls-Royce, Toyota and Alstom, to ensure programmes equip the workforce with the right skills.

Its graduates will be part of a net zero carbon workforce needed to lead the UK's green and digital revolution and support the UK's post-pandemic recovery and journey to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The IoT will specialise in programmes such as Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies; Information and Communication Technology, Science and Mathematics and Construction, Planning and the Built Environment. Students will have access to a new IoT centre in Loughborough, as well as partner sites, including training environments in Derby at the University of Derby's Enterprise Centre and DCG's Roundhouse technical and professional skills college.

Professor Mitchell said: "As an applied university, with specialisms in

areas such as data science, advanced manufacturing, architectural technology and low carbon business support, we are well equipped to help deliver the institute alongside our further and higher education partners from Derby and Loughborough and within industry."

Will Morlidge, interim chief executive at the D2N2 LEP, said: "The new East Midlands Institute of Technology will be at the forefront of skills delivery, giving graduates the skills needed to lead the journey to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

"It will play a crucial role in building a talent pipeline of net zero experts and supporting our collective ambition to lead the most ambitious carbon turnaround in the country."





**CHANGING ATTITUDES.  
CHANGING LIVES!**



## HOW AMO AND HIS TEAM ARE IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOUSANDS OF DISABLED PEOPLE

### **Disabled people in Derby are better off by more than £20 million thanks to the campaigning work of Disability Direct over the past 20 years.**

And that is just the money which can be quantified through the charity fighting benefit appeals on behalf of its clients.

The lives of tens of thousands of disabled people in Derby, across Britain and even beyond have been transformed by Disability Direct.

And the organisation has become even more of a lifeline during the pandemic.

During the past two years, the team has created brand new services to ensure that disabled people were not forgotten when the Covid 19 virus struck.

They ensured that disabled people, older people and their carers did not go without.

For example, The Enabled Centre, a day centre for adults with disabilities, usually provides a range

of activities including arts, crafts, drama, poetry, cooking, singing, sewing, games and days out.

They are led by the activity coordinators and care and support staff who ensure constant stimulation.

The centre also delivers independent living workshops, enabling members to improve their skills in a variety of ways including money management, friendships and relationships, safe computer use and meal planning and preparation.

Trained and experienced care and support staff provide encouragement and assistance to members as required, including meeting any personal care needs. It fosters an atmosphere where deep friendships are developed.

When the UK went into lockdown, it had to close - potentially causing great anxiety to those who rely upon it for help.

Disability Direct chief executive Amo Raju said: "We had major worries at the beginning of the pandemic that disabled people would be so isolated that some could die.

"The Enabled Centre's virtual services helped our clients from spiralling into depression caused by isolation.

"Activity packs were created, personalised for each member's abilities, delivered to their homes and we provided online bingo, quizzes, meetings and other link-ups to ensure engagement."

Another of Disability Direct's services is Blue Sky Brokers, which helps people find carers to help people get out and around.

Its independent living advisors also aid clients with personal budgeting and create contracts of employment and job descriptions for disabled people's personal assistants.

Amo said: "It is not widely known that disabled people have grants to employ personal assistants and will pay tax and national insurance for them.

"Meanwhile, the personal assistant has employment rights and is entitled to holidays and sick pay.

"These personal assistants can register with Blue Sky Brokers, who find the best fit to a disabled person."



Blue Sky Brokers also took on other services during the pandemic, providing essential personal protective equipment for both clients and carers at a time when it was very hard to find.

Face masks, aprons, hand cleansers and surgical gloves were sourced so that they could feel safe when they were interacting.

The pandemic inspired Amo to realise that his team needed to return to its roots - and so it did... literally.

It created Plot To Plate - an accessible allotment project to allow disabled and older people to learn how to grow their own vegetables.

Members were not allowed to come down initially, so plants were seeded and were given away for free to clients, who then had the joy of looking after them and watching them flourish.

Some older people were forced into isolation when the first lockdown arrived but Disability Direct provided phone lines and personal visits to brighten their days.

Its team also takes clients on visits to dentists, doctors and to the shops.

As Amo says: "We have learned a lot over the past few months. We have pioneered new services and slightly shifted back into the community where we first started and where we belong."

In 25 years, Amo, as its leader, has moulded Disability Direct into one of the most respected third sector organisations in the country.

His opinions are regularly sought by regional and national media, where he appears regularly, and in the business world, where he mentors others on disability issues and running organisations smartly and effectively.

In October, he was named, by the highly respected Shaw Trust, in the Disability Power 100, the list of Britain's most influential disabled people.

The judges, chaired by BBC Disability Correspondent Nikki Fox, praised his passionate leadership of a diverse team and his "successful track record of encouraging a culture of opportunity around him."

The citation also highlighted the discrimination that Amo has faced as a disabled person from a BAME background.

Much of this detail provides the background for a semi-autobiographical book, which he launched last year with the aim of helping those who are in a similar position

Walk Like A Man was also aimed at people who, like him, have fought long battles with depression.

He said: "I am living proof that people can win battles against adversity.

"Let's be honest, nobody thought I had much of a chance when I was growing up - even me.

**I AM LIVING PROOF  
THAT PEOPLE CAN WIN  
BATTLES AGAINST  
ADVERSITY. NOBODY  
THOUGHT I HAD MUCH  
OF A CHANCE WHEN  
I WAS GROWING UP -  
EVEN ME!**

"I owe a lot to those who gave me a chance and I have tried to pay that faith forward.

"Therefore, the diverse services we deliver at Disability Direct are run by a diverse set of people who also foster a culture of opportunity around them.

"We take great pride in stating that we have taken more than 130,000 inquiries since day one.

"This is an extraordinary figure, considering there were many critics in the early days who predicted that DD was not really needed in Derby.

"In fact, we were so successful in service delivery that, back in 2008, we were approached by Nottingham City Council to create and trial a similar service for their residents."

Amo's expertise is now utilised in the role of PilotLighter for the national charity Pilotlight UK, which provides business mentors across the UK.

But he hasn't taken his eye off Disability Direct, which he has taken from an organisation reliant on grants to one which generates 95

per cent of the income required to keep it running.

To date, he has overseen income generation of more than £25 million.

A wonderful example of the entrepreneurial spirit is seen in one of the organisation's trading arms, Nimbus.

Disability Direct backed the creation of Nimbus when one of the management team, Martin Austin, came up with the idea of a bespoke Access Card, which disabled people could use when booking tickets for entertainment venues.

Previously, disabled people had to register for music festivals, cinemas, football matches and similar events, by constantly having to provide benefit entitlement letters or invasive amounts of personal information.

The Access Card translates its holder's disability/impairment into symbols highlighting the barriers they face and the reasonable adjustments they might need.

Each symbol is based on a person's individual rights under the Equality Act and provider responsibilities.

It informs providers quickly and discreetly about the support they need.

Access Card removes frustration on both sides and its information has been linked into the computer ticketing systems of companies such as Ticket Factory, making the process of buying tickets for disabled people much less labour intensive and potentially embarrassing.

It also means disabled people no longer must sit and wait on special telephone booking lines but can utilise online booking systems directly.



01/02/03/03/05: AMO RAJU IS HUGE PRIDE OF THE WORK THE DISABILITY DIRECT TEAM HAS DONE OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF DISABLED PEOPLE.

Martin now works as the full-time managing director of Nimbus and the Access Card is being used by over 30,000 people at events and tourist attractions throughout the UK and beyond.

Indeed, Nimbus launched Access Card in New Zealand in 2020 and now has a growing presence on both the North and South Islands.

Such is the overall impact of the card that Martin received the MBE last autumn for his work for improving accessibility in the tourism and entertainment sector.

Disability Direct's Payroll section covers the whole of the United Kingdom.

It serves the needs of disabled recipients who employ carers or personal assistants to support independent living.

Amo explained: "Many non-disabled people may not realise the complex arrangements between disabled people and their carers.

"Employing someone in your home does come with a set of responsibilities, so we set up Payroll to relieve disabled people of the

worries that come with being an employer, so they can concentrate on achieving the quality of life they are hoping for.

"We handle contracts of employment, payslips, PAYE Schemes with HMRC, liability insurance cover and we make sure that the employers have a basic knowledge of employment law and statutory entitlements."

But Disability Direct began with much less lofty ambitions.

Amo said: "Back in 1993, we were concentrating on welfare rights and making sure that disabled people were receiving their entitlements.

"Initially, our aim was only helping them with form-filling because people couldn't navigate their way through a difficult process."

"In 2002, we started representing people at appeals and, since then, we have a 100 per cent track record of overturning decisions at tribunals.

"We ought to make clear that if a disabled person deserves payments, we take the case on but we are honest and tell people if they don't qualify.

"In any one year, we bring in £1 million into the city for disabled people - and they are only the ones who have told us of their pay-outs. We suspect it is more.

"In 20 years, we have helped them claim £20 million and that doesn't include future payments. I am very proud of this."

One of those to benefit from Disability Direct's intervention was Mickleover actor George Coppen.

George, who is 3ft 10, was claiming disability living allowance because he suffers from arthritis.

But the 19-year-old received a letter saying he was losing 75 per cent of his money and his car was being recalled because he wasn't disabled enough.

The decision was overturned on appeal and made a life-changing difference.

Amo said: "Unfortunately, we continue to live in a society where disabled people are not treated fairly.

"In most cases, they must fight for rights in every aspect of life, be it social care, employment, housing, welfare rights... the list is endless!



"This is why we deliver projects which address such injustices. Every single one of our 22 projects has stemmed from direct need at the request of disabled people locally.

"On a personal note, the older I get, the more I'm determined to not only meet local need but to shout about the injustices faced by a cohort of people who are too often at the forefront of the social and economic failure of what is, in essence, poor policy."

That belief in justice has inspired Disability Direct to organise and promote a new card to support care workers.

Amo said: "If you work for NHS, you have blue light card which entitles the holder to discounts at shops.

"One of criteria is the recipient has to have an NHS email address but this often doesn't apply to care workers.

"We know from the pandemic how important they are to society but when the NHS staff were given pay rises, they were not.

"It is recognition of the role they play which is equally important and dangerous."

The card will be available for staff in care homes or those who work in people's homes directly for an agency and freelancers. Employers will be able to buy it at the nominal fee of £5 for their staff.

The applications will be vetted and cards will be provided by Disability Direct.

Amo said: "We want to try to stimulate the social care market. There is a massive shortfall with 500 vacancies across the city and county for social care staff.

"That has slightly improved since October, when we were 800 short.

"Employers are struggling to recruit staff. People don't want to work in tough conditions and many have been frightened by the pandemic, which put them right on the frontline.

"Some social care staff have gone to working in the health service, because pay and conditions are better.

"To stimulate the market, we have come up with the social card and we will be talking to students and people who have just entered retirement.

"It may only need people to give two or three hours a week but if enough do that it would make a big difference."

Now Amo is determine that Disability Direct will be more hands-on than ever.

He said: "I knew disabled people would be at the forefront of deaths and hospital admissions during the pandemic.

"It has taught us to get back in the community – not just delivering services. The pandemic has created anxiety and need for mental health support. We need to be back among people and reassuring them.

"We will do this by restarting surgeries and roadshows at doctors' clinics and shopping centres. We need to get back out there."

Amo and Disability Direct have gained a reputation for making things happen

They prove there is truth in the adage – where there's a will, there's a way. 🟡

## A PROUD HISTORY OF SUPPORT

In August 1993, Richard Shaw had the idea of setting up a user-led organisation which would support disabled people and their carers from all communities in Derby and the surrounding area.

He wanted to empower disabled people through information, advice and, if needed, by signposting them to specialist agencies.

Most important was the desire to have a representative voice to work with the wider voluntary, public and commercial sectors to push for more accessible and equitable services.

Richard brought together Graham Tranter, Robin Wood, Ann Webster, Mick Watts and Jan Kane to create a group of trustees who would take the concept forward.

Within six months, Disability Direct gained seed funding from a number of local and national bodies, enabling the recruitment of three staff and a number of volunteers to begin work on the mammoth task ahead.

Richard's initial vision and plan of a service has been implemented by many staff and volunteers, most of whom have never met him but are guided by the mission statement he passed on to his protégé – Amo Raju.

# The social and environment challenges our world faces have never been greater



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## INSPIRING UNIVERSITY LEADER IS RECOGNISED IN NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST

The University of Derby's vice-chancellor and chief executive has been recognised in the 2022 New Year Honours list.

Professor Kathryn Mitchell has been made a CBE for her services to education.

During her 30-year career, she has made a significant impact on the world of education.

As vice-chancellor of the University of Derby since 2015, she has demonstrated transformational leadership, which has impacted positively not only on the quality of education delivered at the university but also across the city and county.

She said: "I am honoured to have been named in the New Year Honours list.

"Raising the educational aspirations of people, regardless of their age or background, and assuring that a high-quality education is accessible to all is something I am extremely passionate about."

Prior to joining the University of Derby, Professor Mitchell held the role of deputy vice-chancellor of the University of West London, was a Wellcome Fellow at the Institute of Psychiatry, London, for over seven years and worked for the University of Chicago, the Rockefeller Institute in New York and the Friedrich Miescher Institute in Basel.

Originally from St Helens, since coming to Derby Professor Mitchell has immersed herself in her adopted city, gaining recognition



from business leaders, educators and industry for her energy, innovation and dedication in supporting the city and developing the university to offer the best educational opportunities and experience for students and the wider community.

Through her role as chair of the Derby Opportunity Area Board, which she has held for the past five years, her regional impact has been particularly felt.

In 2015, Derby was towards the bottom nationally in school attainment, but since she has been at the helm, this has improved by 25 places, and 70 per cent of children have achieved good development, closing the gap by four per cent towards the national level of 72 per cent.

She also gives her time freely to support a range of business and cultural events, including as chair of the Midlands Enterprise Universities Board and as a proactive member of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership Board.

The list of honours, published by the Government's Cabinet Office, marks the achievements and service of extraordinary people across the UK.

Among the recipients were a number of Olympians, including multiple gold medal winning swimmer Adam Peaty.

In the past, Adam, who was made an OBE, has been supported by the Derbyshire Institute of Sport.

## CHARITY FLUTTERS INTO THE RECORD BOOKS WITH BUTTERFLY DISPLAY

Charity Safe and Sound, which works to prevent child exploitation, has been confirmed as a world record breaker for a butterfly display it staged at the Derbion shopping centre.

Last year, the charity created more than 1,000 printed butterflies, which were displayed at Derbion in the hope of being recognised by Guinness World Records for the world's 'largest display of butterfly replicas'.

After being painstakingly measured and counted by University of Derby entomology professor Karim Vahed and Derbyshire police PCSOs Leah Eyre and Abigail Cook, detailed evidence was submitted to Guinness World Records.

It has now approved the attempt, which has beaten the previous world record of 720.

Visitors to the Safe and Sound stand at Derbion and several local businesses took the opportunity to be part of the world record attempt by buying copies of the butterflies for themselves – designed and printed by Safe and Sound supporters Mercia Image Print.

The butterflies are still available to buy online at <https://www.safeandsoundgroup.org.uk/butterfly-world-record/>.

Thanks to the generosity of the public and the

support of the main sponsor, personalised giftbox company Colleague Box, more than £3,600 was raised.

Tracy Harrison, chief executive at Safe and Sound, said: "We are over the moon to be the holders of a coveted world record.

"One of my favourite television programmes as a child was watching Roy Castle and the team on Record Breakers and it is very exciting that we have made the official log.

"Most importantly, the world record attempt has given us the opportunity to raise awareness of the dangers facing children and young people both online and in our local communities.

"It has also enabled us to raise money to help take our Butterfly Appeal to the next level and our thanks go to our amazing supporters Mercia Image Print, Colleague Box and the Derbion shopping centre."

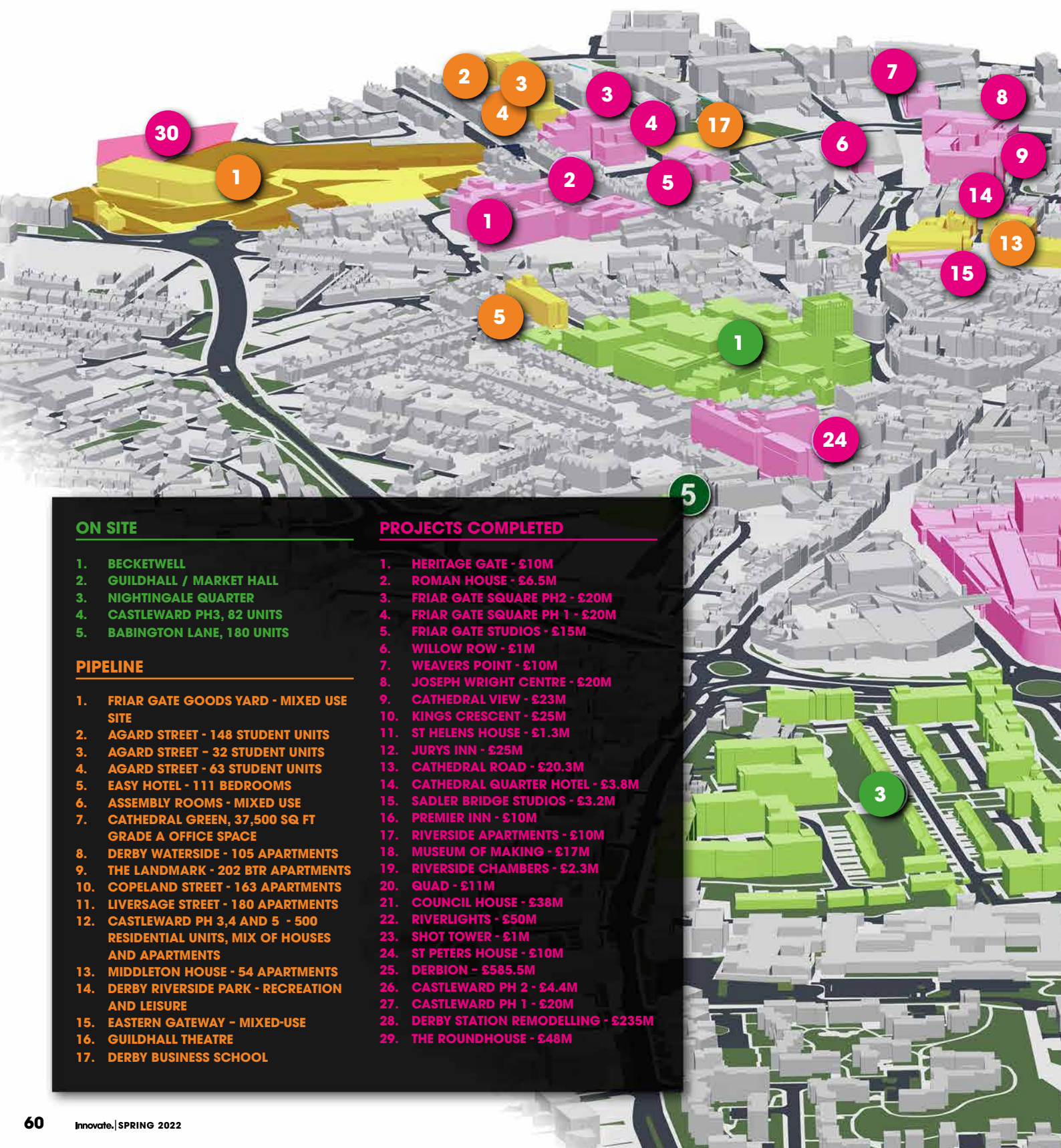
Derby-based Safe and Sound first launched its Butterfly Appeal in June 2019 to enable it to expand the breadth and scope of its work.

The appeal has since garnered wide ranging support from individuals, groups and businesses across the city and county – enabling the charity to support more than 300 young people, 60 families and to engage with over 1,000 people.





# Breathing new life into the heart of our city



## ON SITE

1. BECKETWELL
2. GUILDHALL / MARKET HALL
3. NIGHTINGALE QUARTER
4. CASTLEWARD PH3, 82 UNITS
5. BABINGTON LANE, 180 UNITS

## PIPELINE

1. FRIAR GATE GOODS YARD - MIXED USE SITE
2. AGARD STREET - 148 STUDENT UNITS
3. AGARD STREET - 32 STUDENT UNITS
4. AGARD STREET - 63 STUDENT UNITS
5. EASY HOTEL - 111 BEDROOMS
6. ASSEMBLY ROOMS - MIXED USE
7. CATHEDRAL GREEN, 37,500 SQ FT GRADE A OFFICE SPACE
8. DERBY WATERSIDE - 105 APARTMENTS
9. THE LANDMARK - 202 BTR APARTMENTS
10. COPELAND STREET - 163 APARTMENTS
11. LIVERSAGE STREET - 180 APARTMENTS
12. CASTLEWARD PH 3,4 AND 5 - 500 RESIDENTIAL UNITS, MIX OF HOUSES AND APARTMENTS
13. MIDDLETON HOUSE - 54 APARTMENTS
14. DERBY RIVERSIDE PARK - RECREATION AND LEISURE
15. EASTERN GATEWAY - MIXED-USE
16. GUILDHALL THEATRE
17. DERBY BUSINESS SCHOOL

## PROJECTS COMPLETED

1. HERITAGE GATE - £10M
2. ROMAN HOUSE - £6.5M
3. FRIAR GATE SQUARE PH2 - £20M
4. FRIAR GATE SQUARE PH 1 - £20M
5. FRIAR GATE STUDIOS - £15M
6. WILLOW ROW - £1M
7. WEAVERS POINT - £10M
8. JOSEPH WRIGHT CENTRE - £20M
9. CATHEDRAL VIEW - £23M
10. KINGS CRESCENT - £25M
11. ST HELENS HOUSE - £1.3M
12. JURYS INN - £25M
13. CATHEDRAL ROAD - £20.3M
14. CATHEDRAL QUARTER HOTEL - £3.8M
15. SADLER BRIDGE STUDIOS - £3.2M
16. PREMIER INN - £10M
17. RIVERSIDE APARTMENTS - £10M
18. MUSEUM OF MAKING - £17M
19. RIVERSIDE CHAMBERS - £2.3M
20. QUAD - £11M
21. COUNCIL HOUSE - £38M
22. RIVERLIGHTS - £50M
23. SHOT TOWER - £1M
24. ST PETERS HOUSE - £10M
25. DERBION - £585.5M
26. CASTLEWARD PH 2 - £4.4M
27. CASTLEWARD PH 1 - £20M
28. DERBY STATION REMODELLING - £235M
29. THE ROUNDHOUSE - £48M



**Thriving, sustainable city centres are necessary to support successful local economies and to foster a sense of pride and place.**

**The Derby City Centre masterplan aims to help create:**

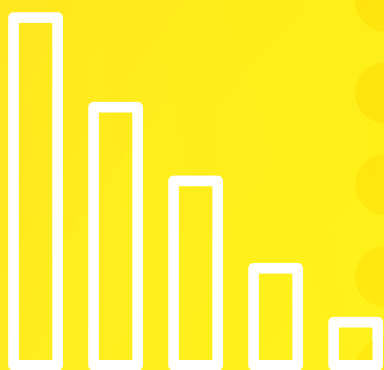
- A city of choice - with attractive destinations such as the £17m Museum of Making;
- A living city - with a range of residential accommodation and the facilities to support successful city living;
- A business city - with a resilient and diversified local economy and a support system to help companies launch and grow;
- A connected city - where local, regional and national mobility is enabled in an effective and sustainable way.

**Our graphic shows key schemes which are helping to transform the city centre.**





# LIVING UP TO THEIR NAME





## WHY FUN-LOVING VIBRANT ACCOUNTANCY TEAM'S BOLD, BRIGHT APPROACH IS WINNING ADMIRERS – AND AWARDS!

**When Bev Wakefield and business partner Ian Ball launched Vibrant Accountancy in September 2019, their vision was to shake up an industry often seen as stuffy and impenetrable.**

Bev had set up on her own following the birth of her first child, after a career working for Cooper Parry and Peak Tax. And then, when son William turned one, she decided that the time was right to push the business forwards to achieve greater success.

A friend put her in touch with Ian, who had decided to branch out on his own, too.

Ian had worked at Mansfield-based Wright Vigar and for Cooper Parry - although the pair had never met as Ian joined after Bev had left the company.

"Ian and I met for coffee and we immediately realised that we had the same vision. We wanted to achieve the same things in the industry," said Bev, who juggled several jobs in various sectors whilst studying for A-Levels and at university 'because I've always

been interested in different industries.'

"After being at Cooper Parry and loving the variety of roles I had there - from initially working in their accounts and audit team to training and qualifying as a Chartered Accountant, Tax Advisor and even working with the Business Recovery and Insolvency team for a short while - I had this overwhelming desire to set up on my own.

"I wanted to have a business that would enable me to earn an income but I also wanted to be there for my young family. That was so important to me."

Ian, a husband and dad to two young children, had similar goals.

The Derby County fan - who runs in his spare time - has a genuine passion for helping others to grow their business and, particularly since Covid struck, there is a genuine demand for this.

He said: "The pandemic made us all reassess our lives and businesses, whether it's a multi-million-pound organisation or a fledgling start-up based in a spare bedroom, have had to adjust rapidly.

"Yes, there was turmoil but many experienced glimpses of kindness and the good-old British 'can-do' attitude was evident wherever you looked. Companies reimaged their business models and, particularly in Derby, we saw several entrepreneurial starts-ups created.

"Vibrant took a hit; we went into March 2020 having had our strongest-ever month. We had taken on lots of new clients and business was booming.

"But, at this point, we decided to take Bev off most of her casework so that she could interpret and share Covid-related financial information to our clients and the wider business population. We knew it was a risk but felt confident that it would pay dividends.

"The economic landscape was constantly changing and there seemed to be an announcement on furlough, grants, loans and tax implications almost every day. Bev was brilliant in breaking down Chancellor Rishi Sunak's jargon and sharing key points from government briefings on social media. She uploaded videos to LinkedIn and YouTube and gave free seminars to help support businesses - and we performed all of our Covid work for free.





THE VIBRANT TEAM'S BOLD APPROACH HAS BEEN A HIT WITH CLIENTS

"This put a huge drain on our resources and in those two months, our revenue fell substantially. But the extra awareness achieved - and Bev's expertise - helped us to attract clients and, thankfully, we returned to pre-Covid levels in June 2020."

Vibrant had demonstrated that they were different; they had realigned how people viewed accountants and the humility and understanding shown, particularly during the online webinars and client Teams meetings, where you would often get a glimpse into the home lives of those participating, were so obviously at the heart of the business.

"I'm big on emotional intelligence," said Bev. "To be emotionally intelligent means to understand the diversity and challenges facing your business, your clients and your home life. And I think that is so important in this day and age, especially after a global pandemic."

"Since the very first lockdown, we made sure that we were flexible enough to offer support as and when it was needed, to clients who were also having to juggle their own remote working and, in many cases, home-schooling commitments."

"We were also mindful of the challenges that isolation of working remotely could present to our team and so we instigated daily conversations, weekly yoga and mindfulness sessions and a mark out of 10 system where we reported how we felt to share our worries and concerns openly and honestly."

Fortunately, Bev and Ian had invested in systems and had remote working to a tee ahead of the lockdowns caused by Covid. During the pandemic, they then invested in their cyber security to ensure that everything was secure.

But while advances in technology - the 'Zoom Boom' - mean that millions of businesses can now operate from pretty much anywhere, Bev and Ian were keen to return to the office - they're currently based in Duffield Road but have plans to move to bigger premises in 2022 - and to reconnect with their team and clients.

"We faced the connectivity, logistic and technological challenges of continuing to operate during lockdown and under restrictions," said Ian, "and as well as Bev taking part in 20 videos and dozens of webinars during this period, we

hosted all of our client meetings online."

"We weathered the storm; we worked hard to ensure that we were operationally slick throughout and that our business support ethos and vision 'to be different' was a part of everything we did."

"But we're very much a 'people first' company and the buzz of being back in the office, being back with our team, seeing clients face-to-face and emerging from Covid stronger than we would have been if it had never happened was great."

Bev and Ian were also keen to focus on the positives from lockdown and have carried on providing flexible working for their team - Sam, Emma, Lynn, Lauren, Zoe, Emily and latest recruit, Katie.

With 11 children and nine dogs between the Vibrant team - from Vibrant Coordinator Lynn's fun-loving Golden Retriever, Reggie, and Zoe's two Labradors to the latest acquisition, Bev's puppy, Luna - the desire to get out and about, exploring the rolling hills of Derbyshire is never too far away.

Bev says that getting a good dose of the Great Outdoors is something





which she and Ian encourage their growing team to do often.

"We're so lucky to have beautiful countryside right on our doorstep," she said.

"Everyone is pretty outdoorsy here - cycling, running, cross fit, walking the dogs, spinning, netball, and hiking are just a few of the activities we all get up to outside of the office!"

"The health and wellbeing of our team is so, so important to us."

Wellbeing is something that Bev is passionate about. So much so that, in July 2020, she joined the board of children's mental health service Bridge the Gap, helping them to make the transition into a Community Interest Company so that they could access further funding.

"Bridge the Gap provide such a vitally important service and what they are aiming to achieve in Derby is something which I'm super excited about," added Bev.

"They have an incredible team there and I am proud to be a director on their board, supporting them and guiding them.

"Whilst I have no experience in child mental health, I do have two

young children myself and I'm acutely aware of how very much in demand the services of Bridge the Gap are right now."

This human centric approach - "we like to think of ourselves as an arm around the shoulders of our clients," says Bev - is what has made Vibrant Accountancy stand out from the crowd. That, and the fact that they take pride in 'breaking down the jargon'.

Their bold, bright branding, marketing and, obviously, their ability to help clients successfully manage their accounts also makes them market-disrupters in an industry dominated by well-established, big-name players.

Vibrant are champions of local businesses, too.

When everyone was working remotely, Vibrant had Derby fashion designer Mr Shaw create the team comfortable 'working from home' wear; a hybrid between smart office wear and more casual home wear.

The pair had worked with Mr Shaw founder Karl Shaw before; his other business - Silver Birch Creative - generated the name 'Vibrant Accountancy' and company logo,

which features a big V. The brief was to create a 'non-accounting' look that was big, bold and bright, and was as much a description of their style as it was their name.

Vibrant have worked collaboratively with personalised gift company Colleague Box and Derby-based Penguin PR - for which the trio were shortlisted for an award - and advised the next generation of entrepreneurs as part of the East Midlands Chamber's Generation Next programme, with Bev presenting a webinar aimed at helping young entrepreneurs.

"Our aim is to become the first local accountancy firm of our size to supplement core book-keeping, tax advice, VAT and year-end, cloud-based accounting services with mentoring, coaching and general business support as part of a holistic approach to our clients," said Ian.

"We already offer fully outsourced finance functions for many of our clients and this is a huge focus and niche for us. We have the perfect team to offer the book-keeping, the Finance Manager role, all the way through to the Finance Director and Board input"

"Being a business owner can be tough and lonely. And we want





# YOU HAVE TO HAVE COMPLETE BELIEF IN WHAT YOU ARE DOING TO SUCCEED

01/02/03/04: BEV, IAN AND THE TEAM ARE EXCITED ABOUT WHAT THE FUTURE MONTHS HAVE IN STORE FOR THE BUSINESS - AND FOR DERBY. "WE WANT TO BE PART OF IT ALL - TO RIDE THE WAVE OF EXCITEMENT," SAYS IAN.

our clients to be able to talk to us about their worries and concerns. We want to be seen as more than their accountants. We want to be seen as an extension to their team; an arm around the shoulder."

Bev added: "You have to have complete belief in what you're doing to succeed. Being a business owner...the work never stops. It's not necessarily being at my desk all day; you're always thinking of the next thing; thinking about your clients. You're thinking about your team and the challenges and opportunities to grow.

"It's important, though, to balance this with the many other roles you have in life; being a parent, a daughter, wife and friend. I'd definitely recommend finding something that helps you to unwind for the sake of your sanity - and also that of your team and your clients."

Reflecting on a successful - and certainly eventful - couple of years, Ian and Bev single out winning the prestigious Accounting Excellence New Firm of the Year award in November 2021 as one of their highlights - and they are hoping for more honours in 2022.

They were praised by judges in a strong field for 'continuing to disrupt

the market and raising the bar' and Bev says it was a big moment for the team.

"We were delighted just to be shortlisted for the Accounting Excellence New Firm of the Year award, so to go on and win it was something else," she said. "Ian and I are really, incredibly proud of Vibrant Accountancy and just how far we've come since forming.

"We took the team down to London for the awards on the train. It was great to get the team glammed up for the event and we were up against some fantastic accountants, who I have a lot of respect for.

"It's a real honour to be recognised by your peers."

Always keen to learn more, improve and grow, Vibrant often ask their clients how they can improve their service - and they are planning big things for 2022.

"We specialise in helping business owners and their companies, largely businesses with turnovers of between £500,000 and £3 million, throughout the East Midlands," said Ian. "Our growth has forced us to revise our business plan and forecasts, as

we've far out-performed where we expected to be."

"We're predicting doubling our turnover for 2022/23. But we don't want to rest on our laurels; we want to continue to be market-disrupters and our passion is empowering others - whether that's our team, clients or associates."

Bev added: "We started the New Year by welcoming our ninth member to the team, Katie, and are looking forward to seeing how she can grow with Vibrant.

"Emily will be taking her chartered accountancy exams whilst working with Vibrant, as we see that as the next challenge for her. And we'll be helping Katie grow with the next level of her AAT exams, Level 4.

"We now have brilliant people in sector specific roles; Lauren, for example, joined us mid-2021 and her role has a specific emphasis on research, development and other tax planning.

"There will be subsequent appointments, whilst also keeping to our strong internal guidelines of turning accounts around in two months - this is almost unheard of in the industry; it's usually left until the nine-month deadline!



"We hope this desire will mean that staff will seek employment with us. We want to boost the local economy, recruiting staff who we can empower, and training apprentices who can blossom.

"Ian and I are constantly wanting to develop both the company and as individuals. We want to offer business advice beyond simple finance; we want to help others to make decisions, to grow and to give them financial freedom.

"Our plan is to give all of our clients a combined accounting and business support service. While we will offer many of our business support services in-house, we will also refer clients to a network of trusted organisations. For example, we currently fulfil funding applications and seek finance for our clients through Capitalise."

But, adds Bev, they also want to create accountability.

"So many businesses have great ideas and create fantastic business plans but we want to challenge them and ask, 'Why have you not done what you set out to do?' and to work with them to find a solution," she said. "We want to have spine as well as heart."

Bev is quick to point out, though, that success means different things for different people.

"Success could be turning over your first £1 million," she said. "Or it could simply be having more time to spend with loved ones, doing the things that you enjoy. We want to work with SMEs and larger organisations to help them achieve their dreams."

Vibrant also want to stay ahead of the game by embracing innovations in accounting technology.

"There are so many amazing tools and apps these days which make the actual nitty gritty of accounting so much easier; things that can help to make invoicing and payments easier," said Bev.

"We've invested strongly in software for Vibrant which benefits both clients and our team; we invested in tech that ensures our onboarding process is as informative, thorough and frictionless as possible, which helps to boost clients' confidence in the service they receive. It's the first step to making life easier for customers."

Investing in apps and tech that streamline the business doesn't

mean, though, that Vibrant will lose their 'people-first' approach.

Ian said: "Vibrant cultivates a people-focused culture, which encourages staff to get to know clients in order to suggest and offer additional services that would benefit businesses – and long may this continue.

"We feel that this is important to us – it's who we are and one of our core values, having that 'human approach'.

"We're excited about what 2022 will bring for Vibrant Accountancy. There is a buzz about Derby, with the city being shortlisted as City of Culture for 2025, a new generation of innovative entrepreneurs emerging from the pandemic and established big players such as Rolls-Royce and Toyota constantly evolving to adapt to the changing world we live in.

"We want to be a part of it all – to ride the wave of excitement, whilst remaining true to our core values; to dream big and act big, empower, celebrate success and to have fun doing it.

"That's what we're going to continue to do in 2022."





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## NEW BUSINESS PARK COULD CREATE UP TO 1,250 JOBS

St Modwen Logistics has announced it will invest £46.5 million to build a new business park in Derby, which could create up to 1,250 jobs.

The firm, a leading logistics developer and manager, is to regenerate a 67-acre brownfield site on Wyvern Way, adjacent to Pride Park, to create St Modwen Park Derby.

The development will deliver more than 850,000 square feet of logistics and warehousing space.

The announcement is the culmination of seven years' work between St Modwen Logistics, Derby City Council and Network Rail.

Polly Troughton, managing director at St Modwen Logistics, said: "St Modwen Logistics is committed to investing in regeneration projects with the aim of supporting local economic growth and generating jobs for local communities."

Councillor Steve Hassall, the city council's cabinet member for regeneration, decarbonisation and

strategic planning and transport, added: "This is yet another excellent example of investment confidence in our fantastic city.

"It demonstrates that Derby is not only open for business but is fast becoming the go-to location for businesses who can see the huge potential of operating from here."

John Forkin, managing director of Marketing Derby, said the development was a massive vote of confidence in the city.

"This quality commercial park will form an important part of the pitch that Marketing Derby makes to potential investors and we look forward to supporting commercial agents in landing end-users."

The first phase of St Modwen Park Derby will comprise investment of £46.5 million to acquire land from joint venture partner Network Rail and deliver the first four logistics units, which will

total 303,000 square feet.

Those units will be built speculatively and are due to be completed and ready for occupation in September 2022.

The second phase is expected to follow within the next two years and will deliver the remaining 550,000 square feet of warehouse space.

Following the recent completion of the A52 Wyvern Transport Improvement Scheme, St Modwen Park Derby will give future occupiers prime access to Derby city centre, as well as the A50 and Junction 25 of the M1.

According to St. Modwen, the Derby development will offer its most sustainable warehouse space to date.

The park will also feature a number of health and wellbeing enhancements. They include a fitness trim trail, landscaped areas with outdoor seating, riverside walks and a cycle path.

## INVESTOR BUYS CITY CENTRE HOME OF MAJOR RETAILER IN £2.25M DEAL

A building in Derby city centre occupied by retailer TK Maxx has been sold to overseas investors in a deal worth £2.25 million.

TK Maxx has been operating from the site in Albion Street since 2017 – and has a lease on the building until 2032.

Close to the entrance of the Derbion shopping centre, it comprises three units, which were combined to create 34,464 square feet of retail accommodation over three floors.

The deal was secured by FHP Property Consultants.

Darran Severn, from FHP, said: "I am pleased to have been involved in this sale and this has truly been a great result for all parties.

"The property has been sold to overseas investors who own several other assets that are let to TK Maxx.

"Albion Street has suffered in recent years but many of the shops on this street have changed ownership within the last 12 months and I believe this area will only get better."

The TK Maxx building was initially bought in 2016 by RDI. At the time, Marketing Derby and Derby City Council worked with RDI to identify potential regeneration opportunities for the street and how to integrate its asset into those plans.

They also helped RDI secure the TK Maxx lease, creating 35 jobs.



# BH

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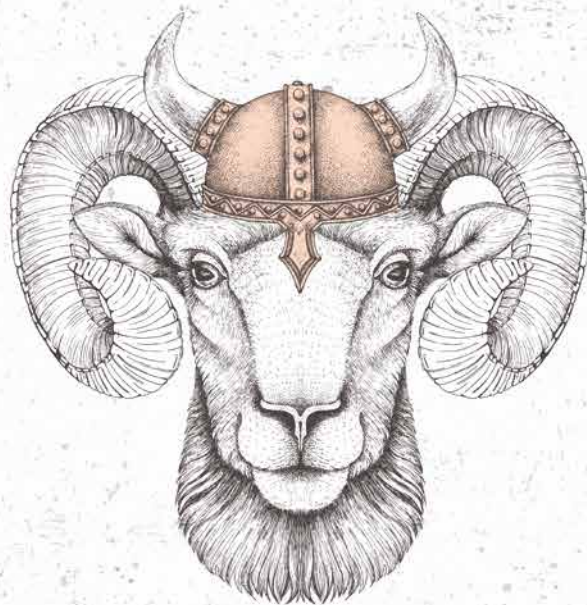
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# The consciousness of place



**JOHN FORKIN MBE,  
MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
MARKETING DERBY**

**It's a rare thing, to be alert to the fact you are not only living through history but may actually be playing an active role in shaping it.**

This is the case for tens of thousands of people in and around Derby, as the hashtag 'SaveDerbyCounty' regularly trends on social media platforms and national media attention fixes to the daily drama of the 138-year-old football club's fight for survival.

However, this article is not about the campaign to save the Rams from liquidation because, as I write, the campaign continues.

I want to capture what happens when a spontaneous coalition of communities express a common will and desire to protect an institution and way of life from disappearing.

It's about the true meaning of the 'people's priorities'.

The early months of 2022 will be remembered in the history of the city - and I suspect also in the history of English football - for the role that people played in protecting one of football's founding clubs.

There are two precedents I can think of when, what I will call 'the consciousness of place', became a mainstream concern of citizens, who then took matters in their own hands and decided to shape, as opposed to witness, history; in 1971 when the city faced the collapse of Rolls-Royce and in 2011, when Bombardier threatened to leave the city.

In both instances, campaigns were launched, importantly engaging a broad cross-section of diverse communities, myriad interests and varied politics.

In 1971, Rolls-Royce suffered massive losses as a result of its RB211 aero engine development and went into administration, facing extinction and threatening the loss of 20,000 plus jobs.

In 2011, Bombardier lost two multi-billion pound UK government contracts (to Japan and Germany respectively) and the company began to lose faith in the need for a UK presence. Their departure would end train manufacturing, again with the immediate loss of 20,000 plus jobs.

In both cases - the disappearance of Rolls-Royce or Bombardier - the concern was primarily economic impact but it was also psychological, a serious bruise on the identity of place - city and country.

Just think, had these campaigns been lost, then the UK would no longer have either an aero engine or train industry today.



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## 2022 could be a new chapter in citizen engagement as we shape our own history.

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For Derby, these battles were both business and personal.

Home to the world's first factory in 1721, Derby has always been a proud place of manufacturing and making, all through the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

The city was not going to lose Rolls-Royce or Bombardier without a fight and campaigns were launched, petitions signed, lobbies made, debates held in Parliament - all urging the Government to step in and support both the city and British jobs.

Both campaigns succeeded.

Rolls-Royce was nationalised in 1971, its R&D thus protected and allowed to flourish, before the company was taken back into private ownership as a PLC in the late 1980s.

Today, with a truly global footprint, Rolls-Royce remains anchored in Derby, employing 13,000 people directly, and many more in supply chains in a relationship that goes back over 100 years.

In the case of Bombardier, the company agreed to stay in Derby, winning the next major government contract to build the Crossrail trains.

Last year, the world's second largest rail company, Alstom, bought Bombardier and Derby is now their largest site globally. The company recently celebrated winning the contract to build the HS2 trains. The relationship between the rail sector and city goes back 180 years.

It's in this context that I see the 2022 edition - the campaign to save Derby County - with its 60,000 petitioners, 10,000 marchers, public-private and political support, local and national media coverage and millions of hits across the virtual world.

This campaign though has been about so much more than football.

Under the slogan 'One Club - One City', it has shown a subtle understanding of the importance of identity and place - a passionate clarion call for people from a range of communities, demographics, age, gender and interests.

Many people on the march were not even football supporters but they innately understood its value to our identity and purpose as a place.

This sense of common purpose has been knitted into broad support for the city's bid to become the UK City of Culture and also the competition for Derby to become home to the Great British Railways.

I am not naive enough to think for a minute that the diverse communities engaged in saving Derby County, and in supporting the other competitions, have the same attachments to particular policies or ideologies - be it politics, Covid, Brexit and other touchstones in our current culture wars.

I am sure that between us we disagree on many things, which is healthy.

However, for too long the public discourse has been dominated by a small clique of what some call 'nay-sayers' - busy bodies and keyboard warriors who love to put the place down, claiming 'nothing ever happens in Derby'.

What I do now know is to call time on this faux narrative, the cheap talk that Derby and Derbeians are negative about their city, that they don't care for its future.

Quite the opposite, 1971, 2011 and now 2022, are all proof positive that Derby people do care and, when pushed, will stand up for what is right and demand response from those in power.

Derby is not Disneyland, there are many great things about the city but also many challenges that need fundamental change. We have to be honest enough to talk about this and deliver tangible change.

Whilst we are home to the highest salaries outside London, our social mobility is shameful.

Whilst there has been significant investment in our city centre, it is not enough and we must sort out issues such as our riverside and the Assembly Rooms.

The nay-sayers latch onto these themes and, maybe in the past, we have not been honest with communities on the difficulty that those challenges bring.

Could there be a better time to engage our communities in our future place now they have shown their passion and willingness?

Over the next few months, we will be seeking to use that appetite as a platform for change. We will be opening an Urban Room, which will engage people in shaping our place, and we will be launching walking tours of the city and recruiting teams of city ambassadors.

The local poet Jamie Thrasivoulou describes Derby as the 'underdog city' and I like this - it feels real. We don't ask for much, we don't demand special favours, we tend to just get on with life.

2022 could be a new chapter in citizen engagement as we shape our own history. 📌



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# Naturally sparkling... Lesley's exciting new drinks business has city fizzing!

**INSPIRATIONAL ENTREPRENEUR IS  
NAMED RISING STAR FOR 2022**

Marketing Derby  
**RISING STAR**



## **A business that creates and sells a healthy alternative to fizzy drinks has been named as Marketing Derby's Rising Star for 2022.**

So Good Kombucha, which was founded by Lesley So, has been chosen by the city and county's inward investment agency as the winner of this year's competition, which aims to give entrepreneurs and new businesses a helping hand.

Lesley, who was recently named as one of the top 100 female entrepreneurs in the UK by f:Entrepreneur, said: "I am very grateful for this amazing honour and opportunity.

"I have been welcomed with open arms by the Derby business community and am so thankful for the support.

"Having the brand associated with the highly reputable agency that is Marketing Derby will help us to connect more with the Derby business community – and promote the city to the rest of the UK."

Lindsey Hatfield, from Marketing Derby, said: "Once again, the standard of entries for this year's Rising Star competition was extremely high. So Good Kombucha is a brilliant new business, run by an inspirational entrepreneur."

Lesley came up with the idea for So Good Kombucha after noticing a gap in the UK market for a non-alcoholic fizzy drink alternative that is vegan, allergen-free, natural, low-sugar and, above all, healthy.

Naturally sparkling and slightly tangy, kombucha is a fermented tea, with origins thought to go back over 2,000 years to ancient China.

Lesley's family had always brewed and loved the drink but most of the kombucha she tried in the UK were either not authentic or did not taste right.

So, in 2020, Lesley decided to leave her job at Rolls-Royce, where she was vice-president of marketing, to pursue her dream of running her own start-up business, producing kombucha.

Since beginning trade in May last year, So Good Kombucha has sold well over 10,000 bottles, with orders coming from all over the UK and abroad.

Despite the growth in demand, every bottle is still brewed, bottled and labelled by Lesley herself. Product flavours include elderflower mojito and strawberry basil.

But as well as being an entrepreneur, Lesley is a champion of the marginalised in the community, particularly refugees and asylum seekers, who have been forced to leave their homes in pursuit of safety and freedom.

She is a trustee at two local charities – Upbeat Communities and EMCF – both of which support marginalised communities.

## **I have been welcomed with open arms by the Derby business community and am so thankful for the support.**



So, when she founded So Good Kombucha, she wanted to create a business with a social purpose that was sustainable and ethical. This has led to Lesley receiving national recognition.

As well as scooping the Rising Star accolade, Lesley has also been recently named as one of the UK's most inspirational and dynamic female entrepreneurs by the f:Entrepreneur 'also100' campaign.

Delivered by Small Business Britain, f:Entrepreneur was launched in 2017 to highlight the stories of amazing female business owners and help provide inspiration and role models across the wider small business community. It showcases trail-blazing female founders who lead businesses alongside other responsibilities, such as

volunteering, mentoring and community support.

On being featured in the #also100 line-up, Lesley said: "It is such an honour to be selected as part of this amazing community of female entrepreneurs.

"So Good Kombucha was born to introduce the UK to kombucha and to be an eco-friendly business that cares for our planet and employs refugees.

"I feel that we are still at the start of our journey, so to be featured on the #also100 line-up is incredibly humbling."

As the 2022 Rising Star, the business will receive a complimentary year of Marketing Derby Bondholder membership, along with local publicity and invitations to must-attend events.

And on being made this year's Rising Star, Lesley added: "I'm convinced that Derby has one of the most vibrant, friendly and exciting small business networks in the UK and it would be an absolute dream to be able to get more actively involved in this community.

"I'd love to be able to use some of my skills in giving back to this wonderful community that has been so generous to me in my start-up journey.

"In particular, as a BIPOC (black, indigenous and people of colour) female entrepreneur, I would like to set an example for other minority groups in the community to have the courage to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams – and Derby is a great place to make this happen."

Lesley has been welcomed to the Bondholder community by last year's Rising Star winner The Swap Shop.

The Swap Shop team said: "The Swap Shop proudly passes on the Rising Star to Lesley and So Good Kombucha.

"We just know that she will have the support of an amazing group of businesses and business owners throughout Derby and Derbyshire during 2022.

"Being the 2021 Rising Star has enabled Swap Shop to grow from that early conversation in the very first online Zoom of Marketing Derby's into a membership of almost 1,000 across the UK. It truly does all start in Derby!" 🍷





# Welcome to the team!

Marketing Derby is proud to announce a number of new and returning members of its Bondholder family. It's really great to have them on the team!

**Omeeto** is a technology-led commercial property agency offering virtual viewings as standard, supplying commercial property advice and specialising in the sale and letting of all non-domestic properties and land.

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

**Upbeat Communities** is a Christian charity that exists to help refugees settle and rebuild their lives in the UK, operates a language school and also runs Upbeat Clean.

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

**ConnektRed** is a Vodafone franchise covering Derby, Burton and Cannock, and is based in Derby under the Vodafone name. The business is really keen to support other companies in Derby.

[www.conekrted.co.uk/derby-team](http://www.conekrted.co.uk/derby-team)

**Down to Earth** is a social project that operates allotments to raise awareness of the benefits of growing your own produce. It aims to combine educational, social and public spaces to showcase how food can be grown through innovative, sustainable and traditional methods.

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

**DSP Interiors** is a multi-award-winning office design and re-fit company, which was established in 1988 and has forged strong relationships with the best suppliers in the sector to offer the highest quality service.

[www.dsp-solutions.co.uk](http://www.dsp-solutions.co.uk)

**Reach Online** is an events, conference and exhibition venue. Previously known as Riverside, the business also offers co-working space.

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

**Develop Training** is one of the UK's leading accredited providers of compliance, technical and safety training. Its learners include some of the UK's largest and best-known organisations from the utilities and construction, defence, healthcare, facilities management and telecommunication sectors.

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

**Althaus Digital** is a high-quality provider of digital and IT apprenticeship training courses, scouting the best talent for employers and supporting learners to develop the cutting-edge technical proficiency and leadership skills they need to make a real impact.

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

**Nuclear AMRC:** The Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre helps UK manufacturers win work across the nuclear sector – in new build, operations and decommissioning.

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

**St Modwen: St. Modwen Park Derby** is a 50-acre, high-profile industrial and logistics park being developed in partnership with Network Rail. The site occupies a prime position, immediately adjacent to Pride Park and Wyvern Retail Park, which will provide high-quality logistics and production space.

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

**Cavendish & London Property Group** is a property developer based in the East Midlands. Established landlords for more than 20 years, the company's portfolio consists of residential and commercial properties which it offers to businesses, professionals and students.

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

**Rammsanderson** works with a wide range of public and private sector clients, providing ecological consultancy, flood risk assessment and arboriculture services. The team are an RISQS-approved supplier and its PTS-accredited ecologists are experienced in undertaking surveys within the rail corridor.

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

**Global Radio** is Europe's largest radio company and home to some of the UK's best-loved radio stations, including Heart, Capital, LBC, Capital XTRA, Capital Dance, Classic FM, Smooth, Radio X and Gold.

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

**So Good Kombucha:** Brewed, Bottled and labelled here in Derby, the company offers a healthy, alternative, fizzy, fermented tea.

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

**Divine Box** is a handmade bath bomb company, producing up to 2000 bath bombs a day and distributing to companies such as Colleague Box. It was highly commended within Marketing Derby's Rising Star awards in 2021.

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

**Gold Box Productions** is a video production company for the new digital age. Launched by four graduates of the University of Derby, the company has filmed for the likes of the British Army and Bear Grylls. It was highly commended by Marketing Derby in its Rising Star awards for 2021.

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

**Mini-Aperture** is a commercial photography company, specialising in virtual tours and Google tours to help put businesses on the map – literally! It was highly commended in Marketing Derby's Rising Star awards for 2021.

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





## **The Last Word**

**Thanks to the enormous efforts of our NHS, we have begun 2022 with fresh hope of a return to some sort of normality. But, as we emerge from our long, dark Covid 'tunnel', we are confronted by a new set of challenges - rising costs of living, energy, materials and production - that will impact us all.**

**These increases are squeezing viability on new development schemes, at a time when the business market was already adjusting to the mass shift to home-working.**

**However, as with our battle against coronavirus, there is reason for optimism.**

**Raybould & Sons have recently disposed of 35,000 square feet of office space in Derby. In each of these nine individual deals, the buyers or tenants were looking to expand - not downsize - their operations.**

**And, despite the acceleration in online shopping, 'physical' retail should not be written off. It remains a vital part of the mix that visitors want to see in our town and city centres.**

**Derby has a track record of resilience. And, with the council, the business improvement districts and landlords working collaboratively, we should look forward and seize our opportunities.**

**Martin Langsdale MBE**

Chartered Surveyor, Raybould & Sons  
Chair, Derby Cathedral Quarter BID



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