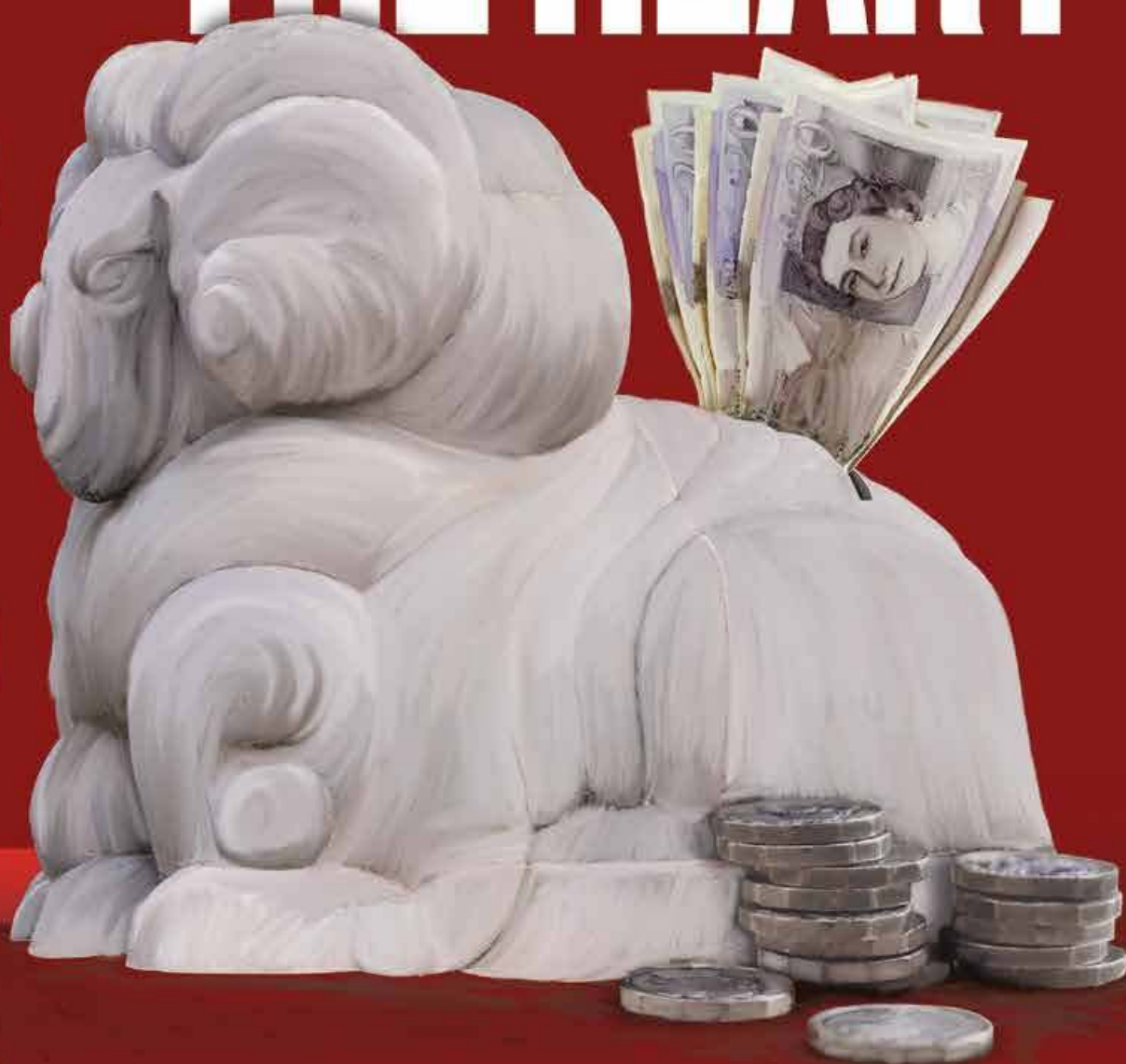


SUMMER 2021

GOOD FOR THE HEART



Millions of pounds of investments
show faith in future of city centre



IT'S A FACT

DERBY IS FORECAST TO ACHIEVE A
25 PER CENT INCREASE IN GVA
FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2021

(UK POWERHOUSE REPORT, IRWIN MITCHELL AND
CENTRE FOR BUSINESS ECONOMICS RESEARCH)

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COMPANIES AND PROFILES THE TALENTED
INDIVIDUALS LEADING THEM. ENJOY!**



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Want to get in touch? Email us at:
press@marketingderby.co.uk

Produced for Marketing Derby by
STEVE HALL
COMMUNICATIONS

CONTRIBUTORS



Steve Hall

Writing and editing:
Steve Hall has worked in the media for more than 35 years and is a former Editor and Managing Director of the Derby Telegraph. He has won numerous industry awards, including UK Newspaper of the Year and UK Editor of the Year. He now runs his own media consultancy.



Andy Gilmore

Design: Andy Gilmore is a creative designer with 13 years experience in the design industry. Currently working at Katapult, Andy has worked internationally with some of the world's biggest brands.



Ian Hodgkinson

Images: Ian Hodgkinson has been capturing Derbyshire life in pictures for 16 years. He's a former Deputy Picture Editor of the Derby Telegraph and now runs his own photography business, PictureIt Media.

Additional contributors:
Neil White
and Sarah Newton

OUR *Heart's* DESIRE



INVESTORS HELPING DRIVE NEW BELIEF IN AN EXCITING FUTURE FOR DERBY CITY CENTRE

You might expect Adam Tamsett to look like a man who has been carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders for the past year.

As general manager of Derbion, he has had to cope with three Covid-enforced lockdowns, previous owners' going into administration and the loss of big-name tenants, such as Debenhams and Topshop, as the pandemic accelerated changes in consumer behaviour and an increase in online shopping.

But there's no head in hands or even furrowed brow when we meet. Instead, Adam is upbeat and sporting a wide grin.

"I couldn't be more optimistic about the future for Derbion and for Derby," he declares.

And Adam's not just putting on a brave face. He genuinely has plenty to smile about.

His team is celebrating signing new high-profile retailers for the centre - including tenants who will take the space vacated by Debenhams and Topshop.

The centre's new owners, Cale Street, have committed to a major programme of improvements, including enhancements to Derbion's food and drink offer.

And the Government has agreed to provide multi-million-pound funding to help create an impressive new 'Eastern Gateway' link between the centre and the bus station.

Rather than sharing the gloomy outlook for High Street retailing - and city centres generally - that some commentators espouse, Adam is excited about the future.

And so are Cale Street. It's why they decided to take sole control of the centre after intu's demise - having already spent £186 million acquiring an initial 50 per cent

stake in 2019 - and it's why they are pledging to spend further.

The company, which is backed by the Kuwaiti Investment Office, can see hundreds of millions of pounds being poured into the areas around Derbion.

Barely out of the centre's shadow, major progress is being made on the £200 million redevelopment of Becketwell.

World-leading concert arena operator ASM Global has been lined up to run the new performance venue being built there and the UK's biggest name in the private rental sector, Grainger PLC, is on board to fund, acquire and operate the 259 apartments to be constructed in phase one of the development.

A short stroll over the ring road from Derbion and two schemes which will help transform city living in Derby continue apace.

The tower crane rising up from the site of the former Derbyshire Royal Infirmary is a symbol of the success of The Nightingale Quarter, a £150 million project to build 796 properties. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, it has already sold out its first phase and is powering ahead with further development.

Neighbouring Castleward has already completed and sold around 200 homes and has just been given clearance to proceed with a further 500 as part of a £100 million investment.

The University of Derby has announced ambitious plans for a business school that will house 6,000 students in the city centre.

And global IT business Bam Boom Cloud has agreed to bring its 100 UK employees to an office in Derby's historic Wardwick, thanks, in part, to a Derby City Council scheme which is supporting the relocation.

That same council initiative is seeking to generate further employment in the heart of the city

and is already enabling a feasibility study into future uses for the former Bennett's department store on Iron Gate, as well as assisting the conversion of the empty Berlin's nightclub, in Becket Street, into Grade A office accommodation.

Meanwhile, thousands of visitors are already flocking to the newly-opened £18 million Museum of Making, which is delivering a major boost to Derby's visitor economy.

"When Cale Street made their investment, they did it with their eyes open," says Adam.

"They knew exactly what the state of the retail sector was but what they believed in was Derby. With several major projects set to transform the city over the next few years, they believed there had never been a more exciting time to invest in Derby.

"Derbion sits at the heart of the city and we are incredibly optimistic about the future of retail here and the significant investment planned for the centre is a reflection of the confidence that Cale Street has."

Derbion's story is, in many ways, a metaphor for the wider city's determination to bounce back from adversity and shape an exciting future. Covid has presented both with major challenges but there is a shared belief that better days lie ahead and that, as we emerge from the pandemic, people will want to come back to live, work and play.

The signs are already positive. Although trading at Derbion is not yet back to 2019 levels, when 21 million people visited the centre's 150-plus retail, food and leisure outlets, the picture is improving.

"The pandemic has actually made people realise that the experience and social activity of being in a busy city centre or a busy shopping centre is something that a lot of them have missed," says Adam.

Although he concedes that the coronavirus lockdowns have accelerated changes in customer habits and a shift to online



01. DERBION GENERAL
MANAGER ADAM TAMSETT

02. NEW DEVELOPMENT IS
TRANSFORMING DERBY'S
CASTLEWARD

03. A NUMBER OF NEW RETAILERS
HAVE BEEN SIGNED UP FOR THE
DERBION MALL

04. BAM BOOM CLOUD WILL MAKE
THEIR GLOBAL HQ IN DERBY'S
WARDWICK

spending, he sees a future where in-store and digital retail operate successfully in combination.

"I see the future as a mixture of 'bricks and clicks' and think people will want to do both," he says.

Adam points to "a halo effect" which traders experience in digital sales if they also operate from a physical store, where they can showcase their products, provide great advice and excellent customer service.

He also believes that many consumers now view retail as a leisure experience and are keen to build it into a day out that might also involve coffee or a meal and other activities, such as watching a movie.

Derbion can already cater for these desires but Cale Street is determined to invest further into its provision.

"What this centre has is a great mix of shops, leisure and food all under one roof. The new owners want to strengthen all of those points and to do that we need to invest in the brands and the environment," Adam says.

The first manifestation of that commitment in retail is the signing

of high-profile fashion names Tommy Hilfiger and Mango, with more announcements to follow, including as-yet unnamed new tenants for the whole of the vacated Debenhams outlet and the former Topshop unit.

At this stage Adam is able to say little publicly about who will replace Debenhams but reveals it is a new retailer to Derby and describes the move as "a statement of intent" by Derbyion's operators.

As well as securing new national businesses, Adam is keen to bring in more local traders, following in the footsteps of the likes of fashion retailer Young Ideas and hand-made gift retailer Design 44 – the latter winning a competition which allowed it to initially test its products with the centre's customers. It now has a permanent presence in Derbyion and is opening two stores elsewhere.

Cale Street is also planning substantial improvements to the centre's food and drink offering and further additions to the cinema, bowling and indoor golf attractions that currently make up its leisure destinations.

"We can't stand still. We need to keep changing to reflect what

customers want. The new owners want to invest in bringing in some exciting new food and beverage offers and to create more leisure space. We have a good offer at the moment but we want to make this place amazing in the evening," Adam says.

The centre has recently improved its car park payment system, to make it ticketless and cashless, and has extended its click-and-collect service to allow people to have packages from online retailers delivered to the centre's customer services desk.

Adam is also looking forward to welcoming traders displaced by renovation work at Derby Market Hall into the Eagle Market, believing it will add to the overall vibrancy.

And he's excited by the Government's decision to allocate money from its Future High Streets Fund to the Eastern Gateway - £15 million will be split between the project and the Market Hall – to allow Cale Street to work with the council to create a new public square and gardens, reshape part of the Eagle Market and develop further retail space.

With so much activity within the mall and outside of its walls, it's

perhaps appropriate that the centre's new Derbion branding was developed to bring together its geographical location with the idea of motion – inspired by the city's history of innovation and its ambition.

"I think the city, more so than ever before, is in a state of motion with investment and positive change," says Adam.

One of the scheme's providing that momentum is the transformation of the long-blighted Becketwell area by St James Securities.

Work has already commenced on demolition of redundant buildings and preparation of the site and, when complete, the scheme will provide new apartments, offices, commercial space, a hotel, multi-storey car park, public square and a 3,500-seater performance venue and is expected to create more than 2,000 jobs.

Leeds-based St James Securities, which has an impressive track record of urban regeneration elsewhere in the UK, is celebrating a double coup after bringing big-hitters Grainger and ASM Global on board for the project – a move which will further increase confidence in Derby as an investment destination.

ASM is the world's leading producer of entertainment experiences and has been named preferred bidder to manage, operate and programme the new entertainment and conference venue following a competitive tender process.

Its portfolio already features convention centres and stadiums across five continents, including the AO Arena in Manchester, SSE Wembley Arena and Utilita Arena in Newcastle.

It is projected that the venue will host over 200 cultural and commercial events each year and attract an additional 250,000 visitors to Derby – invigorating the day and night-time economies and boosting the vibrancy of the area.

Paul Morris, development director of St James Securities, said: "We are tremendously excited to be working with Derby City Council and ASM Global on this ambitious project, which will fill a significant gap in the city's cultural landscape and bring an outstanding, modern performance venue to the city.

"Our aim has always been to create a whole new part of Derby city centre with its own

distinct character and identity. For the world's leading venue management and services company to come on-board to deliver this scheme is a real coup for the city and will be key to the future reinvigoration and repositioning of Derby city centre."

Tom Lynch, group commercial director and senior vice president, Europe, of ASM Global described Derby as "an obvious choice" to form part of the company's expansion.

"We look forward to bringing world-class concerts, entertainment and business events to Derby, in an innovative new venue which is perfectly placed to benefit from the demonstrable growth in 3,000-4,000 capacity shows in the UK," he said.

"We have been inspired by the vision shared for the city and the growth and opportunities for the East Midlands economy more

**I THINK
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INVESTMENT
AND POSITIVE
CHANGE**

broadly. Along with a busy concert and entertainment programme, the venue will attract a wide range of business events and provide a great meeting place and activation platform for the region's world-leading industrial sectors.

"We applaud the ambition of St James Securities and Derby City Council in putting the new venue at the heart of what will be hugely important for the regeneration of Becketwell and the future growth of the city and region. We look forward to working with the council as long-term partners on the development of Derby as a destination, as we have done so successfully with city councils across the UK and globally."

The decision by FTSE 250 company Grainger, the UK's largest listed provider of private rental homes, to forward fund, acquire and operate the build-to-rent element of the

Becketwell scheme, at a cost of more than £37 million, is also likely to cause more investors to sit up and take notice of Derby.

Oliver Quarmby, managing director of St James Securities, said: "Grainger are a well-established operator in the sector, with an amazing track record of delivery and a tremendous reputation with tenants.

"To have a FTSE 250 investor on-board with the Becketwell scheme is a massive vote of confidence in Derby and will act as a catalyst to drive subsequent phases of development on the wider Becketwell site."

Helen Gordon, chief executive of Grainger, added: "This acquisition in Derby is an exciting addition to our growing portfolio of high-quality rental homes in the Midlands and our first scheme in Derby, a city which meets our strict investment criteria."

Ian Ferguson, a member of the Government's High Streets Task Force, believes that Derby city centre is in a good position to bounce back post-pandemic and that long-term impacts will be felt more keenly in other cities that had traditionally benefitted from a higher concentration of offices.

"We used to point to research done as recently as 2018 by Centre for Cities that identified that strong city centres had a large proportion of their offer devoted to offices. It's those kind of city centres that have been hardest hit during Covid," he says.

The strategy and development director with Partnerships For Better Business, which manages the Cathedral Quarter and St Peters Quarter Business Improvement Districts, says while significant challenges remain for many businesses, there are also new opportunities.

"We are encouraging people to look at new approaches to the way that they use their buildings – doing things under the same roof, creating something, selling it and even living on the same premises. That approach is being considered by some of the landlords we are working with," he reveals.

Ian believes that a review of the Business Rates system is long overdue and could help level the playing field for bricks and mortar retailers against online competition.

But he already expects the city centre to be a more attractive



proposition for businesses reappraising their office needs in light of the shift to greater home working during lockdown.

"People will be coming into the office not to work from a workstation, because they can do that at home, but to meet people face-to-face, for those conversations that breed new ideas and thinking," he says.

"We expect some of the companies based on business parks, like Pride Park, may think that the clinical environments there do not give them the dynamic experience the city centre can, where their people can also spend time eating, shopping and meeting others.

"There are clearly opportunities for Derby city centre. It needs to provide the right facilities for doing that - increasing green open spaces and providing flexible space and serviced space for businesses."

One of the companies that has already decided to swap a business park location for a city centre presence is Bam Boom Cloud.

The global IT firm had been part of Cooper Parry until it was bought out by its management team earlier this year and will move from its previous Castle Donington home

to new headquarters in Derby's historic Wardwick.

Executive chairman Brett Critchley said the team was excited by the buzz of the city centre.

"Our people can - and do - work successfully from home but they have missed the creativity of being with the wider team. This solution will offer them the best of both worlds. They will be able to combine working from home with coming into the office to interact with colleagues," he said.

Chief executive Vicky Critchley added: "We are excited by Derby's plans to rejuvenate its city centre. It's an exciting time for us to make the move.

"We also think we will be good for Derby's future and for the economy of the city centre. We are already a global technology business and we have ambitious plans for further growth and to recruit more staff."

The firm, which has operations in the US, Canada, India and Ireland and is looking to increase its international footprint, has signed a five-year lease on a three-storey Grade II-listed building and has drawn up exciting plans for a new internal layout - including the creation of a staff bar and computer games area.

Its move, scheduled for the summer, has been assisted by Marketing Derby, property group Staton Young, which owns the building, and the city council, which used funds from the Government's Additional Restrictions Grant to help with fit-out costs of the new offices.

Paul Simpson, the council's chief executive, said Bam Boom Cloud's decision was a major endorsement of the city's coronavirus economic recovery strategy and, in particular, its efforts to attract more high-value employment into the city centre.

"It's hugely symbolic that a growing technology business like Bam Boom Cloud has chosen to base its global headquarters in the city centre. It's exactly the kind of high-value investment that we are trying to attract," said Mr Simpson.

"These knowledge-based businesses offer great employment opportunities and will help us attract and retain talent. They have been resilient during the pandemic and, traditionally, have been under-represented in the city centre."

John Forkin, managing director of Marketing Derby, said he hoped other investors would now follow Bam Boom Cloud's lead.

"Bam Boom Cloud are a talented team of market-leading innovators



01/02/03. HOW THE UNIVERSITY OF DERBY'S NEW CITY CENTRE BUSINESS SCHOOL COULD LOOK.



05. AN IMAGE OF THE CITY'S NEW PERFORMANCE VENUE.

04. THE NIGHTINGALE QUARTER DEVELOPMENT IS BRINGING BACK TO LIFE THE 'PEPPERPOT' BUILDINGS ON THE FORMER DRI SITE.

and we are really delighted to welcome them into the city centre. It's an important vote of confidence for a city building back differently and a clear signal for others to join us in place-shaping a new Derby," he said.

Marc Brough, managing director of property group Staton Young, has already invested heavily in Derby, creating a number of high-quality serviced business centres, including Cubo in Victoria Street.

He is also redeveloping the former Inland Revenue offices in Agard Street as student accommodation and has acquired the city's Post House, which will become a bar and apartments.

He bought the Wardwick building where Bam Boom Cloud will be based last year and is delighted to be able to bring it back to life after a long period of disuse.

"This development will bring more business people into the heart of the city centre, creating vibrancy and increased confidence. It's fantastic for the city," said Marc.

The council is now utilising more funding from the £1.75 million ARG fund to encourage further businesses to locate in the city centre – including assisting the conversion of the former

Berlin's nightclub into new office accommodation.

The University of Derby has already taken the decision to increase its city centre presence by developing a new multi-million-pound business school in Ford Street, opposite its existing School of Law and Social Science, with an opening date pencilled in for autumn 2024.

"This new city centre building will not only enhance the area's appeal and vibrancy but also attract more students to Derby, positively impact the local economy and provide businesses and organisations with easier access to research, innovation and the business services they need to grow and prosper," said Professor Kathryn Mitchell, the university's vice-chancellor and chief executive.


Dave Bullock has been working to create vibrancy in the city centre since 2013, when his Compendium Living team first started work on constructing homes on a 30-acre site at Castleward, between Derbion and the railway station.

More than 200 properties, including a number of retail units, have already been completed along with a new boulevard, public open space and public artwork, and now a complex legal process has been completed to allow the

compulsory purchase of remaining land required to allow the building of another 500 homes by 2028.

The first phases of the development have already proved popular with purchasers, as well as being short-listed for a prestigious Inside Housing Development Award as the best urban development outside London, and Dave is encouraged that Derby is finally providing the ability for more people to make their home in the heart of the city.

"We have said for a long time that to breathe new life into the city centre, you need employment and people living there. We will be one part of that. With Nightingale Quarter just the other side of London Road, all of a sudden there will be thousands of people living within five to 10 minutes of most of the city's amenities – offering a lot more confidence to people who operate businesses to invest," says Dave.

It seems that confidence, when it comes to the future of Derby city centre, is increasing in supply. 



BUSTLER

MARKET
M A R

- BALL BOX
- BAMBOO STREET FOOD
- BOURNVILLE WAFFLE CO.
- FLYING COWS
- FRITTO
- KEBAB CART
- TACOPORI
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18TH 12PM - LATE

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SAY HI HERE AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT

HOW BUSTLER MARKET IS BRINGING CROWDS OF STREET FOOD FANS INTO THE CITY - AND PROVIDING A BOOST FOR REGENERATION

"It's a bit like throwing a giant birthday party, inviting loads of people and wondering if anyone will come."

Liv Pritchard casts her mind back to the first Bustler Market in Derby in 2017.

She had been to street food events in other places and wondered whether something similar could work in her home city.

"We had faith that we were going to love it, that everyone we knew would love it and that, by word of mouth, the message would spread and it would grow," she recalls.

By we, Liv means herself and fellow Bustler shareholders, Tom Erskine, Andy Darke and Stuart Costen.

Although all four of them had seen the concept executed successfully elsewhere, they could not have dreamed of the reaction they would receive in Derby after they took over a vacant unit at Derby Riverlights and brought in a selection of street food vendors, a bar and DJs.

Their first two-day event pulled in 1,500 customers.

"We were blown away by the amount of people who wanted to come and, still to this day, many of those who came to that first market come to us now. Those regulars are

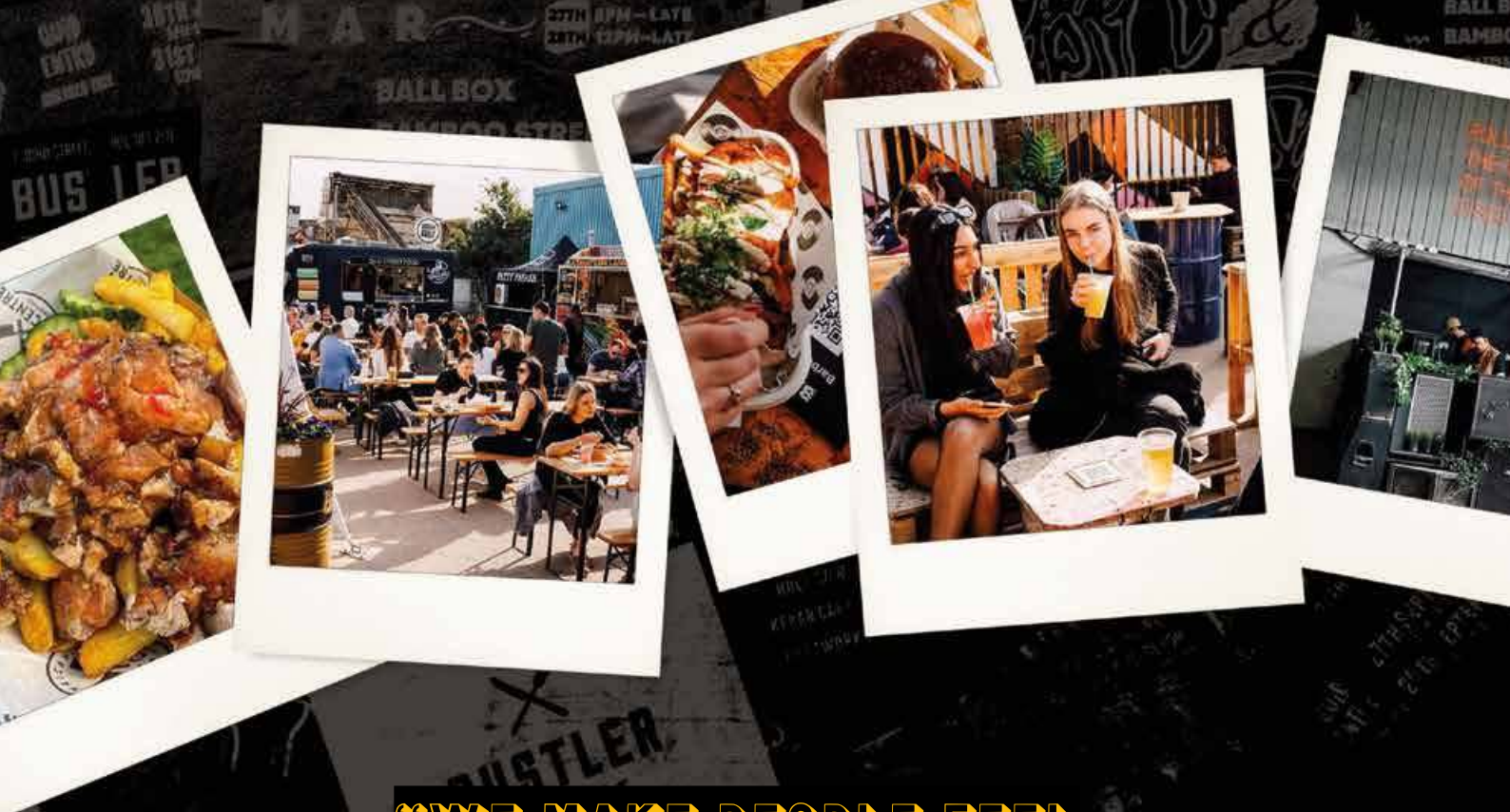
so proud to be a part of something that has grown into what it is now," says Liv.

What it is now is hugely impressive - with an emphasis on huge!

The Bustler team has converted a former warehouse in Siddals Road into Derby's biggest entertainment venue, with outside space for up to 450 people and an indoor area that can cater for 1,500.

When they opened after the most recent Covid lockdown, queues hundreds deep waited in line for entry.

So just what is it that persuades so many people to venture away from the city's main retail and



"WE MAKE PEOPLE FEEL INVOLVED. IT'S LIKE A COMMUNITY OF ALL THE CUSTOMERS."

leisure attractions, to party around wooden benches and oil drum tables in an area that, up until now, has been better known as a home to car dealerships, industrial units and a concrete processing plant?

Perhaps it's because Bustler was set up not as purely a business venture but more because Liv and the guys wanted to do something great for their city – throwing a huge celebration on the last weekend of each month, with fantastic food and a family-friendly vibe.

"We just wanted to take something that you could experience in London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds and bring that back to our city," remembers Tom.

"We wanted to create a good environment for people – an all-inclusive place and something different that they could look forward to," adds Liv.

"We have built a loyal following of people. We make them feel involved. It's like a community of all the customers."

"It's also being different as well," says Tom. "Back when I was growing up, we had dance nights like Progress and major clubs you would go to. That's all kind of gone

away now and Derby's party scene is a bit lacking. You have some independent businesses in the Cathedral Quarter but to have something different on a big scale, that has a party atmosphere but is family-friendly and welcoming, is important for the city."

It's clear that Derby was blown away by the Bustler offering, with its mix of exciting street food, locally-sourced beers and wines and great music attracting a surprisingly broad demographic.

"We thought we would, perhaps, appeal to the 25-year-olds to 35-year-olds but our audience has been much wider than that. Sometimes we'll get three generations from the same family here together," reveals Andy.

"One of the encouraging things from the early weeks was seeing Derby people's reaction to the market. They were asking if we took it around the country and would we be here for long? It was nice to say we were putting it on for the city. The reaction was that people were surprised that something like this was in Derby," he adds.

"That comment keeps coming back – that it doesn't feel like Derby. And that's kind of bitter-

sweet really. It's great that people think it's something different but sad that they don't think it feels like Derby," says Tom.

The team is grateful to Riverlights owner Moorfield for backing its idea in the earliest days.

"We approached them and said that the unit had been empty since being built and, if we could prove the concept in there, hopefully it would get them attention and help bring tenants in. Luckily, they were supportive and really bought into it. That place is full now and so I'd like to think we played a small role in helping with that," recalls Tom.

Bustler continued at Riverlights for 18 months – that bumper first weekend a prelude to more and bigger success as news of the market spread.

The team then moved to the former Bussells Wholesale Newsagents building in John Street for two years, where the business continued to scale up operations. However, with that site due for demolition to make way for the Castleward housing development, another switch was required earlier this year – this time to a new home, in Siddals Road, called the Chocolate Factory as a nod to its industrial heritage.



TEAMWORK: BUSTLER MARKET'S ANDY DARKE, LIV PRITCHARD AND TOM ERSKINE.

"They used to make Jazzles there – chocolate buttons that were covered in hundreds and thousands," explains Liv.

The Bustler operation has come a long way from its pop-up roots in Riverlights.

There, the team had to operate with a temporary events licence, which very much restricted what the business was able to do. The move to John Street permitted an expansion of the market's offer and the staging of further events. And, now, the Chocolate Factory's size and facilities is allowing a step up to yet another level.

"It's worked well because we have adapted as the business has grown rather than it being a monster from the start. We have listened to what people wanted and adapted and changed to make it what it is today," says Liv.

This has included sourcing drinks from local suppliers, such as Freedom Brewery in Burton, Thornbridge Brewery in Bakewell, Beer Metropolis in Little Eaton and Hourlier Wines in Melbourne, and developing the music offer – bringing in more live DJs.

But, at the heart of Bustler's success

is its fantastic food offer, with the team scouring the country to find the very best vendors and different flavours to bring to Derby.

"Initially, I had a ridiculous spreadsheet. You would look at other events and who was trading well at those events and approach them," says Tom. "We were also putting the word out locally and it snowballed quickly. Now it's gone crazy to the point that we have a waiting list."

"I'm constantly looking for new traders and it's my favourite part of the job," adds Andy.

"You have to have balance. You have to have stuff that people can order for their kids, you have to have food that people may have never tried before and, from a logistical point of view, you need traders that can deal with high volume."

Liv says the relationship with the traders is vital to maintaining Bustler's success.

"We want the vendors to do well and, if they do, the word spreads and you attract more and better traders. That's what has got us here today because we do get such good traders. They come

from as far away as London and Manchester because they know they will do well."

So, what foods go down best with the Bustler faithful? Perhaps not surprisingly, despite a mouth-watering array of exotic choices, fried chicken and burgers are big sellers.

"High-end kebabs and grilled meats do really well. But it can also surprise you. It's always really encouraging when we end up looking at what numbers people have done over a weekend to see a nice, even mix," says Andy.

"People have their favourite vendors. When we put out on social media who is going to be at an event, it's great to see people saying that they have got to visit because their favourite is going to be there," adds Tom.

The team has made brilliant use of digital channels to amplify the idea of the Bustler community.

Regular Facebook images of tempting Cuban sandwiches, smokey barbecue ribs, cream-covered waffles and exotic doughnut creations have kept hungry punters coming back for more.

"Social media marketing and word of mouth are the only types of marketing we have done," says Liv.

The team even had social media front of mind when it came to designing the new venue – creating backdrops that people would want to feature within Instagram posts.

"We have found with the younger audience that they like to go to places to be seen on social media, so when we moved to the Chocolate Factory this was very much the message in our socials, as well as thinking about photo opportunities within the building," says Liv.

"We've lots of different areas for people to have photos by, which will include a 70s pink bathroom karaoke booth, a portaloo photobooth and a bright, wallpaper-pasted wall with all our old posters."

Bustler's urban vibe has become part of its trademark, with the industrial surroundings of John Street and the Chocolate Factory striking a chord with customers. Although it's an aesthetic that has also proved popular in other cities, Tom reveals that there were very practical reasons that dictated the team's approach.

"Derby is a small city centre and you are dictated to by what kind of buildings are available. There aren't lots of big spaces like we need for this kind of thing.

"If you are bringing six or seven traders in, you need a lot of space, so industrial is the only way to go really. But then that kind of fits in with what you see in other places. If you go to other cities, it's usually in that kind of space because it's cheaper, it's moveable, so you can work as a regeneration anchor," he says.

But even though Bustler is working out of an old warehouse, the team has been determined to operate to high environmental standards – aided, in part, by its association with another Chocolate Factory resident, Scenariio, which specialises in providing smart technology.

"We have been certified as a green venue based on things like zero to landfill waste policies and moving towards composting as a part of that," says Tom. "We don't use plastic straws, all our cups are compostable and then, in terms of the building, there are 200 data sensors throughout the building, attached to smart lights.

"Those lights will massively reduce our energy consumption. We are moving to a green energy provider. We are using data from the sensors to look at temperature in the building, power consumption and capacity. There's a lot going on to try to make it as green as possible in a very inefficient building."

Bustler also encourages its vendors to follow its sustainability policy and is working with charity Food For Thought to address food waste.

Since the most recent easing of lockdown restrictions, Bustler has been opening, with great success, from Thursday to Sunday each weekend but the team plans to return it to a monthly operational model from the summer.

At the same time, they will be stepping up use of the Chocolate Factory for other events, run by the team or by third parties. They already have plans to capitalise on the delayed Euro 2020 football tournament and are seeking bookings for festivals, parties and award ceremonies.

"Covid was challenging – especially being in the hospitality industry," remembers Liv. "The first few months of the first lockdown, the unknown of what lay ahead for us as a business was hard but we adapted and changed how we operated as and when the Government restrictions changed or lifted.

"When we opened again properly last summer and saw the demand, that gave us confidence during the further lockdowns that demand would be there when we did reopen fully.

"When we started after lockdown at The Chocolate Factory, we had more than 5,000 people in the first week. We opened for seven days straight and I'm glad we did because if we had only opened at the weekend, I think the queues would have reached all the way to the Derbion.

"It was a mix of people just wanting to be out socialising and also people wanting to support businesses being back open. We went from 15 staff to 50."

The team learned lessons quickly and adapted its model to meet demand.

"We're really proud of the model we currently operate under. By using an at-table app, it means that people never wait longer than

10 minutes for a drink – something we really focus on to make the customer experience that extra bit better," says Liv.

"People will give you the good grace to queue but, once they are inside, if they don't have a drink in their hand within 10 or 15 minutes that good grace quickly goes," adds Andy.

While adopting table service for drinks and food, in contrast to many other businesses, Bustler decided not to introduce a booking system.

"We are a very casual venue and if we were to put booking in it would spoil that," explains Liv. "I know, with my friends, I don't plan weeks in advance what I'm going to do. We would cut out a lot of our customer base by doing that. Others operating bookings had no-shows or people that would turn up and wouldn't want to leave the table after service."

Now, with the country eyeing up the next steps on the Covid recovery roadmap, Bustler is considering how its operations should change when restrictions finally end.

"Will people still want table service or do they want to move around and see people?" wonders Liv.

The return to a monthly operational cycle for Bustler Market may surprise some, given the success of recent weeks and its ever-increasing popularity, but the team believes it is the right move given Bustler's original intentions, the vastly increased capacity of its venue and the desire to stage other events.

"We want it to be a packed-out event. That's the environment that people want and expect. We're called Bustler for a reason," explains Liv.

"It's not that for three weekends of the month we won't be doing anything. We have private events that we are putting on and then other companies that want to use the space. There will be things going on every weekend but not necessarily Bustler Market."

"We want to go back to being that big, exciting event at the end of the month but also, with people having the trust in the name, if they see us doing different food-related events, for example barbecue festivals, boozy

THE REACTION WAS THAT PEOPLE WERE SURPRISED THAT SOMETHING LIKE THIS WAS IN DERBY



brunches and Sunday socials, they will trust us over the diversity," adds Andy.

The team also hopes that the size and flexibility of the Chocolate Factory will make it attractive as a venue for hire.

"Derby Beer Con are already booked in. We have spoken to people about Christmas parties, award ceremonies, car shows and loads of other exciting options we can't reveal just yet," says Tom.

"A lot of people are looking to move away from traditional black tie-style events and perhaps do something less formal, at which point, this, as a venue, becomes interesting. The beauty is that it's a big, blank canvas so people can put their own stamp on it."

The team also plans to take the Bustler concept out on the road, staging pop-up events in other large towns and small cities, while developing the Derby market into the premier street food destination in the East Midlands.

"This place has almost completely step-changed everything. It's made us realise that what we have is really good and if we were to do it in another city we would have

the support of the traders instantly there," says Liv.

Bustler's Derby ambitions will, at some point, involve having to move again. Its new home will also have to make way for the Castleward housing scheme within a few years. But the team is unphased by the challenge.

"We have been quite nomadic and have already moved from place to place, regenerating the area," says Liv.

"Yes, we need a big space but the beauty of what we do is we are quite flexible. I think if a restaurant was to move every few years, it would lose its following because the restaurant is more the environment as well as the food it creates, whereas we create the environment by what we put on. The venue isn't as important at the event itself."

They hope that their success can be a catalyst for helping the re-imagining of Derby's city centre to take account of changes in consumer behaviour that have been accelerated by the coronavirus pandemic.

"The pandemic has focused minds on city centres. People

were already aware that most cities were over-provided with shops. And they had all become homogenised," says Tom.

"Derby has become a place of plans but not action. The pandemic means there is no choice but for it to become a place that does what it says it's going to do. There are plenty of green shoots of hope, like the Museum of Making, Becketwell and the performance venue, but we have to translate that hope into delivery. Those big schemes need to act as a catalyst for getting projects off the ground across the city."

Liv believes that Bustler can help drive interest, footfall and custom into the city centre.

"If we were in the heart of the city centre, it would be a pull for a lot of other businesses to be in there too, from offices to other cafes, restaurants and bars wanting to set up in the area because, if we were going to bring 5,000 people through the doors on a weekend, why would you not want to be in that vicinity?" she asks.

"That would be an amazing thing for the city to have and, hopefully, one day it's what we'll get to do."

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WHAT DOES DERBY NEED TO MAKE IT A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY? OUR PANEL OF LOCAL BUSINESS LEADERS GIVES ITS VIEW

John Forkin: The coronavirus pandemic has challenged everything, not least our habits – our living habits, our working habits and our visiting habits. All of these have been recalibrated as a result of the time we have been in this emergency situation.

We had an embassy event in March and one of the questions we asked was, 'Do you want to go back to where you came from, stay the same or build back better or differently?' It was interesting, for such a large number of people, that go back to where we came from didn't get one vote. Staying the same didn't get one vote. The consensus was that while we might not know where we are going, we don't want to go back to where we came from.

In a sense, the context of this conversation is the changes that are happening in cities like Derby. These challenges are everywhere. In many respects they're even bigger for some of the larger cities who have lost their office footfall, which Derby never really had, but we are all facing pretty serious challenges in what is the city of the future?

I think the modern economy is represented around the table today. Some of your companies have been around for a while. Some of them were born during the pandemic and probably have to think about how they are going to deal with things when it is over.

What we want to do is get a customer voice. We want to hear your personal and professional views.

So, to throw out the first question, if the purpose of a place like Derby is to create a customer, it's important to know what customers want. What might people want to come to this place to live, work or play?

I'm going to start with Lee, who moved his office into the city centre

when everyone else was moving out. Tell us why, Lee?

Lee Marples: We have moved into Iron Gate. We're not at street level. We are in one of those hidden gems up above that no-one really knows are there. As a company, we had been through some rapid growth. We had a serviced office at Marble Hall in a Connect Derby scheme but we needed somewhere we could grow into.

I had always been hesitant to go into the city centre because, doing what we do, we don't need to be in the city but looking around at what our options where, Iron Gate was big enough for us, wasn't overly expensive and it's turned out to be one of the best decisions we have made.

It has put us smack bang in the middle of a customer base that we weren't really tapping into to start with. What we have found now is having that base in the city centre, people will pop into Bear and grab a coffee and then come up and see us at the same time. We pretty much have a doors always open policy.

I didn't think we needed to be in the city centre but now I wouldn't change it. The question is, if we can keep growing at the same pace, where next?

JF: Does your team like being in the city centre? What's the difference for them? Does it enable them to do other things?

LM: They are finding it useful. They can pop out at lunchtime. They can go to Bear or down the road to Portobello to grab a sandwich. We didn't have that when we were at Marble Hall. They are making use of that which is, ultimately, town centre footfall.

We are at that stage now where we are thinking about how being in an office environment is going to work moving forward. We hated



Chair:
John Forkin,
Marketing Derby



Martin Jinks
Nelsons Solicitors



Liv Pritchard
Bustler Market



Adam Bamford
Colleague Box



Nathan Drew
Altered Reality
Zone



**Claire
Hutchby-Drew**
Altered Reality
Zone



Heather Gunn
Union of Students,
University of Derby



Kevin Hudson
Circulayo



Sam Lowe
Barba



Lee Marples
think3

"The vibe, the experience, the feeling of place is important."

the first period of lockdown and not being able to pull people together for a few minutes to run through stuff and generate ideas – things you can get done quickly together that became a process of trying to fit Zoom calls into diaries and stuff just taking longer.

This week, I think we have had everybody in at some point. They are still working from home a bit but probably doing three or so days a week in the office. We have only had people back in for a couple of weeks now but the difference we can see straight away, having people together, going to chill on the sofas and have a chat about projects and ideas, it's a much better way to work.

JF: So, let's just explore this return to work bit a little more. Martin, you're in a much larger enterprise, what's your view?

Martin Jinks: We've got hundreds of people in Derby, Nottingham and Leicester. We expected a big hit when Covid started, that there would be a downturn in legal work. We didn't know whether all of our computers would work from home. We had computers that you could take out and work from anywhere but we had never tested out everyone taking them home at the same time.

We assumed that to get the best out of people, you needed them in the office from 8.30am until 5.30pm and what we have learned

is that people still need lawyers, the computer system works very well and people work just as well without having to be in the office. We furloughed quite a few people at day one but had them all back within a couple of months and our figures have stood up as good this year as last year.

But we want to be back in the office. It may be not quite as we used to be. It will be more flexible. We have learned there is no point being stuck in traffic when you can be working from home.

But we want to be back in the office because we have people who have joined us during the pandemic who have never met their colleagues in person. We want to be able to train the younger people and we want that buzz of being able to bounce off each other.

JF: In terms of being in the centre of the city, there's no desire to work from home forever and not come in.

MJ: You have the full spectrum of those who are desperate to get back in the office, perhaps they have kids at home, and then there are people like me, whose kids have flown the nest, and I can get up and do an hour's work before the time I would have arrived in the office and I can take an hour's walk at lunchtime.

What will happen is that people

won't be expected to be in the office 50 per cent or 60 per cent of the time, we know we can trust them. Yes, come in and have meetings with colleagues or clients but, if there is any part of the day where you can work as well or better at home, then do it.

Part of wanting to return to the office is the ability to be in the city centre and pop out, use the shops and the cafes because being in a room at home all day, every day is quite wearing for a lot of people.

JF: Looking at the big picture, what happened in Derby in the early Naughties, a lot of companies moved out of the city centre into Pride Park, which isn't that far away but when you are working on Pride Park it feels a long way away.

We have noticed some of the inward investments we have dealt with in the last few months are from SMEs desiring to come back into the city centre. Not into an office block necessarily, and we don't have that many office blocks, but into converted nightclubs, converted cafes, so when you go into these places they don't look like an office. People are not coming in Monday to Friday, nine until five, but they are coming in for particular events and project meetings.

What we are trying to figure out is are these companies outliers or is there a trend happening, which, if you are being dramatic, you call



it the death of the business park, where you say businesses don't need those big spaces?

I'm interested in whether you think it's a trend or a short burst.

Kevin Hudson: I had this conversation the other day with our development team. Most of them are young, in their twenties. They want benefits and perks, pool tables and things like that. It seems that they want an office that's not an office. Yes, there will be a few desks but, other than that, it will be a flexible space that they can make whatever they want it to be on any given day. If they have come in to just spend time with each other, it's a social room. If they have come in and they want an entire floor full of white boards and space to roam about, they can.

I think in the city centre, at the moment, there are not a lot of places capable of delivering that but, with a bit of investment, there probably can be. I think Cubo has proven that can work. That investment or redesign would draw in a lot of business – especially new technology companies that want to attract the right level of developers. You have to meet the needs of what they want from an office.

JF: So, you're saying that this might be driven by the talent. What's interesting, in terms of this theme, is we have a big fund, called the additional restrictions grant, which we work with the city council on,

and it's aimed at repurposing city centre buildings.

The money so far has gone into repurposing buildings that you almost forgot were there. They are beautiful buildings but they have been empty for 20 years and you just pass them by. Derby is full of these and it's interesting that there are investors doing what you've just suggested. With a bit of support, it makes it viable to do something like Cubo. Is that what the talent is asking for over the next five or ten years?

Adam Bamford: I think the rest of it has to match up as well. It's cool having an amazing office – you could do 'a Google' in the middle of Derby – but it's what's going to attract people, especially younger people, to come to Derby.

I spoke to someone from London the other day who said I went out for a night in Derby once. And you know what the next comment is going to be. There was a pause and then they said it was rubbish – or words to that effect.

I think that's what's lacking. We can sort the buildings but what else is going to attract the young talent?

Liv Pritchard: You can't survive as a restaurant, shop or a café if you haven't got footfall in the city and to get footfall in the city you have to have people living and working there. But someone has to take the risk and invest first.

JF: So, in terms of what you guys are doing, you have been getting these massive numbers in recently.

LP: We have 5,000 people roughly each weekend.

JF: So, 5,000 people coming to a place which, in a sense, is in the middle of nowhere. That tells you they want to come. They didn't just walk by. And from tonight, with restrictions easing, you can get 1,000 people inside. These are big numbers. So, where are these people coming from and why are they coming?

LP: I think if you create something good, then people will come. If you market yourself well and you have a good offering, people will travel for it. You might travel to a country pub because you know it does good food. People will travel huge distances to somewhere like Alton Towers.

I feel that if there is enough of something then people will come but that's what Derby as a city lacks. There might be one good place but, if you are going out for a night, you might want to do more than one thing, or, perhaps, you can't get into that place, you want to be able to move on or you might want to go somewhere else first. It all needs to match up to make it more of an experience in the city rather than just that one venue.

JF: Sam, where are you with this?

Sam Lowe: We are a technology company and we are really struggling to get the talent we need. We just can't get development staff. A lot of our team are from elsewhere in the UK and one of our board members has an office in Manchester. You go there and there are great bars and then you come to Derby and are really struggling.

We'd love to continue building the company and bringing in talent but it's really difficult because there just isn't that kind of wow factor.

JF: So, there's something around perception of the place but also having the experience and critical mass that's right for that place. You talked about that dynamic, Liv, of being between the rock and a hard place. Who goes first?

You need people like Lee to say they're moving their business into the city centre and then they're going to pop to the café but you need the café to be there. And the café isn't just going to open in the hope that one day Lee brings along his office.

So, where does the catalyst for that come from? And what does critical mass look like in a place like Derby?

KH: I think there is demand for hospitality businesses and non-hospitality businesses to be in the city centre but a company like ours wouldn't need a ground-floor public-facing area but potentially could partner with someone like a Bustler or a Bear that would. It perhaps needs someone to facilitate that kind of relationship.

It needs someone to go out to companies and say we've got a number of buildings with upper floor space for offices and ground floors for hospitality, would you consider a partnership arrangement?

SL: I feel that Derby is missing a technology hub. Every other major city in the East Midlands has a technology incubator and accelerator and, if you want to be a part of that, you have to leave Derby. We were approached by a Leicester accelerator but do we just drop everything to move to Leicester because everything we have done so far has been around helping Derby businesses? If there was a hub for new start-ups to be around, this would draw the talent into the city and you could have the hospitality offer around it.

Nathan Drew: From a virtual reality experience perspective, we nearly invested in a property in Derby and then the pandemic kicked in. With all the costs associated with property, as a small business, we decided to go mobile and take our product to the customer. We are looking for partners to take our technology to and, maybe, some shared space would be something that we would be interested in.

We've also set up a venture called Eco-Lock N Go. I'm a keen cyclist and last year I parked outside the Intu centre and my bike, which was quite an expensive model, was stolen. No-one, including the insurance, seemed to care. I looked into it and discovered three bikes were being stolen in Derby every day, which means hundreds of people every year are potentially being put off cycling. I'm put off cycling into town. If we're going to push a green transport strategy, we need good, secure locations and a good, smart digital system that goes along with it.

JF: What you're talking about there is experience. It's alright having these grand strategies but you've got to support them.

ND: People want to scooter or cycle into town. Climate change is driving a lot of behaviours in terms of how people invest, what they do, how they spend their time and we think there is a massive opportunity for Derby.

If we really want to make a difference for the city, we need to be thinking differently, driving at pace and investing in the right things.

Claire Hutchby-Drew: People have talked already about the idea of hubs and making work spaces exciting and engaging for the younger generation to attract talent. I think this all works together. You create a vibe and a feel and people will come.

I think that's, maybe, what Derby is missing. Somehow you need to create a buzz around one area or one facet of business that people will go to and then other things will follow.

JF: I want to bring in Heather because you are representative of a massive cohort of people – students. The relationship between the university and city is really important. What's your take?

Heather Gunn: We saw huge challenges when students weren't on campus but we have worked through it and our approach has evolved so that we have learned a lot of lessons about connecting people wherever they are.

Now students are coming back to a model of blended learning and we understand there has got to be more than just a course – otherwise universities wouldn't exist. It would all be distanced learning. So, what we try to do is create opportunities for students to familiarise themselves with the city, improve their employability skills – and have a great student life.

We're talking about bars and restaurants and a great night out

If we really want to make a difference for the city, we need to be thinking differently, driving at pace and investing in the right things.

but, yet, we all know it's not a great night out and so we cannot then be surprised when we create a wonderful, unique university offer and our students are on the bus to Nottingham every weekend.

We do have students commuting in from other areas, which means the university has something attractive, but we also have great halls of residence that are populating areas of the city that we can invest around to create that great daily student life – sandwiches, coffee shops, those nights out. That's really important.

I think what we are trying to do at the moment is create that all in the campus building and that means that people might not ever go into



the city. They get everything they need on campus and then they disappear again.

So, in terms of a hub, the university is that hub right now. If you're talking about talent generation, investment into graduate opportunities, the university is doing that but it's slightly disconnected from the city.

In terms of my conversations of the past few weeks, with something like Bustler or the Derby Marketplace, suddenly there are destinations that students are happy to come to and stay.

I think the days of a night out where you go to five or six places has gone. I think people want a destination where they can get a 360-degree experience of entertainment, food and drink and that's the thing we are really trying to up this year because we have a great cohort of students that have had a high quality, distanced academic experience but their student life has been in a bedroom.

I think the university has worked very hard to put itself on the map in terms of reputation and I think that student life piece needs to come along with that – that you are proud of your institution but also proud of your city.

MJ: If I can then talk about when they get a bit older, late twenties, thirties, forties. In readiness for today, I did a survey of Nelsons Derby people in that age group and I asked what would their three wishes for Derby be?

Number one was a green, carbon-zero Derby, with more green spaces and places to walk, drink and eat, that are safe, traffic-free and have continuous cycle routes.

Number two was better shops and the third was more jobs, which means encouraging more start-ups and more business growth.

We had already worked out at Nelsons that to attract and keep the best young professionals, you need to have a nice environment.

So, all our offices now have a nice coffee lounge, a pool table and a bar in the evening. That's what they want. They want to work hard but they want to be in a pleasant place, to feel that they are part of the green economy and, if they find that in a place, they will stay there.

JF: Let me ask you, Liv, you're dealing with thousands of people each weekend, you must hear conversations. Why are they coming to Bustler? You have created a customer. How do we retain that customer as a place?

LP: I think because our offering is very varied, it hits a lot of different target markets. We are not a place where if you are not wearing a certain type of clothing you won't fit in or if you are of a certain age category. Because our offering is in the middle of the market, we do cover a lot more bases and we offer a lot of choice.

HG: But you also have a blueprint that's a trusted model. You have



that set framework that people know – the environment and the atmosphere but you put all the choice within that. Bustler, as a concept, becomes a trusted, loyalty opportunity but the traders within that change dynamically.

JF: One of the things that's occurring to me is clustering – you, at Bustler, have created a cluster. The Market Place, four of you could go there and have four different meals. The Cotton Quarter in Darley Abbey is a cluster with a choice of restaurants. Mercia Marina is another. I'm wondering whether that is the direction of travel because people want to do different things but in the same place?

Therefore, I guess, the challenge for a city centre is itself being perceived as a cluster. Sadler Gate, Friar Gate – so you think let's go there, there's lots to do, it will be shut off from the traffic, there will be people on the street and it becomes a place. In London you see that a lot.

MJ: On Saturday, our kids have organised for us to go to the Museum of Making in the morning, to go to the Market Place at lunchtime and then see the Joseph Wright collection at the museum. Derby has become a venue, in that respect, and that's what we need more of.

JF: So, when people come out of the Museum of Making, where do they go next and how will they know where to drift towards?

AB: We had an opportunity for a babysitter the other night and straight away I thought we would go to Nottingham because I know it's going to be busy, it's going to feel like it's an exciting place to be, there will be people buzzing around, all the shops are open, there are loads of cool restaurants and bars.

It feels like one, big, exciting adventure, whereas, when I think about coming into Derby city centre, other than Bustler, I might

go to one bar here and then it's a 10-minute walk to get to the next bar I want to go to. I feel deflated, I'm walking past loads of empty shops and places that I used to enjoy going to.

JF: The next 18 months will be critical. A lot of the brands have gone from the city and they have gone forever. So, therefore, what's going to replace them? It almost doesn't matter – it's how it all connects and fits together. It's curation. The challenge is creating the experience as a whole.

I'm keen to touch on living in the city. Adam mentioned Nottingham. One of the big differences between Derby and Nottingham is that Nottingham has a lot of people living in the city centre because, 10 or 20 years ago, investors built a lot of apartments. Derby missed out then but we're now starting to get that. We're about to enter into a phase where, maybe, 10,000 more people will be living in the city centre in five years' time. That



might make viability of some of the things we have been talking about a bit more achievable.

Liv, you have Castleward around you. Do many of your customers live there? Are you now their local?

LP: We have a lot of customers that are local and on our doorstep. I think us being in this area has helped sales of some of these homes because we're helping improve the reputation of the area and help people feel more safe and secure.

HG: It's like a lifestyle infrastructure around accommodation. If you have a unit, you can choose to put an off licence or a coffee shop in that unit. It will dictate how that area feels and who visits that unit. The choice dictates the vibe.

JF: But that implies curation, doesn't it? If you get the right types of companies doing these developments, they will exercise choice.

I'm going to try to pull things together with a few conclusions.

There's a lot of talk at the moment about cities becoming community hubs. Everyone is going through that identity crisis and the key word seems to be repurposing.

What I picked up from today is three things.

We started by talking about repurposing buildings for multi-use and rediscovering some of the buildings. That is one thing that needs to continue to happen but it needs to be more than that. There's also repurposing of place. This idea of it being more attractive, safer, greener and so on.

Also, there's the repurposing of businesses. We've got to be more flexible – this idea of business partnerships and people getting together.

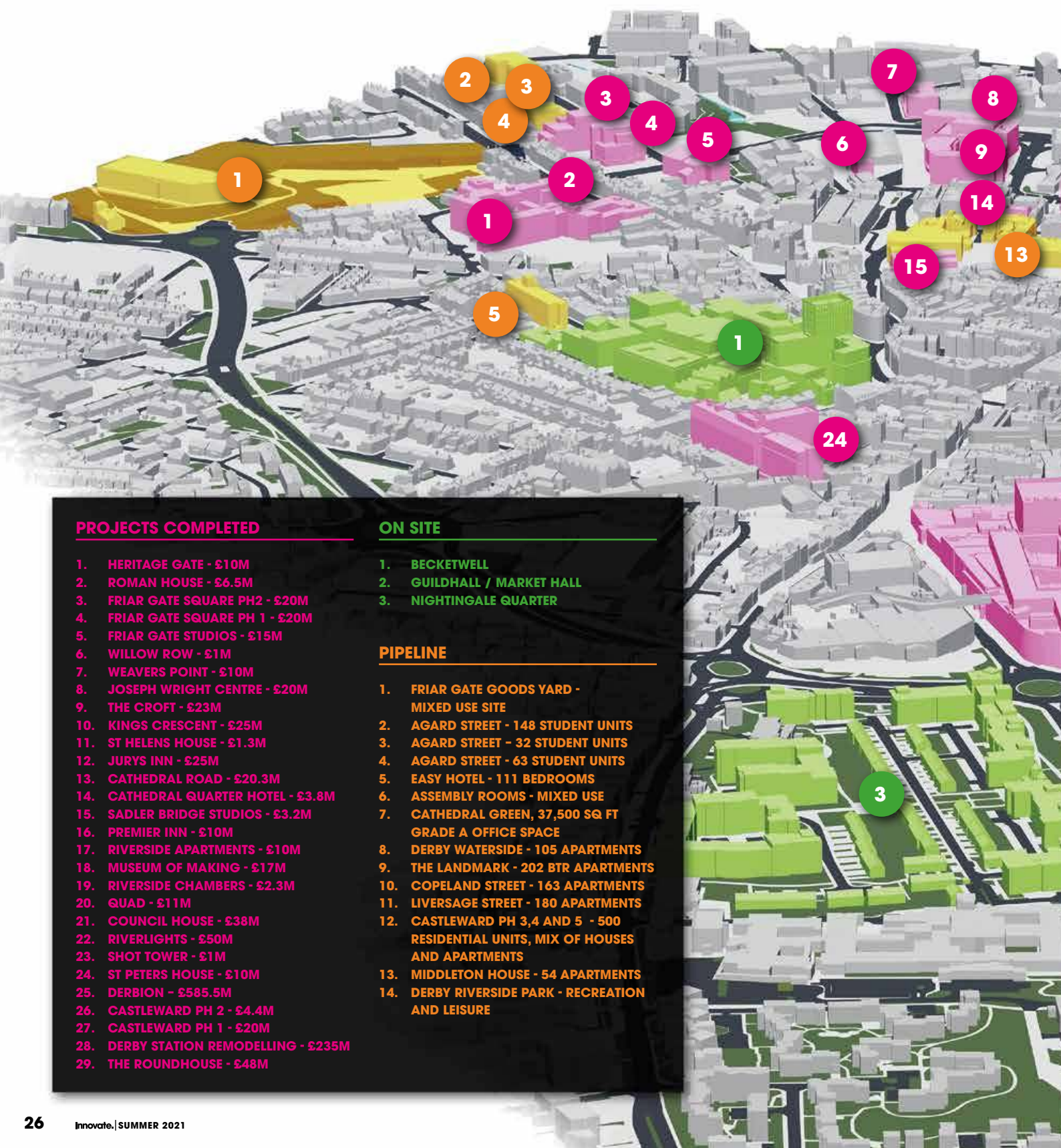
And this idea of clustering seems to be the future.

Wrapping around it all is this emotional thing – the vibe, the experience, the feeling of place is important. Someone has to stand above it and think how we can do that rather than expecting all these isolated projects to add up to something greater than the parts.

There are two words I'd leave you with. There's curation – of the place. And connection – between and within businesses, people and place.

If we can get those things right in a city the size of Derby, maybe in three years' time the conversation we might be having could be a very different one. **1**

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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

ON SITE

1. BECKETWELL
2. GUILDHALL / MARKET HALL
3. NIGHTINGALE QUARTER

PIPELINE

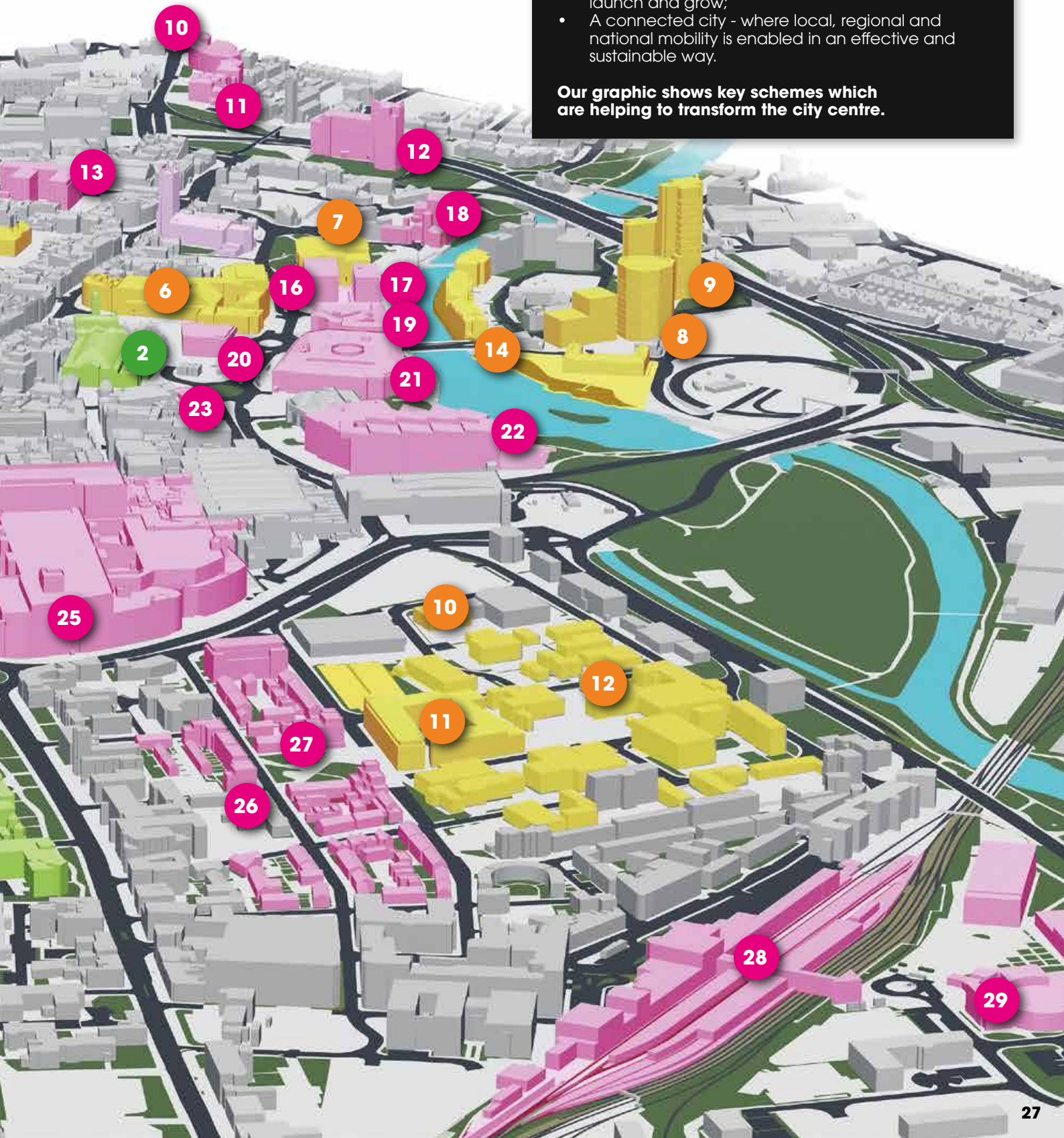
1. FRIAR GATE GOODS YARD - MIXED USE SITE
2. AGARD STREET - 148 STUDENT UNITS
3. AGARD STREET - 32 STUDENT UNITS
4. AGARD STREET - 63 STUDENT UNITS
5. EASY HOTEL - 111 BEDROOMS
6. ASSEMBLY ROOMS - MIXED USE
7. CATHEDRAL GREEN, 37,500 SQ FT GRADE A OFFICE SPACE
8. DERBY WATERSIDE - 105 APARTMENTS
9. THE 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

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.





SHOP
AT THE
MUSEUM OF MAKING



HOW OUR AMAZING £18 MILLION MUSEUM OF MAKING AND RICH HISTORY OF CREATIVITY CAN HELP THE CITY TO EXPAND ITS VISITOR ECONOMY

Build it and they will come.

It may be a line from Kevin Costner's hit movie *Field of Dreams* but it might also be the secret to transforming Derby's visitor economy and helping re-energise the city as it plots its post-pandemic future.

The 'Costner strategy' doesn't just refer to the millions of pounds that will be invested in developing a new performance venue - to be run by the same operators as Wembley Arena and forecast to bring a quarter of a million people to the city centre each year.

It also applies to the visitors that will be drawn to celebrate everything that Derby has become famous for building, making and inventing over the past 300 years.

Tens of thousands of people are expected through the doors of the city's new £18 million Museum of Making, which only opened in May but is already receiving rave reviews regionally and nationally.

Created within the Derwent Valley Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site, on the spot where Derby Silk Mill, the world's first modern factory, was built 300 years ago, the museum showcases the city's history as a centre of innovation since the Industrial Revolution.

It's opening, after a journey stretching back more than a decade, is a huge boost to the city's tourism offer.

But those behind the project insist it must be seen as something for Derby to build on if the city is to achieve its potential as a visitor destination.

"We hope our new museum will become a must-see destination, bringing optimism and inspiring all who visit it. Derby has been shaped by an incredible array of cultural and industrial innovations over the last 300 years and the new Museum of Making is the exciting next chapter in the story," says Tony Butler, executive director of Derby Museums.

But, he adds: "The museum needs to be seen as the start of the reimagining of the city centre. This has to be part of a thought-through and integrated strategy to improve the volume of leisure and culture activities here and to encourage people to come into the city centre and stay here.

"We have ambitions to do something more, either with the Museum and Art Gallery or a Joseph Wright entity. There's lots



01. A VIEW OF THE OUTSIDE OF THE NEW MUSEUM OF MAKING

02. /05./07./08. DERBY'S HISTORY OF INNOVATION IS BROUGHT TO LIFE THROUGH 30,000 EXHIBITS

03. THE STUNNING NEW CIVIC HALL
04. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TONY BUTLER

06. INCREDIBLE VIEWS FROM THE MUSEUM ALONG THE DERWENT

more space for growth in the city - more so than there might be in other cities.

"But that's also got to link with things that happen organically in the city centre - with local makers and artists, so a city makers' programme, for which there is a feasibility study, is a great manifestation of those ideas."

The city makers' project to which Tony refers is an idea, being developed by the city council and partners, to help more creative businesses become established in the city centre, utilising vacant space for make-and-trade enterprises which will enrich the experience for visitors.

Travel bible Lonely Planet already promotes Derby's history as a centre of making as a reason tourists should check out the city.

"Derby is one of the Midlands' most energetic, creative cities. This was one of the crucibles of the Industrial Revolution: almost overnight, a sleepy market town was transformed into a major manufacturing centre, producing everything from silk to bone china and, later, locomotives and Rolls-Royce aircraft engines," it tells its readers.

But Stella Birks, Derby's visitor services and development manager, believes there is more that can be done to capitalise on that reputation and that the Museum of Making should act as a catalyst for action.

"One thing we have always struggled with is identity - knowing who we are and planning the experience about what we know are our city's strengths. And we know that the making economy is absolutely genuine," she says.

"That's what our city has been built around. We are not the only city that can say that - but we are the only city that can also say we have the site of the world's first factory, a world heritage site and Royal Crown Derby, Rolls-Royce, Toyota, Alstom, the university - all of those businesses are the outcome of all those years of creativity in the city.

"We just have to make sure that the city experience feels like that. It hasn't done in the past. We have to make sure we know who we are, we know what's authentic and give people a taste of that.

"Let's turn our empty spaces into something that creative businesses can use to create a different experience in the city. That fits

perfectly with our identity. It's all part of the same story and it just happens to be what people want - unique, individual creativity."

Derby's visitor economy is already sizeable. Council figures show that the city attracts around nine million visitors a year, contributing £476 million to the local economy and supporting employment for 5,500 people across accommodation, food and drink, recreation, shopping and transport.

Another 140,000 visitors will be added to that target if the Museum of Making draws audiences in the number that Tony Butler expects in its first year.

What awaits them is a world-class attraction, with more than 30,000 exhibits that chart the history of innovation, design and manufacturing in Derby. It also sets the context for the 'valley that changed the world', through the birth of the modern factory system along the River Derwent, which helped kickstart the Industrial Revolution and transformed the region into a worldwide economic powerhouse.

On arriving at the museum, visitors encounter the newly-renovated Grade I listed Bakewell Gates,



which have stood proudly at the front of the Silk Mill since 1725. They then enter a new Civic Hall - a triple height glass atrium, built around an impressive seven-tonne Rolls-Royce Trent 1,000 engine, which hangs from the ceiling.

All objects in the museum's collection are grouped around the materials from which they are predominantly made - wood, metal, ceramic, glass, stone, textile, synthetic or organic - and visitors can explore everything from Derby's Palaeolithic past to more modern-day feats of engineering.

Exhibits include a Rolls-Royce Eagle engine, on long-term loan from the Science Museum; the world's smallest engine, run using only a human hair; an iconic Silk 700S motorbike and an 'exploded' Toyota Corolla, suspended above people's heads and displaying how the car is engineered.

There is also a celebration of the city's rail heritage - including the much-loved Midland Model Railway and items that help tell Derby's story of close to 200 years of involvement in train manufacturing.

"In terms of my favourite object, I do like the silent running wheel

that was built in the Midland Railway Works, that was designed for use on sleeping cars for railway carriages. That harks back to the golden age of going on sleeper trains - and going to bed in London and waking up in the north of Scotland," says Tony.

Throughout the galleries there are stories of making, including a video wall of modern makers talking about their work and inspiration. There is also a new gallery space which will allow the Museum of Making to host touring exhibitions.

As well as telling the stories of Derby's impressive past, the beating heart of the museum is a new workshop full of specialist equipment and skilled staff who are on hand to support modern makers.

All of this is topped off with a wonderful, never-before-seen panorama from The View, near the top of the museum, which overlooks the city and the wider valley beyond.

"This is no ordinary museum. The unique Grade II listed building and all it represents is now celebrated and safeguarded. The Museum of Making tells the story of our industrial and creative past but it

is also a hub for modern makers through the facilities and support on offer," says Tony.

"I'm really proud of the team. What they have created is pretty unique in a UK museum in the way that they have engaged the community and brought partners together to co-produce this museum.

"That's pretty special and I'm really excited about the idea of being able to inspire young people to fulfil their ambitions as makers and designers, because they are the people in the future that we are going to need to solve the wicked issues of society like climate change and automation.

"On the one hand we are celebrating 300 years of our manufacturing heritage but also we are inspiring that new generation of makers and thinkers."

The museum opening also kickstarts a range of events and activities - the 300 programme - around which arts, cultural and other organisations, such as the Darley Park Concert and Feste, have been collaborating to celebrate 300 years of creativity in the city.



01. DINING IN DERBY
MARKET PLACE

02. VISITORS ENJOY
PICTURESQUE
DERBYSHIRE

03. SCULPTURES
FROM THE DERBY
RAM TRAIL

Tony expects the museum to contribute around \$4.2 million a year to the local economy but, like Stella Birks, he believes it can be a catalyst for more.

In the short-term, the organisation is already helping to generate further footfall into the city with its Ram Trail.

The 30, five foot-high, highly-decorated, fibre glass figures are based on the East Street sculpture created by Michael Pegler and have been positioned in key locations, with visitors guided between each by smart phone app.

The rams will be in place until late August, by which time it is estimated they will have been seen by around two million people. They will then be auctioned to raise money for the museum endowment fund.

"There are some really lovely designs, some of which are quite abstract and fun and not specifically related to the city but some of which absolutely speak to the soul of Derby. There's lots of stuff about the Peaks or inspired by Joseph Wright, by the Silk Mill and, obviously, the football club," says Tony.

"We just hope that it's another way for people to feel proud of and good about the place where they live."

Also helping make people feel good about the city is the second

year of activity at Derby Market Place.

First launched last summer as an al fresco dining experience to help hospitality businesses who were struggling to profitably accommodate customers because of Covid restrictions, the initiative has been relaunched this year with additional facilities to allow entertainment performances.

"We recognised that the objectives were a little different this time around," explains Stella Birks.

"The hospitality sector could already have people indoors and that sector had already developed a great takeaway offer in many cases, so who needed our support more than anybody else at that point were the cultural partners. Although they can reopen now, they haven't had the time for people to rehearse, to plan, to book things, so we are putting in more entertainment over a weekend and reintroducing people to entertainment and artists.

"We are putting a marquee in and working with Derby Theatre to put on Wind in the Willows, we are going to be putting a beer festival in there, a jazz festival and working with as many different communities as possible to discover what they want to see there."

Stella believes that lessons learned during the pandemic and from changes in consumer behaviour

will help Derby to develop its visitor offer of the future.

"If you look at the really innovative cities around the world, they are looking at space very differently and they are thinking about the whole experience – what does it feel like to be in a city?" she says.

"That's about greening cities, providing links between places. In the past we have just thought about buildings and what you do in those buildings but now it's about what the space feels like and what it feels like to move from one space to another.

"We want to get that feel that we have in Derby Market Place of being lively, vibrant, creative and surprising. We have to get that feel around the rest of the city. I'm looking with colleagues at things like a canopy over Iron Gate, more lights in trees, more greening, parklets, the kind of things that just make the whole city feel like a great place to be."

The canopy Stella refers to would be similar to an art installation made from umbrellas that covers part of Camden Market in London but with a Derby-specific theme.

"We want to do something like that but make it unique to Derby, something that pulls on our history, so perhaps calling on the silk-making industry. We need to be brave and bold and realise that this is what other cities are doing. We

have to be in that game and make a great place that people want to be," Stella says.

The importance of tourism to the wider Derbyshire economy has been highlighted during a visit to the county by the chair of the British Tourist Authority.

Lord Patrick McLoughlin visited some of the region's top tourism destinations to hear how businesses are working hard to welcome visitors back safely and to discuss the ongoing challenges facing the sector during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Organised by Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire, the trip enabled Lord McLoughlin, who was MP for Derbyshire Dales between 1986 and 2019, to see first-hand how the industry is preparing to rebuild following the easing of lockdown restrictions.

Highlighting the Peak District and Derbyshire's appeal as a year-round, all weather destination, the day began with a visit to the newly-opened Great British Car Journey at Ambergate.

Lord McLoughlin toured the state-of-the-art exhibition, which celebrates 100 years of British motoring history, before sampling the region's first locally-distilled whisky, produced by the nearby White Peak Distillery.

He then visited Chatsworth, where he was welcomed by the Duke of Devonshire for a tour of the magnificent Grade I listed house, before networking with local tourism businesses and representatives.

The trip also included visits to the Old Original Bakewell Pudding Shop and Thornbridge Brewery, where business owners highlighted the challenges facing the tourism and hospitality industry because of the coronavirus pandemic.

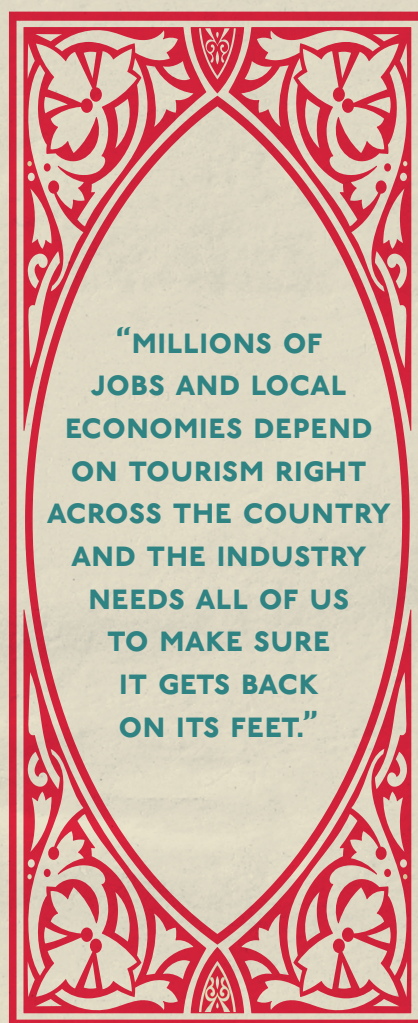
The final stop of the day was in Buxton, where Lord McLoughlin toured the town's iconic Opera House, which recently reopened following 16 months of closure, and the Ensana Buxton Crescent Hotel and Thermal Spa, the destination's first 5-star hotel, which opened in October, following a £70 million renovation.

The visit followed the launch of Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire's £70,000 Escape the Everyday marketing campaign, supported by funding from VisitEngland, to boost the recovery

of local tourism and hospitality businesses.

Lord McLoughlin said: "Local businesses have been working so hard to welcome visitors back safely, adapting and innovating to meet new ways of working and still providing a great visitor experience.

"And it is great to see the activity that Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire will be delivering locally, with support from VisitEngland funding and aligning with our national Escape the Everyday campaign, to encourage more



people to get out and discover the outstanding destinations and quality attractions here on our doorstep and to drive bookings.

"Millions of jobs and local economies depend on tourism right across the country and the industry needs all of us to make sure it gets back on its feet."

Managing Director of Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire Jo Dillelley welcomed the opportunity to show Lord McLoughlin some of the region's most exciting new tourism attractions.

"Over 32,000 local jobs depend on tourism and I am confident that we left him in no doubt that, despite ongoing challenges, the businesses that make up the Peak District and Derbyshire's visitor economy are resilient, passionate and fully focussed on the future and their role in successfully supporting the county's economic recovery," she said.

Derbyshire County Council leader Barry Lewis said tourism was vital to the Derbyshire economy, generating £2.5 billion from 41 million day visitors and 4.3 million staying visitors.

"As we move further along the Government's roadmap out of lockdown, we're looking forward to welcoming more visitors back and are working hard with our partners to help rebuild our visitor economy following the pandemic," he said.

"With uncertainty about foreign travel, more and more people are looking at staying in the UK for their holidays and Derbyshire is a perfect destination for short or longer stays.

"From stunning, specially protected landscapes, exciting outdoor activities and brilliant attractions, to rich history and heritage, quality accommodation and fine, locally-produced food and drink, Derbyshire has everything. There are lots of new places to explore, too, and this year we're especially encouraging people to come to Derbyshire to discover many of our hidden gems that are off the main tourist trails."

Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire has worked with local authorities, businesses and tourism representatives to develop a five-year plan to help rebuild the region's visitor economy post-pandemic.

The document highlights the destination's aims to boost domestic holidays and lead the way with sustainable tourism, alongside plans to position the Peak District and Derbyshire as a top choice for corporate breaks to extend the visitor season.

It also lays the foundations for the area to become one of the Government's first Tourism Zones, an initiative designed to boost holiday destinations across the country, helping create new jobs, as well as supporting improvements in transport connections. ❶

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR SUPPORT ORGANISATION

A key figure in the development of Derby Cathedral has been named as the new chief executive of Relate Derby and Southern Derbyshire.

During her time at the cathedral, Rachel Morris managed two major building projects and helped bring attractions such as the Knife Angel and The Museum of The Moon to the city.

She was also Diocesan Secretary for the Church of England across Derbyshire, covering 335 churches, and a member of the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust, which oversees 27 primary schools as well as the new Derby Cathedral Senior School.

She said: "It was a big change to leave my posts at the cathedral and the diocese but I am very excited about the new opportunity with Relate.

"For many years I have

been inspired by working with organisations who help people and I have already been incredibly impressed by the dedication and breadth of knowledge of our counsellors.

"We also have a much wider range of services than most people realise.

"These include relationship and family counselling, children's and young people's services, sex therapy, education and learning courses and we help businesses with coaching around work and life and employee assistance programmes.

"I am also keen to help the organisation grow at a time when our services will be needed most."

Rachel grew up in Derby and left the city to study occupational therapy, before working in the licensed trade.

She joined the charity sector 20 years ago when



RACHEL MORRIS

she set up a hostel for homeless people in Derby and later became a senior manager at YMCA Derbyshire before moving to Derby Cathedral in 2015.

Dianne Prescott, chair of the Relate Derby and Southern Derbyshire's board of trustees, said: "We are delighted that Rachel has agreed to join us. She is an experienced CEO with a proven track record of delivery.

"She brings with her some fantastic experience and knowledge, which I am sure will be invaluable as we look to move forward from lockdown and continue to develop Relate's services."

CHATSWORTH RECOGNISED FOR RARE BREEDS CONSERVATION

The farmyard at Chatsworth House, part of The Devonshire Group, has been recognised for its contribution to conserving some of the rarest livestock and equine breeds native to the UK.

Chatsworth Farmyard has been awarded an accreditation by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust for its work.

The farmyard is home to a number of the country's rarest breeds of livestock and equines, including Suffolk Punch horses, Shire horses, Gloucestershire Old Spot pigs, Bagot goats and Cream Legbar chickens - with British Landrace pigs and Eriskay ponies due to join them soon.

Melissa Underwood, Chatsworth Farmyard manager, said: "Since joining Chatsworth Farmyard in September we have been increasing the numbers of rare breeds kept here.

"One of my best moments has been to discover that the Albion breed of cattle originated here in Bakewell.

"They were an obvious choice for us to have here and we hope to use them in our milking demonstrations later in the year.

"I am passionate about rare breeds and their conservation and look forward to sharing our journey and exciting new breeding programmes with our visitors."



THE FARMYARD AT CHATSWORTH

EXPANSION FOR FINANCIAL PLANNING FIRM

Derby company Aristotle Financial Planning, which was set up just weeks after last year's first Covid lockdown, has appointed its first member of staff.

James Wallis, founder, described the appointment of Gemma Bailey as a significant step in growing his firm, which he launched in April last year.

Gemma has joined Aristotle as its client

support technician to handle business administration required for dealing with the firm's clients, which mainly consist of families whose members are approaching retirement age or who run their own businesses.

James, who had ten years' experience as an independent and chartered financial planner before setting up Aristotle, said: "Gemma has many years' experience in the financial industry and her previous role was as a paraplanner, so she is more than capable of giving me the assistance that we need with the

day-to-day tasks so that I can focus on growing the business."

Gemma said: "I'm really excited to have joined Aristotle Financial Planning. The values of the company, James' approach to financial planning, along with his vision for the future are what made this role so appealing."



JAMES WALLIS

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Willmott Dixon is a privately-owned contracting and interior fit-out group. Founded in 1852, we are family-run and dedicated to leaving a positive legacy in our communities and environment. Being a large company means we can create a huge and lasting positive impact on our society. This is not only done through what we build and maintain; it's achieved through the fantastic efforts of our people who make a major contribution to enhancing their local communities.

NOW OR
NEVER



ONE OF DERBY'S FINEST

Claire Twells is a successful lawyer, business leader, charity campaigner and mum. She talks to Innovate about her pride in her local roots, her gratitude to her family and her determination to give others the opportunity to succeed.

“It was just a few quid but I struggled to hold back tears when I realised what a difference it had made.”

Claire Twells had seized upon the birthday box initiative run by the Revive Centre in Chaddesden.

The concept was simple enough – raise a bit of money so that underprivileged children would have a present when their birthdays would otherwise pass by without celebration.

Claire galvanised her contacts, especially among Derby's Finest, the women's business network she helped launch.

The response was overwhelming – Claire even appeared on television and radio – and suddenly underprivileged boys and girls were receiving birthday cakes and presents.

But the one who really stood out for Claire was the boy who had not been going to school because he was ashamed of his uniform.

“Just £50 changed his life,” she said. He is now back at school, studying and happy.

Claire admits that she has a privileged life, being a very successful lawyer at Smith Partnership, happily married to Chris, with a lovely two-year-old, Alice.

But she believes that sight should never be lost of those who are less fortunate, which is why she has been at the forefront of the company being involved in myriad charity efforts.

One is being part of the Breakfast Club initiative, in which it pays for the costs of a daily healthy meal for underprivileged children at Firs Primary School, Derby.

“Smith Partnership is a big supporter of initiatives such as Birthday Box and Breakfast Club because we recognise the importance of children to our city.

“The company recognises our roots – we began in the city centre, working on legal aid criminal cases. We are still the company people can call on when they are in trouble – no matter what their social standing.

“I also share the company's passion for Derby and love to help other businesses, which is why Derby's Finest is so important to me.

“We are giving women a voice and also promoting great Derby companies and organisations.”

Claire is speaking about her passions from one of the interview rooms at Norman House, which she was central to transforming into the modern new home for Smith Partnership.

“The open-plan building is a deliberate contrast to the public perception of lawyers being behind imposing oak doors.

“Our clients are often speaking to us about the most important situations in their lives, therefore, they deserve to be in a relaxed environment, not where they would feel intimidated.

“The open plan has other benefits, allowing the company's different teams to bounce ideas off each other when we aren't locked down.

“And the offices have allowed us to develop a really positive green strategy. It must be the only solicitors' office where there are no piles of paper!”

However, the move to Norman House had a near-disastrous beginning when a fire broke out on the first day at the new premises.

"Oh, don't remind me," says Claire. "Every bit of painting had been done and the furniture had been delivered when a colleague called me to say that there had been an explosion and the building was on fire!"

Workmen conducting "hot work" on the roof of Norman House had accidentally caused a blast.

Fortunately, it did not spread to the ground floor and the electricity had been turned off at the time.

While Claire has built a reputation as being able to lend her hand to anything, she remains a formidable lawyer – a partner at Smith Partnership who heads up the Debt Recovery Team and Business Development department.

In other words, she helps clients track down money they are owed and among her clients are universities, utility companies, independent schools, veterinary surgeries and companies in the consumer goods sector.

She has expertise in insolvency, bankruptcy and winding up and handles out-of-court debt settlements, advises clients on credit control strategies and represents them in small claims and fast track trials, as well as County Court hearings.

"I am lucky that I work with a great team who have proved just how flexible they can be during the pandemic, having to deal with a constantly changing business landscape.

"We have often been up against it because clients have not always responded to requests for instructions to progress cases due to being furloughed and debtors have not contactable.

"We have even seen official letters and court papers being returned due to businesses closing their premises and then bailiffs were ordered to recover goods by the Government and the court system fell into disarray.

"Nevertheless, the whole team has had to think of different ways of best serving clients and to think of ways to contact debtors to seek to recover money due," said Claire.

She then smiled as she added: "Their innovation has been superb but I am afraid I cannot give their secrets away.

"Suffice to say that, without the tenacity and forward-thinking of

the team, then it is highly unlikely the creditors would have been paid."

Meanwhile, she is also in charge of Smith Partnership's brand and promoting the company to the public and businesses.

Her outstanding networking skills also help the company lure in new clients. For example, she was key to Smith Partnership being named the preferred law firm for clients of Wavensmere, the company developing the huge Nightingale Quarter new homes site in Derby.

Claire wanted to be a solicitor from the age of 11, was a pupil at Chaddesden Park Juniors and West Park School in Spondon, before studying for her law degree at Sheffield Hallam University.

I have found that if I give people that extra courtesy and kindness, they will respond very positively.

"My Auntie Sue was really important during my childhood because she told me I could achieve anything when others told me being a solicitor was a lot of hard work and I might not make it.

"I was the first person to go to university in my dad's and my mum's family but Auntie Sue always pushed me and inspired me to be the best version of me. Her words 'work hard, our Claire,' still resonate with me now."

Claire joined Smith Partnership as a solicitor in 2006 after working at Fraser Brown and training at Derby-based firm Broadbents.

She was promoted to associate partner in 2009 and, again, to partner in 2013.

But she is a keen advocate of encouraging those who haven't had similar opportunities.

Claire said: "Not that long ago we took on a single mum who had been working in a bar but wanted to embark on a career.

"You could see the spark in her and so we gave her a job in our administration team and it is now clear that she will be able to go up the ladder with us.

"All she needed was for someone to believe in her and her case shows why we should think out of the box when it comes to recruiting people."

Despite being someone who has to deal with rules laid down in legislation, Claire enjoys looking at life through a wider lens.

She cares so passionately that she has even been known to take calls on Christmas Day from an elderly and lonely client who wanted nothing more than a chat.

Anyone who has met her will testify that she dispels the cold image of lawyers. She has an infectious tide of enthusiasm which carries along those with whom she engages.

"Of course, I am a serious lawyer who works as hard as I can to achieve results for my clients but why should that mean that I should lose my humanity?

"I have found that if I give people that extra courtesy and kindness, they will respond very positively."

"Actually, much of my inspiration to help others comes from my younger sisters.

"Katie is a social worker and works tirelessly to help families across the city and a recent mummy to Jude.

"Meanwhile, Victoria, a mum to my two beautiful nieces, Macie and Harper, is an incredibly dedicated healthcare worker in the NHS. She has recently been delivering the vaccinations at Derby Arena."

This same can-do attitude can be seen towards other businesspeople, particularly women – because she recognises the barriers many of them face.

No surprise, then, that she and her friends April Hayhurst, who was at Derby College at the time, Bev Crighton, from the University of Derby, and Amanda Strong, from Mercia Image Print, created Derby's Finest – which has become one of the busiest and most influential businesswomen's networking groups in the country.

Claire said: "We wanted to inspire, encourage and celebrate women and help them believe that they can achieve and thrive in all areas of society. Between us, we know a

fair few people in Derby and were delighted when 50 attended the inaugural meeting. Since then, its impact has been amazing.”

“All of our members, who have a wide variety of ages, backgrounds and skill-sets, support each other and have also raised lots of money for charities, such as the Revive Centre.”

Claire is considered such a networking expert that she is often asked to speak on the subject.

“It is just a case of pushing yourself out of your comfort zone.

“I have to laugh when people think I must be really confident because I speak publicly and am involved in lots of groups.

“They don’t see that I have nerves just like anyone else and then I just think to myself, ‘What is the worst that can happen?’”

She has taken up a number of voluntary positions with equal gusto.

“I am company secretary for the Derbyshire Cricket Foundation Board and a director of Derby County Ladies Football Club.

“I am also on the Business Growth and Innovation Board of D2N2.”

“But I should say that I am certainly not the only one in the team at Smith Partnership who are contributing to the community.”

“I am in awe of Darren Perry, who is a Dementia Friends Champion and co-chair of the Derbyshire Dementia Alliance.

“Dementia is a terrible condition and Darren shows great patience to clients who are either affected by it or whose kin are.

“Meanwhile, my colleague Fraser Cunningham also takes a very active role in promoting Derby, being on the board of Furthest From The Sea - a community interest company for local artists, as well as the very successful Cathedral Quarter BID and Marketing Derby.

“Fraser and Russell Davies, who is on the board of the St Peter’s Quarter Bid, are as enthusiastic as I am in our support of Derby.

“This comes from the top – our managing partner, Kevin McGrath, who joined the company 30 years ago as a newly qualified solicitor.



CLAIRE TWELLS IS CHAMPIONING THE GREEN AGENDA WITHIN SMITH PARTNERSHIP.

“Kevin insists that the company is as in touch with our community as it was in the beginning when it set up as a criminal law firm, dealing mainly with walk-in legal aid cases.

“That is why we sponsor events such as The Derby Book Festival and The Derby Telegraph Sports Awards.

“It also meant that when we were looking at new premises in 2018, he was insistent that we should still be in Friar Gate, within easy reach of the city centre so people could drop in when they are in town.

“In our post-Covid business plan, we have written agreements from each department on how they will become even more visible in the community.

“Charity fund-raising is now taken so seriously among staff that an internal communications group has been set up, with a representative from each office getting together each month to discuss their targets.

“There is a competition, with each of our offices vying to become the one which raises the most money,

and you would be amazed at how competitive our annual charity events, such as pumpkin-carving, can become!”

Claire has also picked up the green agenda, which initially came to her attention during the office move.

She said: “I am a real stickler for a clean office. In the digital age, I just didn’t see the reason for our wonderful new environment to be a mess.

“Now there is a clear endeavour towards reducing our carbon footprint and we now analyse our suppliers to assess their green policies and environmental impact.

“For example, Smith Partnership even use pens made from a bioplastic, which is derived from renewable and non-finite raw materials (sugar cane). Our pen supplier also purchases green electricity from hydropower!”

“This year, we are also looking at bigger changes, including a print-monitoring system, which will analyse how much paper we use and seek to reduce that monthly.”



Claire is self-deprecating when it comes to persuading people to see the world the way she does.

"I reckon they will be probably saying, 'Here she comes again, bossing us around or wanting more from us,' but, overall, people respond really well to making their community and environment better and also improving our professional services."

This is a considerable understatement - Claire's qualities shine to such an extent that she was named most inspirational female leader in the region, as well as top female executive of the year, at the East Midlands Women's Awards, held by Women In Management UK in 2019.

"On the night, when I heard there was an award of inspirational leader, I thought, 'I'm not winning that,' because there were phenomenal people in the room.

"Then I turned around, my name was in lights and I was asked to come to the stage but I couldn't move. I just sat there and I am slightly embarrassed to say I just cried.

"Those who know me would agree I am very rarely stuck for words but I didn't know what to say and the next day my husband asked, 'What does it feel like to be the East Midlands most inspirational leader?' and I cried again."

Tears may be around the corner again because Claire is a finalist for Businesswoman Of The Year at the East Midlands Chamber Enterprising Women Awards.

"As I said at the time, I could not have achieved so much had it not been for the support of both my wonderful colleagues at Smith Partnership and the love of my fantastic family."

And she knows that little Alice will keep her feet right on the ground.

"She is funny and feisty and knows exactly what she wants and has completely changed our world.

"It was certainly an interesting experience to be with her when I worked from home during the

various lockdowns. Alice was no respecter of Zoom protocols, I can tell you.

"Joking apart, having Alice has made our lives so much richer and makes me even more determined to help others because I know how lucky we are by comparison to many.

"I hope she will never know what it is like not to go to school because she is ashamed of her uniform but she, like all of us, needs to know that there are young people out there who are.

"My job at Smith Partnership, and being immersed in charity work, has certainly made me feel humble because I see how many people live with so much less than we have and I hope I can pass this humility down to her.

"You never know, she may become a member of Derby's Finest. That would make me very proud," she said. **●**



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They work with some of the world's brightest sports stars. They can count a host of household names amongst their fans. They've just won an award from the Queen for innovation and now they're teaming up with the Thunderbirds. This is why HUUB are simply ...

FAB!

Dean Jackson was cycling when he had a brainwave.

As the child of the seventies cranked the pedals of his bike, he realised he had been humming the theme tune to Thunderbirds, a favourite TV show from his youth.

It occurred to him that many of the middle-aged men in lycra, with whom the sport is now popular,

would have grown up in the same era and may share his fondness for the iconic children's programme, which followed the adventures of the puppet heroes of International Rescue.

So, Dean mused, could he produce cycling kit that was based on the show and market it to fellow fans?

When he got home, he fired off an email to Anderson Entertainment, the company run by the son

of Thunderbirds creator Gerry Anderson, to ask if there was a way to work together.

A video call with Jamie, later and a range of jerseys, based on the numbers, colours and designs of the Thunderbirds' land, sea, air and space craft, was being readied for market through the Gerry Anderson shop and other retailers.

This, in microcosm, demonstrates why Dean's company, HUUB, has been such a stunning success over the past decade.

He and his team come up with brilliant ideas and have the determination – and nerve – to make them a reality.

The firm is best known for its revolutionary wetsuits, worn by some of the world's leading triathletes, like brothers Jonny and Alistair Brownlee, its triathlon and cycling apparel.

HUUB's story also involves partnerships with celebrities like chef Gordon Ramsay and F1 champion Jenson Button, taking on – and beating – the elite of world track cycling, supporting a young cerebral palsy sufferer, whose incredible spirit inspired the nation, and bagging a prestigious Queen's Award for Innovation.

But it begins back in Alvaston, with a young lad who loved riding his Raleigh Chopper bike and went to Wyndham Street School.

"It was kind of a tough school," Dean recalls. "I remember being beat up by a kid and his mum cheering him on!"

"But I loved school and I found a passion through a teacher there, Mrs Porter, for athletics. It ignited me. There was the schools' Esso Challenge and I earned my badge with three stars on it and my mum bought me a pair of new trainers for sports day."

After moving up to Noel Baker School, Dean was persuaded to give a local athletics club a try.

"I didn't have the proper gear and didn't really know what I was doing, I just knew I had a set of lungs and legs. I was there standing on the track in my stretch jeans and t-shirt and they were all in the proper gear. But it went okay and I trained with the group and just stayed with it. I ended up running for Derby and for the county," he recalls.

Of course, at that point, Dean had no idea he would end up forging a

successful career in sports-related businesses – especially as he left school with two 'O' Levels and ambitions of becoming a male nanny.

"My goal was to be the first National Nursing Examination Board-qualified male nanny. I was at Mackworth College in a class with 48 girls."

He spent a year on the course but found it difficult because of the attitudes of some of the lecturers, who, it seemed, were not ready to have a man learning the profession.

"After the summer holidays, I decided not to go back. But I met a girl there, called Angela, who contacted me three years later, who is now my wife," remembers Dean. The couple now have four children and four grandchildren.

It was kind of a tough school. I remember being beat up by a kid and his mum cheering him on!

After a spell working at Bussells Wholesale Newsagents, Dean, who was still only 19, took out a £7,500 bank loan and set up running shop The Derby Runner.

"I was still running but, at this point, I discovered this sport called triathlon, which ignited my imagination because you had to have a really cool bike. I liked the idea of bikes and equipment and how sexy it all was," he recalls.

"It was around the time of Greg LeMond winning the Tour de France by seconds, and he was on triathlon handlebars and all aerodynamic, and there was a big battle in the Ironman World Championships between two heroes of the sport, Dave Scott and Mark Allen, and it just all seemed to be going on. It was really exciting."

After two years at The Derby Runner, Dean left to work for a

running shoe company in what would be the first in a series of successful sports sales and business development roles, for companies like Asics, that would also see him dealing closely with some of the UK's best sporting talents.

"I was looking after Jonathan Edwards and Steve Backley. I went to Japan with Christian Malcom. I took on sponsorship of Dean Macey, who was a medallist at the World Championships – although I also fired Paula Radcliffe because I said she would never make it as a marathon runner," remembers Dean.

He was recruited by Orca to grow its triathlon wetsuit business in the UK – his baptism in the sector – and was then approached by the UK's biggest wetsuit suppliers, American Bicycle Group, to join their operation, eventually leading to a move for the Jackson family to Chattanooga, Tennessee.

But, when Dean reached 40, he decided that rather than helping others grow their businesses, he'd rather be launching his own.

Back in the UK by this point, he worked up his ideas for a new sporting brand which utilised science and technology to produce performance-enhancing clothing and accessories.

He produced a business plan and took it to two banks – but the lenders wouldn't part with their money.

"I did a triathlon and my head was a mess. I was thinking, I've just finished a job and I've got my final payment coming, what am I going to do?"

"One of the guys I was competing against asked me what was wrong. I explained and told him I wanted to launch my own brand that was really honest and scientifically driven. He offered to introduce me to a group of investors from Nottingham called Turning Point.

"I had to do a Dragon's Den style pitch to 12 individuals and I have never been so scared in my life. I had given talks to 1,000 people on running shoes but being in front of this group who could make such a difference to your life, that was something else," Dean recalls.

"If I had fluffed it, I would have been done but, that night, I was at home and got a call telling me that the investors loved the plan and were going to give me £25,000 – but on three conditions.



"Condition one was that I produced a wetsuit that was faster than anyone else; the second was that I got an Olympian wearing it, because this was 2011 and you had the 2012 London games coming up; and the third was that I came back with \$300,000 in orders."

The pressure was on but Dean, working out of the kitchen of his Mickleover home, came up with his first wetsuit ideas and jetted out to China to meet with potential manufacturers. He then flew to Amsterdam to consult with human movement specialist Professor Huub Toussaint, who he had worked with four years earlier developing a wetsuit for an Olympic open water swimmer.

"Maarten Van Der Weijden had had leukaemia and was a real Lance Armstrong-style comeback story and he was doing the open water swim. Professor Huub had contacted me and said he thought the fastest swimsuit around was one made by Blueseventy, who I was working for at the time," recalls Dean.

"He asked if we could make one specifically for the open water in Beijing and so we tailored it to fit him and Maarten won gold."

Dean explained his new business venture to the professor as they sat in a lounge at Schipol Airport.

"I told him I had a bagful of the best wetsuits in the world and wanted him to look at them and tell me how I could make one faster – and, by the way, I had trademarked his name! I asked if he wanted to be part of the business and he chuckled and replied, 'Do I have any option?'

"He said he would join the business on one condition – that whatever improvements he suggested we followed. I said that was why I was there because I knew my weaknesses and being a professor in hydrodynamics was not where I was at that point! Noel Baker wasn't that hot. He said we had a deal and I gave him shares in the business."

Dean also consulted with a friend, Paul Newsome, who runs a company called SwimSmooth, which studies how the body moves through water and trains athletes to move faster. Paul and his team suggested a number of ideas around design and buoyancy.

So, armed with input from both experts, Dean was quickly able to



01. MEASURING THE SPEED OF HUUB TECHNOLOGY IN THE POOL.

02. THE FIRM'S MUCH-LOVED DERBADOS T-SHIRTS.

03. HUUB'S BRIGHTLY-DECORATED OFFICES.

04. DEAN JACKSON AT HIS CITY BASE.

go back to the Chinese factory with an improved design and produce a prototype for testing.

"It tested really well with an athlete called Harry Wiltshire, who was destined to be the pilot for Alistair and Jonny Brownlee at the 2012 Olympics and swim like a demon, bike like a demon and then, basically, just collapse at the side of the road and spit Alistair and Jonny out the front," says Dean.

HUUB signed Harry up to the project, giving them the Olympian that the investors had demanded.

Dean then set about achieving the \$300,000 of orders, securing two-thirds of the amount from a former colleague in the US, who agreed to become a distributor

That just left the investors' third clause to satisfy – demonstrating the performance of the suit.

"I went to the Netherlands with Professor Huub and we got our wetsuits on a testing rig that measures active drag and that proved we had the faster suit," recalls Dean. "So, I went back to the investors and they said they would give me £100,000 to fund the purchasing of the stock and working capital.

"Year one was working off my kitchen table but I used £3,000 of the investment money to convert my garage to give me an office. A young friend of one of my daughters came to work for us as an apprentice – she's still with us today.

"We had two chairs and a table in my garage, back-to-back Apple Macs and a red leather chair that our guests could sit in. They had to climb over the washing basket and squeeze past the tumble dryer. People would knock on my door and ask if we were the wetsuit people and we would take them into the garage and fit them out.

"It was just so small and like a cottage industry but in our first six months trading we did half a million quid and it was, like, how the hell did that happen? We won awards for the best wetsuit and for innovation and after two years in the garage we had grown to such a level that we had to move."

The business shifted to a shared lock-up in Sinfon and increased its turnover to £1.5m. It was then that Dean was joined by his finance director, David Lamb, who he credits with helping to increase the rate of growth.

"He knew how to drive the business and I carried on innovating," Dean recalls.

They also worked hard on building the profile of the HUUB brand.

"We were working with the fastest swimmer in triathlon ahead of 2012. We read the rules of the Olympics on branding when it appeared others hadn't. The rules said if you were the kit supplier you could have a logo up to 30cm square. That surface area was good for our logo. So, we had Richard Varga, who was going to be first out of the water – he never isn't – and we gave him his kit with this big HUUB logo on it," remembers Dean.

Richard performed as expected, meaning that millions of TV viewers were watching as the triathlete emerged from the swim at the front of the field wearing a wetsuit with the company's brand front and centre.

"That taught us to read the rules of play and maximise what they will allow," says Dean.

A year later, they recruited the Brownlee brothers, two of the biggest names in triathlon, to join the HUUB set-up. Dean had worked with their manager earlier in his career and they quickly bought into HUUB's ambitions.

"They signed a deal without even trying the wetsuits on. They just trusted that we would pull something great out," says Dean.

"They came on board in 2013 and that was transformational. They have been incredibly loyal and hugely helpful in innovating products that are going to make them faster. They just want pure speed.

"But, at the same time, we have been developing products for those who would like to be the Brownlees but aren't as good. So, for our top wetsuit, we do a version for those who need help with their swimming and those who are really good at swimming but you cannot tell the difference just by looking."

Dean and Professor Huub were determined to continue their scientific pursuit of increased performance and decided to build their own test facility, at a cost of £300,000 and based in Majorca, to measure their achievements.

"It gives us true, strong data and we have turned the wetsuit industry and the world of competitive

swimwear upside down in the way it thinks. Dave Brailsford had us all thinking about marginal gains but we started thinking about taking everything to bits, bringing the experts on each of the bits in and putting them back together better – and we still live by that today."

Dean is hugely proud of the gains HUUB's technology has helped produce, using the physiology of athletes to lead the design process, understanding the differences in buoyancy that are required by elite and lesser swimmers and ensuring that women's suits are created specifically for the female form and not just a men's version reworked.

"The 2019 Ironman winner Anne Haug approached us in 2020 and asked if we could make her faster? We said, yes, we would make her faster in the water and on her bike. She has just sent back pictures from her in the wind tunnel last week. She says it's the lowest drag number they have ever seen and we have saved seven watts from our previous HUUB suit – and that was a saving of 10 watts from her previous suit," Dean explains.

HUUB also recruited another expert – aerodynamicist Dan Bigham – to help with further development of the company's tri-suits.

His arrival not only boosted the organisation's brain power, it also propelled the company full speed into the world of track cycling.

"Dan told me he had a little cycle team on the track and asked if we could support him, which we did. The team did quite well, its members all moved to Derby and got support from Derby College and Derbyshire Institute of Sport. The next thing you know they are on the world stage, beating Team GB on their bikes," Dean recalls.

"We did a bigger sponsorship deal with them and renamed the team HUUB and got Wattbike to also join the venture to give us credibility in cycling. Before you know it, the cycling world is aware of these young upstarts from Derby who are just a little bit smarter than the average Joes.

"The pinnacle was when we went to London for the World Cup and they beat Team GB in qualifying. They won the event and it was incredible. You had the velodrome from the Olympics absolutely full.

"Because the boys weren't a national team, they had to make one up and so they said they were from Derbados. We designed a



I had a bet with Gordon Ramsay that I would beat him in a triathlon. I could hear him behind me, so I swore - and he told me off for swearing in public!

flag for them and we're all there - hundreds of people in Derbados t-shirts. That leveraged us into cycling."

The coronavirus pandemic has also accelerated HUUB's expansion in cycling, with more and more people turning to the sport for exercise during lockdown.

"Covid came along and I thought it was the end and I'd have to start all over again," says Dean.

"But we spoke to our suppliers in China and asked what they could make. They had also been hit by Covid and said if we needed anything for cycling they could make it and ship it in two weeks. That's unheard of. Normally it's a two or three-month timeline."

The company's new cycling kit designs and promise of double-quick delivery were a hit with distributors.

"They said they would give us a small order and that turned into a massive order, with Boris telling everyone that they could get out on their bikes. It just lit up. Cycling now is 24 per cent of our business and has got there within a year. That was a plan that we would

have expected to take 36 months," says Dean.

"We have sponsored the Ribble cycling team, which the guys from HUUB Wattbike went to ride for on the road. We are now in a very strong, credible position where we are looking where we can go next with it but still keeping the ethos that we built the brand on - research, science and reality.

"We research the problem and sport and see how we can make a difference. Science will tell you how to make that difference and the reality is whether your idea is commercially viable?

"If those three are ticked, you have a product. We do that now in cycling.

"An example in cycling is heated trousers. We have several athletes, that we can't name yet, who are going to the Olympics, who will be wearing our heated trousers that will warm the muscles up before you compete.

"So, if you are in an explosive event or sat on a bench waiting, your muscles are ready to go from the gun. We are always keeping our eyes open for what we can innovate."

HUUB already has a deal with Umbro to produce Derby County FC cycling kit and will be announcing a further, major partnership shortly.

"And also, after a mad moment of me being out on my bike, looking at everyone being the same age as me, we have a deal with Anderson Entertainment to supply Thunderbirds, Space 1999 and Captain Scarlet into very stylish cycling wear," reveals Dean.

"I was on my bike and singing Thunderbirds in my head. I just wrote to Jamie Anderson saying, 'You don't know me and you'll think I'm nuts but can we do a cycling line with Thunderbirds?'

"We already have a presence in Japan but Thunderbirds are huge out there and we think that will be some leverage for our distributors to do more business.

"We are in the sport, trying to get under the skin of it with the elite competitors but we also know there is space with the masses who are enjoying long Sunday rides."

To help HUUB exploit even more opportunities within cycling and in foreign markets, the company



embarked upon a recent crowd-funding exercise in the hope of bringing in £250,000. The offer was so popular that it actually achieved £1.3 million, with 1,612 investors together acquiring nine per cent of the business.

What they have bought into is much more than a balance sheet – although that’s pretty impressive, with turnover now at around £5 million. It’s more about the ethos that the 24-strong HUUB team follow as they dream up their next ideas as the firm’s funky Park Bikeworks headquarters in Full Street, Derby.

“We ask what is stopping us from doing something,” explains Dean. “If we have an ambition to do something, what is stopping us? It’s not, ‘That’s too risky’, it’s, ‘What’s stopping us?’”

The HUUB team is expected to work hard but also gets to play hard.

“We take the team on holiday every year. We’ve done Tenerife and Ibiza. And on Friday nights we take them down the pub – although we’re now building our own bar within the office. I’d like to think working here is exciting and energetic,” says Dean.

That new bar might be serving drinks to some well-known customers when it’s complete. HUUB has built strong relationships with celebrities such as Gordon Ramsay and Jenson Button – thanks to Dean’s eye for an opportunity to get them wearing HUUB kit.

Dean recalls how he had been helping out in a triathlon store in Nottingham when Gordon Ramsay’s coach telephoned to pay for a turbo trainer that he had purchased there.

“I asked if Gordon would wear my wetsuit? His coach said he’d give it a try and so I sent one down. A week later, one of my customers, a shop in London, rang me up and said, ‘Dean, Gordon Ramsay has just been into our shop and bought two of your wetsuits. He says he can’t carry them with him and would we deliver them by taxi? Will you pay for the taxi?’

“I said, of course I would. So, they delivered them to Gordon and then his coach rang me up and said that Gordon was setting up a foundation and could we help out? He was trying to get 100 people to raise £5,000 each. He asked what we could do? I said I’d give every one of them a wetsuit, worth £550.”

Dean’s generosity made such an impact with the star, who is famed for his colourful language, that he ended up visiting Derby and forging a friendship with Dean – along with establishing a friendly rivalry in triathlon events.

“I had a bet with Gordon that I would beat him in a triathlon. On the second lap of the run, I could hear him behind me, so I swore – and he told me off for swearing in public,” Dean remembers.

HUUB went on to develop a range of women’s triathlon clothing with Gordon’s wife, Tana.

Dean also forged a friendship with Formula One star Jenson Button after, unannounced, sending him some training kit to try.

The motor racing ace telephoned Dean to thank him – and ended up being persuaded to bring a triathlon event he was organising to Markeaton Park in Derby.

A further celebrity association, with Wales rugby legend Gareth Thomas, came about even though Dean had no idea who the sportsman was when he turned up for a meeting at his office.

"One of the swimming coaches that we know in Wales had called and said he wanted to come and see me and bring his friend, who he called Alfie. I said I was really busy but we found time in the diary.

"Alfie was sat on the settee in my office. He said he had come to see me because he was doing an Ironman and I said that lots of people come to see me because they're doing an Ironman. He asked, 'Well have you met an athlete who is doing an Ironman who has HIV?'

"I said I hadn't but I'd bet he wasn't the first. He said he had got the BBC following him and making a programme about it. I asked him why and he explained that it was probably because of his rugby.

"I said, 'Forgive me but what have you ever done in rugby?' And he said, 'I played for Wales 100 times and I captained the Lions!'"

HUUB have used their celebrity associations not only to grow awareness of the brand but also to help the community and good causes - Gordon Ramsay visited catering students at Derby College and Jenson Button helped Dean support youngster Bailey Matthews, who has cerebral palsy.

Bailey had won a BBC Sports Personality Award after a video showing his determination to finish a triathlon event, despite falling over several times as he left behind his walking frame, went viral.

Dean had noticed that Bailey's dad, who was accompanying the youngster, was wearing HUUB kit.

"We found his details and I rang him up and asked what we could do to help. They said they would love to have a triathlon for those who are not able-bodied. I went to Jenson and asked if we could do something alongside his event.

"We created the Be More Bailey Triathlon. It was so heart-warming. I'm now on the board of Bailey's charity and they do brilliant work providing equipment for kids who need specialist help," says Dean.

While supporting worthy causes is a passion for Dean, so is promoting his home city. He's deeply proud of his roots and is determined that, however the business develops, Derby will always be at the heart of its operations. He's already turned down an approach from a company that wanted to buy the company but would have relocated it elsewhere.

He's keen to see the city build on its reputation for innovation - and thinks it should make every effort to create an attractive city centre that more people will want to visit.

"When we moved to the States, Chattanooga had been, in the seventies, among the worst cities in the US to live but, by the time we were there, it was amongst the top three.

"What they had done was take 'Downtown' and transform it from a shopping centre so it was about bands and music and arts and festivals. It was just so wonderful and you would go there to relax, chill, meet friends and enjoy yourself. I don't see why we can't do that here.

"We have to work with the entrepreneurs. We should have an entrepreneurial zone. We need a statue in the centre, called the Innovator, that would be big, like the Angel of the North, that people would want to come and see but it would also portray what the city is all about," he suggests.

What HUUB remains all about is innovation - and that has just been recognised with one of the UK's most prestigious accolades, a Queen's Award.





01. DEAN, PICTURED OUTSIDE HIS DERBY OFFICE.

02. HUUB USES SCIENCE AND INNOVATION TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE OF ITS WETSUITS.

03. THE HUUB WATTBIKE CYCLING TEAM, WHICH TOOK ON AND BEAT TEAM GB.

The firm was put under the microscope by a panel of judges before they passed their recommendation on to the monarch for approval.

Dean said: "To be recognised in the Queen's Awards really is amazing.

"I would never have dreamed when starting this business on my kitchen table that we would be recognised for what really makes HUUB special ... our innovation.

"We constantly strive to make athletes better and faster and

our sport more fulfilling. We are relentless in the pursuit of performance and innovation sits at the heart of everything we do.

"I'd like to thank the team for driving our ambition and aspirations to be the very best in our field and for believing in the crazy ideas that drive innovation and experimentation.

"There is a saying, 'If you do what you did, you get what you got' and we believe that to make innovative change you need to do, think and explore where others have failed to

go or failed to see the benefit.

"Winning the Queen's Award really is for the whole business... it's a reflection of the team's dedication to pushing thinking and challenging the norm."

As he proudly shows me the designs for his Thunderbirds-inspired new cycling range, there seems little doubt that this kid from Alvaston will go on challenging the norm.

And that, as his puppet heroes might say, is what makes his HUUB story so FAB! 🎬



Train of Thought

NICK CROSSFIELD, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ALSTOM UK AND IRELAND, ANSWERS THE KEY QUESTIONS ON THE COMPANY'S ACQUISITION OF BOMBARDIER'S DERBY OPERATION, WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE PLANT AND THE FUTURE OF THE RAIL INDUSTRY.





is that heritage and how central will the Derby plant be to Alstom's future operations?

A: It's hugely important. Everyone in Alstom is aware of how central train building is to Derby, and how it will remain so. Not only is Derby the largest train factory in the UK, it is the only one that can design, build and test trains, and it's also the largest in Alstom globally.

Q: The Derby factory has suffered mixed fortunes under previous owners. At times it has been threatened with closure and seen significant job losses. What does Alstom's stewardship mean for employment and investment here?

A: The UK market is one of the top four or five global markets for Alstom so, naturally, Derby is really important to us too. We are half way through the largest order book in the industry – 2,660 Aventura cars for five different customers, and we are also making the trains for the Cairo Monorail, the first rolling stock export by anyone in the UK for over a dozen years. So, it's about continuity of employment and it's about keeping Derby one of the most productive and competitive facilities in the world.

Q: The plant has historically enjoyed and endured peaks and troughs in its order book. How will you seek to break this cycle? Will Derby export more of its products in future? And how does Brexit impact upon your ambitions?

A: The UK rolling stock market is fairly cyclical so we have to do three things. First, constantly ensure we remain competitive on technology and on price so we win as many orders as possible; second, it's about looking for export opportunities, so Derby can compete and win international work as we have done with the Cairo Monorail; and, third, it's about capitalising on the huge opportunity represented by decarbonisation of the railways - essential if we are to hit net zero. Alstom has led the way in hydrogen technology and Bombardier was strong in battery technology, so we have a great basis to build on.

Q: How confident are you that, in the global marketplace, Alstom and its UK operations can remain competitive against the Chinese?

A: We have to retain our competitive edge, there is no doubt, but we are competing and winning against international competition across the world, including against the Chinese.

For example, we beat the Chinese on the Cairo Monorail tender. Its about technology, price and service.

Q: You've spent a lot of time in the city since January. What are your observations of your new team, the wider cluster of rail companies based here and of Derby itself?

A: Yes, I've spent most of my time since the deal closed on January 29 in Derby and I'm really impressed by the factory itself, and the professionalism and commitment of our people; and I'm impressed by the city and its manufacturing and academic strengths. As well as ourselves and our supply chain, the likes of Rolls-Royce, Toyota, JCB, as well as the university, give the city a real can-do approach. I can't think of another city in the UK like it.

Q: The acquisition of Bombardier was completed during the latest Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. How has the pandemic impacted upon the business and how are operations now? How confident are you in the post-pandemic recovery?

A: Apart for a brief three-week pause at the beginning of the pandemic in March last year, the factory has kept going throughout and we have suffered very few cases and no real outbreak in the factory, which I think shows we have had the right measures in place. It has affected the rail sector in a wider sense, of course, and we will have to adapt to changing travel patterns post-pandemic, perhaps more leisure travel and fewer commuters on some days of the week. But I suspect overall the bounce back will be fairly rapid and some of our customers are already seeing that.

Q: Alstom's chairman, Henri Poupart-Lafarge, describes the company as "a global leader, centred on smart and sustainable mobility." What does he mean by that?

A: Henri is describing the two prevailing trends in our industry: decarbonisation through electrification, battery and hydrogen, and the switch to software-driven digital signalling and train control. Alstom are leaders in both those trends and indeed we have to be because that's what our customers rightly demand.

Q: The company published its own report - The UK's New Green Age; A Step Change in Transport Decarbonisation - calling for a £10 billion

Q: Alstom completed its acquisition of Bombardier Transportation - and its Derby operations - in January. What was the strategy behind the takeover?

A: Globally, the acquisition was about improving Alstom's global reach and our ability to respond to the ever-increasing need for sustainable transport. It was also about combining complementary footprints, and that's particularly the case in the UK where the two businesses complement each other really well. For example, until the deal, Alstom had no train making capability in the UK, and Derby brings us that.

Q: Derby has played a pioneering role in UK and world train building for nearly 200 years. How important



ALSTOM DESCRIBES ITSELF AS A GLOBAL LEADER IN SMART AND SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY.

programme of investment in UK rail and mass transit systems. Where do you think the biggest differences can be achieved - nationwide and in the East Midlands region?

A: To decarbonise rail by 2040, and 2035 in Scotland, we have to act now. That means electrification of the core network, including routes such as the Midland Mainline, and battery or hydrogen trains on routes where electrification is harder to justify, or where the wires will take longer to reach, routes such as the Matlock branch for example. Finally, it's about modal shift, persuading people to take the train rather than flying or driving, both of which are much more carbon-intensive than rail. That's why HS2 is so important and why tram and metro systems in our big cities are vital too.

Q: Among the report's recommendations are speeding up electrification of the railway. Presumably, then, you believe the Midlands Main Line should be targeted for such an investment?

A: Absolutely. We're half way there now, with electrification as far as Kettering, and Market Harborough is next, so now we must finish the job and reach Derby, Nottingham

and Sheffield. That will reduce emissions, improve air quality and make trains cleaner and cheaper to run.

Q: The report also suggests that HS2 has an essential role to play in creating a modal shift that will help the UK meet its net zero targets. Do you think the project's overall environmental credentials stand up to scrutiny?

A: In a word, yes. The case for HS2 is primarily about capacity and about modal shift. If we can persuade people to take the train rather than domestic flights or the motorway, we can make a huge difference to meeting our climate targets. That applies to HS2 itself but also on the existing routes that HS2 will relieve. It will also create more space for freight trains that can replace polluting HGVs.

Q: Of course, Alstom, in conjunction with Hitachi, is a leading contender to land the £2.75 billion contract to supply rolling stock for HS2. Where is that process currently at and what will it mean to Derby if you either win or lose the bid?

A: I think we will see news on that very important tender process fairly soon.

Q: Alstom has invested heavily in developing hydrogen and battery technology. You recently secured a contract to deliver electric-hydrogen trains to SCNF in France and you are working with Evershot Rail, here in the UK, on a project to convert existing fleets to hydrogen. How important is this technology to the company's future?

A: It's very important, as the market for sustainable rail is growing all the time. I don't think we will see any new diesel trains being built in the UK or in the big EU markets, and that's the way it should be.

Q: Some would suggest that the UK has lagged behind many other countries in adopting - and commissioning - trains powered by these new technologies. Do you agree and, if so, why do you think that is and what needs to change?

A: It does take time to develop the technology and to make the economic case as, inevitably, the technology is expensive to start with. But the Government recognises that and we are working closely with them to prove the economic and technological case for hydrogen trains.



01/02. ALSTOM STAFF AT WORK ON THE HIGH-TECH PRODUCTION LINES.

03/04. ALSTOM'S DERBY PLANT IS CELEBRATING A MAJOR DEAL TO EXPORT MONORAIL CARS TO DELKETE SINS

Q: What could the continued development of hydrogen and other 'green' technologies mean for the Derby plant?

A: My ambition is to make Derby the UK hub for hydrogen and battery technology. That technology is what our customers want so, naturally, the UK's largest rolling stock factory has a major role to play in that.

Q: Derby has already won a contract to supply environmentally-friendly monorail cars to Egypt, meaning the creation of a new assembly line and work for around 100 people. How significant is this contract award and do you see this type of business being increasingly important for Derby?

A: It's hugely significant, both because it's a major export after a long period of purely domestic work, and because we are creating the country's only monorail production line. That's important because a number of fast-growing nations in the Middle East are urbanising and decarbonising at the same time, so green systems, such as monorails, are the perfect solution. We are very keen to win more of this work.

Q: You have been appointed to sit on the Midlands Engine Business Council, as it seeks to drive growth and productivity in the region and to help the levelling up agenda. Where do you believe are the biggest opportunities for the region? Have we been successful enough in galvanising the region to act as one and to ensure that its voice is heard?

A: If you look at the businesses in the Midlands: JLR, Rolls-Royce, Toyota and ourselves, plus the huge range of new green technology companies, the Midlands really can lead the 'green industrial revolution' that the Government talks about. I like the Council that Sir John Peace chairs because it's focused on these opportunities, and because it covers both East and West Midlands. It understands that we do need to speak as one region in the same way that London does. We really do need a powerful and unified voice if we are to win our fair share of business investment and transport infrastructure.

Q: Developing future talent will be vital for the Midlands and the UK as a whole. How would you persuade that future talent that a career in

the rail industry would be a good option?

A: Rail is a very different industry from even a decade ago. It's now about design, about digitalisation and about green technology. You're as likely to repair a train with a laptop as a spanner these days. It really is an exciting and technology-driven place to be now. Fundamentally, public transport is a public good, it connects our economy and society and in a sustainable way, too.

Q: It's been an exciting and challenging start to 2021. What are your main hopes for the rest of the year?

A: I would like to complete the integration of the former-Bombardier business into Alstom. We are 15 weeks in and it's on track. I would like to deliver on the expectations of our customers and I would like to win the important orders we are in the running for. Fundamentally though, I want to run a safe operation and ensure we all recover quickly from Covid-19. **1**

RR shows commitment to Derby with new £90 million engine testbed

Rolls-Royce has officially opened the world's largest and smartest indoor aerospace testbed in a move that underscores the company's commitment to its Derby site.

The completion of the project is a major milestone after almost three years of construction and a £90m investment.

Larger than a Premiership football pitch, Testbed 80 features cutting-edge technology that will help the firm develop the next generation of aircraft engines.

Rolls-Royce chief executive Warren East said: "Testbed 80 is the largest facility of its type in the world. However, it is not only big, it is also smart and features the most advanced testing technology we have ever used.

"As the new global hub of our testing capability, it will support the next stage of our UltraFan programme as we begin ground testing the first demonstrator in 2022.

"This incredible piece of infrastructure is a very visible sign of our commitment to this site and secures the future of Derby as the home of large engine development, continuing a history that began in the late 1960s with the RB211."

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng attended the testbed's official opening and praised Rolls-Royce for its innovation.

"This testbed here in Derby shows that the UK remains a global leader in aeroengine technology. I'm proud that we're supporting Rolls-Royce's development of the highly-efficient UltraFan engine, as well as investment in green and cutting-edge aerospace technology here in the UK that will create high-skilled, well-paid jobs for decades to come," he said.

"As the civil aviation market recovers, the innovation of great British companies, such as Rolls-Royce and the entire aerospace sector, are central to our plans to build back better from the pandemic and end our contribution to climate change by 2050."

Testbed 80 will support Rolls-Royce's sustainability strategy - continuing to improve the efficiency of gas turbine engines, promoting the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuels and testing hybrid and all-electric flight systems. **1**



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A photograph of a person in a laboratory setting, viewed from the side, looking through a microscope. The image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent red circle. The text "A TRUE TEST OF INGENUITY" is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the red circle. The background shows laboratory equipment, including a computer monitor and various cables.

A TRUE TEST OF INGENUITY

CITY FIRM'S INNOVATION HELPS INTERNATIONAL BATTLE AGAINST CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC - AND CREATES HUNDREDS OF NEW JOBS

"The brilliant work done by SureScreen and the contribution it will make to our rapid testing programme is another example of the home-grown talent, ingenuity and industry that exists right here in the UK."

The words of Health Secretary Matt Hancock provided the endorsement which the Derbyshire family firm had worked tirelessly towards for more than a year.

His order of tens of millions of Covid-19 tests has been the springboard for a massive expansion at SureScreen Diagnostics.

This summer the company, which employed 60 people a year ago, has moved into a huge new site just off the M1 with plans to expand to 1,300.

SureScreen, long respected amid scientific circles for its innovation, has become headline news for being at the forefront of the battle against Covid.

Their work even prompted a visit by Prime Minister Boris Johnson to its

Eagle Park production line and for him to proclaim: "Lateral flow tests, like the ones being made here at SureScreen, are going to be crucial... they pick up whether you are infectious very accurately."

SureScreen Diagnostics had been one of the quickest companies in Europe to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, being one of the first to produce antibody tests which would show whether a patient had contracted Covid-19.

This was important because many cases were going undiagnosed at the time and studies showed that utilising the SureScreen device helped pick up missed cases in hospitals, which was key to reducing spreading of the infection whilst in care.

Many countries imported those early SureScreen tests, but the golden fleece for the UK government was seen to be antigen tests, which would show if a patient was infectious.

SureScreen's team set about the task of creating the antigen test with the most reliable and quickest results.

Director David Campbell said: "At SureScreen, we set ourselves the

goal of trying to resolve real-world health issues.

"When Covid-19 emerged, we felt compelled to help wherever we could."

SureScreen may not have been widely known outside of the scientific and medical communities but its work has had significant impact since it was founded by Jim Campbell in 1996.

Even before the pandemic, a rapid SureScreen test to diagnose disease or pick up drug or alcohol abuse was used every three seconds across 70 countries, cutting out hundreds of hours that medics would be waiting for the results of laboratory tests and saving huge amounts of money for healthcare.

Indeed, in recognition of his work, Jim was awarded the OBE in 2019 for services to healthcare.

He passed his passion to find answers through scientific discovery to his sons, Alastair, Alex and David, who have now taken on the business following his retirement.

A tour around SureScreen's premises reveals the huge variety of their business.



"They agreed that the ten-minute test was 98 per cent accurate and, consequently, it proved hugely popular in Europe, South America and as far as Australia. Our manufacturing was up-scaled so that around 500,000 could be made every week."

David said: "If you read the first few pages of Google, you may get the impression that we deal exclusively with Covid tests.

"Of course, they have been a game-changer in terms of the company's expansion, but it was the knowledge gleaned during years of research and developing products which enabled us to act so quickly and effectively once we were aware of Covid."

Jim has also offered his manufacturing expertise to Rolls-Royce, JCB and Formula 1 over the years.

In the SureScreen Scientifics arm of the business, he developed expertise in investigating and diagnosing metal failure, degradation, fracture and consequent loss in performance.

He invented the specification for curfew-tagging for the Home Office and led the team to become experts in spotting animal DNA - most often used in detecting whether endangered species might be present at potential housing developments.

The Campbell family all speak with the same quiet assurance. They have a thirst for knowledge which drives them on, but they are reticent about publicity.

Consequently, few people would know that they specialise in liquid health supplements, which they supply to a myriad of household brands.

This work is carried out under the Nutrivitality name and its own brand Skinglo.

One of their products contains collagen, which is popular among people who want to prevent wrinkles!

Another of their successes was inspired by the brothers' grandfather, whose sight was deteriorating.

"We really wanted to help him because reading has been such an important part of his life," said Alex Campbell.

Thus, the team put their heads together and, after some painstaking work, came up with a supplement which helps prevent macular degeneration.

Alex added: "Thanks to the liquid supplement, grandfather is still able to read his emails and he is in his mid-90s."

Most recently, the company has developed a gut-testing product called NeoVos which the team believes which help overall health.

Alex said: "It may surprise people to know that there is a clear link between the gut and mental health.

"Indeed, much of our overall health and energy levels are associated with the gut.

"Therefore, we have developed a product which can quickly analyse the gut health of a client through analysing a stool sample.

"We then send them a report on any problems they might have and even suggest remedial activities to improve their health. We only launched this service in December and it has already helped hundreds of people."

All of this activity took place while SureScreen Diagnostics, the company's testing arm, was at the forefront of fighting a worldwide pandemic.

David added: "We knew that implementing rapid screening for Covid-19 would mean huge time and cost savings when compared to laboratory screening and help control the spread of the virus by identifying infection rapidly and accurately.

"As soon as Covid-19 emerged, our scientists worked to develop the first antibody test.

"The result was a rapid test which identifies the body's response to coronavirus after the onset of infection and gives a qualitative yes/no result within 10 minutes.

"The test cassette is easy to use, needing only a finger-prick sample to function, much like a blood glucose test.

"As well as whole blood, the cassette can also be run with serum or plasma samples.

"Following the success of the antibody tests, we developed a lateral flow Covid-19 antigen test.

"Using an anterior nares nasal swab, the detection of COVID-19 antigen takes just 10 minutes. Once the sample has been taken, the swab is introduced to the buffer solution, extracting the sample, then applied to the test device.

"The result is easily read against the result chart in the product instructions - in a similar way to a pregnancy test.

"We have always been very confident in the performance of our tests, however, as everyone in the industry has found, there have been many challenges along the way, and often unexpected ones.

"The speed of development has been a key thing for us. The pandemic has put the industry in fast forward and trying to keep up with the latest research on the virus has been critical as understanding has evolved from early 2020.

"After developing a test which we believed performed excellently, we had to put the tests through their paces in our own laboratories and, following this, external validation to prove performance and repeatability.

"The initial difficulty came in proving a relatively small family company could really have come up with a better solution than some of the huge, established brands.

"Governments were faced with having to sieve through tenders by dozens, if not hundreds, of companies, while the surge of cases and deaths from Covid was, and still is, daily headline news.

"How could we persuade them that we could be of significant help?

"Firstly, it was important to have supporters in the scientific arena - people at key institutions who understood the reliability of SureScreen's record with diagnostics and could see the benefit of the device being used in their institution.

"To prove its accuracy, we worked with several renowned partners across the world, including Kings College London, Guy's and St Thomas's London, UZ Leuven Belgium, The French National Centre for Scientific Research, Cambridge University, Imperial College London, NCI in the USA, and Champalimaud Portugal.

"They agreed that the ten-minute test was 98 per cent accurate and, consequently, it proved hugely popular in Europe, South America and as far as Australia. Our manufacturing was up-scaled so that around 500,000 could be made every week.

"We were exporting a lot of tests, which was great that we were helping people all around the world, but we always had hoped we could help people in the UK in a greater way also.



THE SURESCREEN TEAM AND PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON

"Fortunately, our Mid-Derbyshire MP, Pauline Latham, played a significant part in raising the case for SureScreen in Parliament and spreading the word among her colleagues.

"At the same time, she linked us up with a fellow Marketing Derby bondholder, Black & White PR, which ensured that the progress with our tests was highlighted in the national media.

"This gave us the national profile, which could be married to the quality of the tests.

"We could highlight how successful the tests had been abroad as a case for how they could be used here also

"Finally, our tests went through the stringent validation process of Public Health England, and we were fortunate enough to be discussing supplying the UK government."

The SureScreen test is being used as part of the Government's rapid testing programme for those without symptoms, which has seen lateral flow tests deployed across the country to test NHS and care home staff, as well as in targeted settings including schools, universities and to allow key workers to continue their vital work during lockdown.

With up to a third of individuals with Covid-19 not displaying symptoms, broadening asymptomatic testing

is essential in finding positive cases among people who may unknowingly pass on the virus in order to break chains of transmission.

By April this year, the company had already completed the delivery of over 30 million tests to the Government.

Rapid testing allows accurate and cost-effective results within minutes, meaning that both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases can be detected quickly and efficiently.

The Prime Minister visited the production line at Eagle Park, Derby, and pronounced that: "These SureScreen tests are very good and they pick up whether you are infectious very accurately.

"That is incredibly valuable because we know who has got it and may not have symptoms. That could help us in all sorts of ways."

Occasionally, the Campbell brothers have to stand back and digest the changes at SureScreen.

"It is difficult to take in how our company has gone from being a medium-sized family business to creating millions of products a week to help people globally," said Alastair.

"To have the Prime Minister visit us and give us the official seal of approval was amazing and he even helped make a few tests!

"It was great for him to meet our dad, who started it all, as well as our head of research and development, Yasin Kurmoo and, operations manager Jennifer Chambers.

"It was a big boost for the team and especially our production team.

"We also have to pinch ourselves when we think that our tests have been used to help people as diverse as those who live on the banks of the Panama Canal to the President of Portugal."

SureScreen's expansion hasn't been confined to the UK.

"We have set up an office in Australia to help people in Australasia and the Pacific islands and we have continued to work in Europe, opening a subsidiary business in Ireland to help our European customers.

"To overcome language and cultural barriers, we translated information and marketing into local languages and hired individuals to work solely in the international business development space.

"We carried out direct marketing campaigns, via email and telephone, to suitable distribution partners, submitting directly to have our products registered with the correct authorities and submitting our products for international validation at recognised institutions



01/02. BORIS JOHNSON MEETING WITH THE STAFF AT SURESCREEN.

03. THE SURESCREEN COVID 19 TEST.

to prove the quality and raise the profile of the brand in certain markets.

"We have also actively participated in contact tenders internationally, which is something we haven't done before. This resulted in us supplying the Belgian and Flemish governments.

"Due to our strategy, our products are registered and validated across Europe, in some countries in the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia, Australia and across most of South America."

The pace of SureScreen's business growth show no signs of easing up.

"We have been very pleased to have played a part in keeping professional sport going through the pandemic," said Alastair.

"Our tests have been used in football, rugby, cricket and most recently at the World Snooker Championships in Sheffield."

"The Sydney Opera House used the tests to enable it to perform after the initial Covid lockdown.

"We've also had some strange events such as two men from Mexico who turned up in our car park one day unannounced and demanding hundreds of thousands of tests.

"They had actually flown over and not even made an appointment. The contract was signed, masked

and socially distanced, on the bonnet of their hire car!"

"A year ago, we could not have imagined any of this or that we would be planning to expand from an organisation of 60 people to potentially one of 1,300.

"Now we foresee that people understand how easy testing can be and that the need for rapid testing will only continue to grow into better diagnostics for health. These tests can be used to catch issues early and we have the infrastructure to deliver these solutions in volume going forward.

"Our mission is the same as before - we want to help come up with the best scientific answer at the lowest practicable price.

"With that in mind, we will continue to develop different types of tests to ensure that they pick up not only the dangerous Covid variants but other health parameters too.

"We will continue to work with governments, organisations and private companies at home and abroad to try to bring the pandemic under control worldwide.

"But to do this, we will need to be producing millions of tests every week, so the need to invest in a production facility which is second to none is so important.

"We are delighted with our move to the new facility - it will really

help in ensuring the future of the company is secure."

Many local companies have been key to the quick acquisition and fit-out of the production and distribution hub at Sherwood Business Park.

"We would like to thank our team for their dedication and hard work and DSP Interiors, Smith Partnership, Encore Personnel, NatWest, Bates Weston and FHP for their help in sealing the move to Sherwood Park in very quick time. Black & White PR, Mercia Image and Flint Bishop have also been so helpful during the last year. We have always worked with local business where we can.

"It is a giant step for us but again one of which we are incredibly proud.

"What has been achieved over the past 18 months has been remarkable but we are certain that this is not the end of the story but just the beginning."

One thing is for certain - SureScreen will never again have to prove its credentials. It is now the turn-to company in a health crisis. 📌



THE TEAM AT MERCIA IMAGE PRINT

PRINT FIRM EMBARKS ON NEW CHAPTER FOLLOWING MERGER

Print firm Mercia Image Print has embarked on a new era following a company merger and expansion into new markets.

The Little Eaton company has joined with The Print and Design Factory, which has led to a diversification of its product portfolio and a boost in sales.

The merger has acted as a springboard for the company's recovery after the coronavirus crisis seriously disrupted its hospitality and retail industry sales.

Mercia Image Print was founded by owner and managing director Amanda Strong more than 30 years ago. She has now taken on the role of company ambassador following the merger.

Craig Ikin, group commercial director

with The Print and Design Factory, said: "We are delighted to welcome Mercia to our group and look forward to maintaining and building on Mercia's reputation as the leading print provider in Derby."

When the coronavirus crisis first hit just over a year ago, Mercia Image found its order book for promotional print disappear, especially from the hospitality and retail sector.

Amanda said: "A big chunk of business had vanished overnight, so we had to think on our feet, juggle furlough with production and find new products to fill the gap and secure our future."

The company decided to switch focus onto product packaging, which led to the securing of large orders for rapid

flow testing kits and online retail packaging.

Mercia also secured contracts from all over Derby, including producing bespoke boxes for innovative companies, including Colleague Box and Solesmith.

Sales director Paul Ross said: "We were kept busy producing new innovative packaging that creates the right impression for a multitude of customers and business sectors."

Amanda was then approached by The Print and Design Factory, based in Sheffield, with an offer to buy the company.

The two businesses have since successfully merged, allowing Mercia to offer a full printing package, which has opened up a range of new opportunities.

CHILDREN FIRST SECURES LOTTERY BOOST

Children First Derby, a charity which supports children and families, has secured more than £300,000 in lottery funding to continue its mentoring service.

The Leopold Street-based organisation is to receive £321,529 from the National Lottery Community Fund to carry on the operation for the next five years.

Mentoring is one of three services the charity provides and offers one-to-one mentoring support to children and young people aged between 10 to 18 years in the Derby area.

The service relies on the use of staff and trained volunteers, who provide essential support and guidance, helping to boost young people's confidence, reduce isolation, and improve overall mental health and wellbeing.

The mentors also help the young people develop strength and resilience needed for success in education and the workplace.

Children First Derby chairman Fred Jacques said: "We are delighted to hear that our funding bid from the National Lottery has proved successful.

"We rely on public funding and fundraising initiatives to operate our mentoring and family support services. And our fundraising capacity has been greatly reduced over the last 12 months due to Covid-19."



THE VIBRANT ACCOUNTANCY TEAM WEARING THEIR NEW BRANDED WORKWEAR

BONDHOLDERS EMBRACE CASUAL WORKWEAR REVOLUTION

Vibrant Accountancy and Colleague Box are embracing the casual workwear revolution by ordering their own bespoke ranges of clothing.

Both firms have called upon the expertise of Derby independent clothing label MrShaw to come up with their own branded business workwear.

According to MrShaw, more firms are looking for workwear that bridges the gap between the home and the office, such as corporate hoodies and T-shirts.

MrShaw, which was founded by Karl Shaw in 2016, made its name by designing clothing inspired by Karl's love of Derby and his memories of growing up in the city.

Earlier this year MrShaw – whose brand ambassadors include Derby County TV presenter Owen Bradley and former Rams footballer Shane Nicholson – produced a range of clothing in conjunction with Derby Brewing Company.

However, this year, MrShaw supplied its first-ever clothing collection, designed solely for a company, after it supplied T-shirts and hoodies for Duffield Road-based accountants Vibrant.

It has since been asked to supply a bespoke range for Derby letterbox gift company Colleague Box and says that more orders from other local companies are in the pipeline.

Bev Wakefield, a director at Vibrant Accountancy, said: "We like to see ourselves as more informal and less stuffy than a traditional accountancy, while still appearing professional, smart and distinctive, and this new clothing allows us to do that."

"We were already moving in that direction, but lockdown has certainly changed things to the extent that if you wear formal clothing when you're sitting at home taking part in a Zoom call then it just looks wrong."

CATHEDRAL QUARTER BID ACHIEVES QUALITY KITEMARK

The Cathedral Quarter Business Improvement District has become one of the first in the UK to be awarded a BID industry kitemark for the quality of its work.

The BID, which was first established in 2008, is one of more than 300 business-led partnerships operating in the UK.

Its governance and quality have been scrutinised against 11 new standards, which have been developed

by The BID Foundation to encourage transparency and responsible governance in the sector.

Ashley Lewis, senior BID project manager for the Cathedral Quarter BID, said: "Business Improvement Districts operate for the benefit of the levy payers they serve and these new industry standards, set by The BID Foundation, give reassurance to levy payers that BIDs are transparent, open and professionally operated."

"These 11 standards were achieved by the Cathedral Quarter BID and we have been pleased to have been part of this initiative."

UNI GRADUATE JOINS BB&J TEAM

A University of Derby graduate has been appointed to coordinate digital communications and marketing at property firms BB&J Commercial and Boxall Brown & Jones.

Amey Hellen, who completed her degree in Business Management, has joined BB&J following a recent rebrand.

Mark Richardson, partner at BB&J Commercial, said: "We were very impressed by the enormous enthusiasm and skillset that Amey possesses."

"With her existing industry experience in marketing to both businesses and consumers, we are confident that she will be a great addition to our existing team and help us develop and strengthen our social media strategy to further grow our brands."



NEW BB&J RECRUIT AMEY HELLEN

A pink background with numerous colorful, pill-shaped sprinkles scattered across it. The sprinkles are in various colors including white, red, green, yellow, blue, and pink. The title "Hitting the Sweet Spot" is centered in a white, stylized font.

Hitting the Sweet Spot

WITH ITS STRIKING PINK PACKAGING AND EXTRAVAGANTLY-TOPPED DOUGHNUTS THAT ARE AS STUNNING TO LOOK AT AS THEY ARE DELICIOUS TO EAT, THE SKY'S THE LIMIT FOR RAPIDLY EXPANDING DERBY BAKERY PROJECT D. WE TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THIS INNOVATIVE, VIBRANT YOUNG COMPANY'S AMAZING SUCCESS OVER A FEW SHORT YEARS.

Here in Derby, many people have had a taste of the spectacular and joyful creations emerging from hip young bakery, Project D.

Little puts a smile on the face quite as much as the arrival at your office door of its funky pink boxes and the knockout doughnuts inside. Whether they're adorned with a Biscoff biscuit or boast a wobbly lemon yellow centre, they are pretty much guaranteed to hit that sweet spot.

But Project D's success is no longer just local to Derby. Its doughnuts have graced the Love Island after-party and London Fashion Week, an achievement which is thanks to the Project D's founders, Jacob Watts, Max Poynton and Matthew Bond's, instinctive understanding that in order to succeed in today's market, a business such as theirs needs to harness social media effectively as well as creating eye-catching designs and mouth-watering flavours that will keep people coming back for more.

As a result, and over the past year, the hard-working Project D team has been delivering to a region from Leeds to Birmingham and, with rapid expansion now underway, the energetic trio of businessmen behind this youthful brand have their sights on units in Leeds, Manchester and London over the next two years, with the possibility of heading overseas too.

It seems that everyone just loves a doughnut - and they particularly like a Project D doughnut. Delivered in boxes of four and decorated to the nines for the ultimate 'Insta' appeal, people just can't get enough of their doughnut fix.

Today, with a large new bakery in Derby, a distribution hub in Leeds, an investment of £250,000 in equipment to allow 24-hour operation for a tripling of output and 100 more staff, just how has Project D achieved its remarkable success in a market that already has plenty of big players?

From small beginnings...

In 2018, the Project D founders began their journey by embarking on some important market research. Max, Jacob and Matthew, who all attended Chellaston Academy together, were working in completely different areas at the time: landscape gardening, building and car sales.

United by an enthusiasm for food, a strong work ethic and considerable creative flair, they decided to combine forces and set up a business together. The germ of the idea of Project D was born via Matthew, who had grown up in America, where doughnuts were so popular people would queue up for them.

Inspired, the trio set out to see if the same could be achieved in the UK.

They started by going on their

travels, chatting to bakers and their customers. This enabled them to glean valuable insights into the realities of running a bakery and, more vital still, what customers most enjoyed.

Matthew said: "We learned loads on those trips and, when we got back to Derby, we were ready to make our dream a reality. We watched YouTube videos to learn the skill and sourced cheap or second-hand equipment to make early bakes.

"We put all of our savings into Project D to get it off the ground and sold everything from stands at one-off events, such as festivals, or to passers-by from kiosks in shopping centres and universities. "It was a good start, but at the time our long-term goal was to run our own shop one day."

'Hatching' success

The following year, in 2019, Project D identified a funding initiative which could really help them expand their business. Called 'Hatch', the scheme at Intu Derby (as it was called at the time) with retail support organisation Revo, offered the opportunity for a business to take advantage of space in the centre cost-free for six weeks.

It was a plum offer for Project D, which was one of three successful companies to win prime retail space under the scheme, taking advantage of the centre's then footfall of more than 21 million a year.



01. THE PROJECT D TEAM.

02/03. SOME OF ITS DELICIOUS CREATIONS.

04. THE COMPANY'S DISTINCTIVE PACKAGING.

"Those six weeks were all we needed," Max said. "With the 'Hatch' scheme, we got additional marketing support and a kiosk in the centre, which meant we were ready to take it to the next level and find out if the wider public liked what we were doing."

They certainly did. In the first month, Project D sold out of their lovingly hand-decorated doughnuts every single day, sometimes before the end of the lunchtime trade. In a sign of things to come, it was a hugely more successful exercise than the team had dared hope and they found themselves taking home, on average, £10,000 per week.

The stellar trajectory allowed Max, Jacob and Matthew to stop doing the baking themselves, employing a team of 10, who were divided between the bakery and the customer-facing role of running the kiosks.

By the end of the six weeks, Project D had proved such a hit with visitors that they stayed on at Intu Derby. By the end of that year, they were permanently based at the centre and had opened up a second kiosk at Cooper's Square in Burton.

Using skills acquired during their

working lives pre-Project D, they saved money by building the stands they used at events and shopping centres themselves. Unafraid to get stuck in and with youth and energy on their side, they would often work all night to ready themselves for the next day.

Looking great, tasting great

And then there was social media and, in particular, Instagram. Recognising the contemporary trend among many in today's society, particularly millennials, for photographing mouth-watering food and posting these images to followers, Project D ensured that their doughnuts were unfailingly visually wonderful to look at for that all-important 'Instagrammability'. Matthew said: "We loaded them up with mouth-watering toppings like chocolate bars and biscuits and made sure we used bright and contrasting colours so that they looked amazing."

"We also used names like 'Mischievous Milky Way' and 'Moment in Maryland' to add to the fun of the brand."

And it's not just the doughnuts themselves that are striking to look at. Project D's signature bright pink branding, with its pop-art style logo, means that its boxes are distinctive

too. The same goes with its kiosks – an important point when Project D's team are selling their wares at festivals and need to stand out amongst the competition.

A flatbed truck and a Vespa scooter, bought to deliver doughnuts to events, have been sprayed bright pink too, to tie in with the Project D brand. Customers love them and so, realising the appeal, the Project D team parked the truck inside the shopping centre when opening in Burton-on-Trent and sold doughnuts from the back of it instead.

The power of social media

To date, Project D boasts 117,000 Instagram followers as it enters its third year of business. On Facebook, it has more than 80,000 likes too.

The team has also grasped a further important key to social media success: regular content, ensuring that it maintains a flow of on-brand messaging to prevent it becoming stale in the fast-moving online world.

To that end, Project D has invested much valuable time in social media engagement, posting at least once daily. They know their consumers are more likely to buy from a brand they follow on social media

channels, so think carefully about their online posts.

Realising, for example, that everyone always likes a view behind the scenes, whether it's actors waiting to go on stage in a London theatre production, or models coming off the catwalk to change into their next outfit, Project D has labelled their bakery "the dream factory" and show their followers tantalising glimpses of "where the magic happens".

That all helps build up a sense of connection, meaning people will be more likely to buy.

With its current selection of no fewer than 280 flavours, Project D exclusively releases photos and short videos on social media channels every time flavours and toppings are changed. Also, dates and times of any pop-up locations, where they are selling, are published on Facebook and Instagram. This gives customers the sense they are finding something out before other people, a highly valuable tool to get those doughnut queues forming around the block.

In the business's early days, social media was the only marketing tool that Project D engaged with. It worked brilliantly, and it was via these platforms that they received orders to sell their doughnuts at London Fashion Week and a Love Island after-show party.

An eye for publicity

Ever canny with publicity, in 2019 Project D appealed for taste testers. The offer was tempting: in return for a free weekly batch of doughnuts, all that people would have to do was offer feedback. Newspapers quickly picked up on a fun story and it was featured in many publications, printed and on social media, even reaching the pages of the Daily Mirror and the highly popular and influential Lad Bible. Once again, Project D had a hit idea on their hands.

There were more than 30,000 applications for the roles. This, of course, had another benefit: 30,000 email addresses for Project D to add to its contact database.

Weathering a pandemic

Fast-forward to March, 2020, and Project D was riding the crest of a wave. By this point, they had a staff of 25, of which 12 were solely employed in their bakery. On the point of signing a lease for a new kiosk at East Midlands Airport, it was then that the coronavirus storm hit the UK, the first lockdown was

announced and the world turned upside down.

It might have spelt disaster for a young company who suddenly found themselves unable to sell their doughnuts at their kiosks.

Max said: "We were a doughnut company that couldn't sell doughnuts and we could have thought that was the end of everything we were trying to do. Instead, we sat down and worked out how to weather the storm and keep money coming in, even though we had to close the bakery and put staff on furlough."

Once again it was quick-thinking, determination and a willingness to think outside the box – even a bright pink Project D box – that not only saved the day but in fact allowed them to expand even further.

**"Sometimes
success happens
in ways you
don't expect"**

Their brainwave was to look at what was happening to the nation under lockdown and some interconnected consequences rapidly became apparent. One was that many people took to baking in order to occupy themselves under lockdown. The second was that, as a result, staple items such as flour, eggs and yeast rapidly disappeared from supermarket shelves.

Joining up the dots, Max, Jacob and Matthew realised a way forward, of sorts. If doughnuts were non-essential, the same could not be said for their core ingredients: eggs, flour and yeast. Their own suppliers were still producing, so the enterprising trio posted on their trusty social media channels that they would be offering a new service, starting with egg deliveries.

Once again, the idea was an instant success. Within 24 hours of their post, they had received 1,200 orders for eggs. They quickly un-furloughed staff and had them back into work within a week to keep up with the new-found demand.

Selling eggs proved highly popular and Project D found itself selling enough in Derby to make an omelette the size of 20 tennis courts! However, they also found that, despite the success of the eggs, it was hard to make money this way and so expanded their delivery offering to include flour and yeast too.

Realising they would be best operating with pop-up stands, Project D consulted with the police and Derby City Council as to whether they would be able to run this sort of business during lockdown.

Max said: "We realised that, if we were able to continue, we needed to make sure that we did everything we could to maintain social distancing in order to keep everybody safe and prevent them from getting COVID too.

"We put tape on the ground, just like the supermarkets were doing, so that people could queue safely, which was vital, because the queues of people waiting to buy from us were really long. We also came up with the idea of giving our staff two-metre poles, with card readers attached to the end of them, so that everyone could pay and still keep their distance."

But even this ingenuity was not the real secret to their success. With people also requesting to buy doughnuts, Project D realised that now they were able to trade as an essential supplier, they would be able to sell boxes of doughnuts alongside flour, yeast and eggs, allowing them to continue doing what they do best, while offering a key service to customers.

From doughnuts to deliveries

Of course, during lockdown, not everyone could go outside. A sizeable portion of the population, being over 70 or otherwise vulnerable, were advised to stay indoors. Project D had used the time when selling eggs, flour and yeast to build up a home delivery service too. Ever resourceful, they gave their delivery drivers poles with card readers on too, but this came into its own when they realised that card readers even work through glass – so that people who were isolating could pay for their deliveries without even leaving their own front room.

Always mindful of the need for eye-catching appeal, in typical style, the Project D team sold their bags of flour – self-raising and plain to cater for every baking need – in pink striped packaging. In those



PROJECT D DIRECTORS MATTHEW BOND, JACOB WATTS AND MAX POYNTON.

early, frightening days, a splash of colour could really lift the spirits.

Going online

Project D's new home delivery service was proving so successful that it became apparent that they really needed a website that worked as hard as they did. Before lockdown, their website was simply a landing page. Within a short time, they built a new site, allowing customers to order doughnuts, and by September, 2020, they were delivering to doorsteps from Leeds to Birmingham.

Expanding horizons

Matthew says: "Sometimes success happens in ways you don't expect and it's amazing that we became successful in the middle of a pandemic.

"But it's true, it changed everything for us, because what we learned, coupled with our new website, meant that we could now deliver doughnuts across a wide area and it's those home deliveries that have really driven our growth."

By the end of 2020, Project D picked up the keys to a new bakery in Spondon, which was 11 times the size of their previous HQ. Delivery routes were extended and the process of recruiting 100 new staff began. They also bought a piece of equipment, costing £250,000, which will allow them to take production 24-7.

New products

Finding a perfect balance between a tried-and-trusted formula while continually expanding and experimenting is the keystone to success for many a business. Project D is a young brand that needs to excite its devotees with a continually revolving range of flavours, while not losing touch with those which have been perennially

popular. Its Lotus Biscoff doughnut, for example, is always a winner.

With that in mind, the Project D team have now expanded into another sweet favourite: ice cream. Its new business line: Project Whippy, features warm doughnuts with frozen ice cream in the middle. It's a further great example of the team's creativity and their 'Conut' (a cone-shaped doughnut topped with ice cream, sweets and sprinkles) is already proving extremely popular.

Giving back

It seems that success knows no bounds for Project D but the team has never forgotten that a good business gives back to the communities it serves, too. The company also knows how important strong eco credentials are to today's increasingly aware audience and so offers its doughnuts in fully recyclable packaging, as well as partnering up with the likes of 'Turtley Eco', an organisation that champions plastic-free living.

Not just that but the Project D team are generous with their time and energy. During the pandemic, they donated 5,000 eggs to Derby city's food bank. In 2020, they also gave more than 10,000 doughnuts to staff at Royal Derby Hospital, Derbyshire Police, Derbyshire Fire and Rescue, plus staff and residents of city care homes, as well as a further 500 to staff delivering Covid-19 vaccines. Ever loyal to their roots, they have also sponsored football and rugby shirts in their home town of Melbourne, too. Naturally, they are bright pink!

To the future and the 'new normal'

In just three years, the success, resourcefulness and resilience of the Project D team has been an absolute inspiration. Now seeking

opportunities for overseas expansion, it seems the sky really is the limit for this fabulous young enterprise.

The new bakery is already too small, work has already started on a mezzanine floor, and the company has been chosen to pilot the new Ascend programme, a £5 million scheme launched by Derby City Council to help businesses in the city innovate and expand.

This will provide the heroes of our story with expert support to enable them to continue to grow the company in a sustainable way.

The firm still intends to open a flagship store in London – it has already identified a site – and has exciting plans to make this a 'destination', somewhere that connects digital lives with reality.

They are also hoping to return to their roots, by attending the Y Not Festival in July and The Big Feastival in August.

Max added: "We've found a suitable space in London but before we move forward we need to know what's going to happen with lockdowns. We are also talking to several airports about opening kiosks in departure lounges.

"At the moment, we're busy regrouping. We are still enormously ambitious and want to continue on this trajectory but, to be successful long term, we need to implement the correct strategies and procedures now."

In 2021, while much about the future remains uncertain, things continue to look bright for Project D.

Even in dark times there's nothing like a doughnut to cheer us all up. All that remains to decide is which of the 280 flavours will you choose? ●



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DERBY ARENA - THE NEW HOME OF DERBYSHIRE INSTITUTE OF SPORT

NEW HOME AND ERA FOR PIONEERING DERBYSHIRE INSTITUTE OF SPORT

Derbyshire Institute of Sport is relocating to Derby Arena, where it will expand its operations.

Founded in 2012 with the aim of increasing the number of Derbyshire-based, world-class athletes, DIS has been based at the Kedleston Road campus of the University of Derby.

It achieved its target of developing 20 champions by 2020 in February last year.

These champions include marathon runners Jessica Piasecki and Ben Connor, who have both been confirmed in Team GB for the 2021 Tokyo Olympics.

Managing director Chloe Maudsley said: "We are coming out of the third lockdown on a high with our move to Derby Arena, which has great facilities and enables an expansion to our work to develop, inspire and support people who

want to be the best they can be at the sports they love."

DIS has been instrumental in supporting a number of budding Derbyshire athletes.

It has worked with hurdlers Alex Knibbs and Jess Turner, para badminton world number one Jack Shephard, heptathlete Niamh Emerson, who is world junior champion and is now being coached by Toni Minichello and Jessica Ennis-Hill, and five times world champion para cyclist Katie Toff.

Now, DIS is to move to Derby Arena, where it will work with athletes and team players from across the country.

Chloe said: "We have had eight wonderful years working on-site with the university.

"They were a major, founding partner –

alongside the city and county councils – when we began work as Derbyshire's legacy project following the 2012 Olympics.

"We are so grateful to the university and founding partners for their support and unfailing belief in our mission."

During the lockdowns, DIS has worked with athletes online, offering strength and conditioning classes, nutrition, psychology and lifestyle support and virtual physiotherapy screenings.

DIS is following all government guidance and working closely with the arena to offer its athletes full membership of the arena gym and face-to-face support from its world-class coaches in a Covid-secure way.

Chloe said: "For those who live further afield, we will continue to offer a

package of 100 per cent online support.

"This gives us the chance to help team sports players and individual athletes based anywhere in the world.

"Whether people choose a face-to-face or a virtual programme, they are all delivered by our multi-disciplinary team of experts, who have supported Olympians, Paralympians and world champions."

Rachel North, strategic director for communities and place at Derby City Council, said: "We are delighted that Derbyshire Institute of Sport has chosen the excellent facilities of Derby Arena for its new base.

"It is fantastic to see how we have achieved the vision of 20 elite athletes by 2020 and look forward to seeing the arena play its part in building more world champions of the future."



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Strategic Consultancy – we offer a range of consultancy services, from cultural transformation through to diversity and inclusion

OUR CLIENTS

We are very choosy who we work with. We have strong values around creating environments that encourage cognitive diversity where everyone feels heard, seen, included and valued we only work with those organisations that genuinely want to build that into their culture.

We have had the great honour to work with companies around the world, including the oil industry, foreign and domestic police forces, universities who want to improve their leadership capability, NHS, HSE, local authorities, financial sector and even schools.

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If there is one thing that we've all learnt from 2020 is that we need to be agile as businesses and deliver our services in a wide range of ways. Luckily for us, that didn't require much calibration as we have always taken a hybrid approach to our service delivery. All of our programmes and services are deliverable both in person or virtually with no loss in quality. We love a good challenge and our motto is that your success is our mission.





Assembling the pieces of the Derby jigsaw



JOHN FORKIN MBE,
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
MARKETING DERBY

If you imagine city centres as giant 3D jigsaws, made up of hundreds of pieces - small, medium and large - then essentially, the impact of the Covid pandemic has been to throw many of those pieces in the air. Where will they fall?

Last spring, during the first lockdown, the Government's 'stay at home' edict meant it was practically illegal to visit city centres. This led to dramatic reductions in footfall as most businesses closed and people stayed away.

Subsequent lockdowns have been less dramatic, and places have been allowed to gradually reopen, but the road back to anything like

pre-pandemic levels is going to be long and winding.

Many fear that some towns and cities will never recover.

I was in the City of London recently, the historic financial district, right at the heart of our capital.

It was a Friday - in any other time a regular working, busy, buzzy day - but I was shocked to experience what was essentially a ghost town. The vibe was more akin to a sci-fi film; few people on the streets, most offices standing virtually empty and its varied amenities, coffee shops and the like, shuttered and closed.

Last year, our Marketing Derby Lockdown film captured Derby in a similar state, eerie and apparently abandoned.

I believe that the purpose of a city centre is to create customers

and, therefore, the challenge for all cities, including Derby, is to recalibrate both its function and form, to repurpose many of the pieces that make up its 3D jigsaw.

You will have heard the phrase build back better, one of those three-word mantras so loved by the Government. In a recent Marketing Derby business survey, 100 per cent of respondents wanted to see Derby 'build back better' or 'build back different'.

Not one selected the option to build back the same or to do nothing.

This gives me hope. It tells me people do value city centres and that they want them to revive. There is clearly a sense of pride in their role as vibrant community and business hubs and people do not wish to take the road to oblivion seen in many cities in the United States in the 1970s.



"We must make the city centre welcoming, safe and attractive and give people a reason to visit."

However, city centres do not happen by chance.

They are the consequence of thousands of investment decisions; personal, political and financial.

Decisions to open a shop, construct apartments, build an office block, develop a theatre, pedestrianise a street, when put together, amount to an offer - the 3D jigsaw if you will - intended to attract people to live, work or visit.

It would be fair to say that Derby's jigsaw is currently under design and needs more development as we move towards post-pandemic recovery.

Some of the pieces have been established for hundreds of years, think of the elegant Cathedral, others are relatively new, such as the incredible Museum of Making, or being rediscovered, for example the stunning Victorian Market Hall currently being unveiled.

Repurposing means exactly that, changing uses, responding to the needs of the customer of the future.

For example, significant investment is underway in finally bringing city living back to Derby, the pioneers being Compendium Living's Castleward project, now entering phase three, and Wavensmere's Nightingale Quarter, on the site of the former DRI.

A welcome sight are the tower cranes appearing on the city

skyline, at Nightingale, and also at the St James Securities Becketwell apartment scheme on the site of what was Debenhams.

These three schemes alone will bring something like 5,000 new city centre residents when complete and anyone who has not been in town since the lockdown will be surprised by the progress.

The retail map is changing too and look out for funky new independent businesses popping up across the city over the coming months, complementing the massive investment being made in the Derbion mall and its immediate environs.

There has been much talk about the nature of the post-pandemic office market and, for the first time in decades, companies are beginning to see the city centre as a location of choice. Most companies will adopt a hybrid working model and still need office space, albeit radically different from that of the past.

Early adopters include IT companies EVAD and Bam Boom Cloud, between them bringing over 150 new jobs.

This direction of travel may surprise many but one catalyst has been Staton Young and their dynamic approach to repurposing many of the beautiful heritage buildings left empty for decades, such as the popular Cubo space at the old Post Office.

These are all important pieces on the Derby jigsaw board and the intention is to see that momentum accelerated as confidence builds.


At the same time, we appreciate that it must be more than property led - people make cities and people are increasingly looking for the right experience.

Any visit to the city's Cotton Quarter, Chocolate Factory, Bustler Market or Mercia Marina shows the incredible demand for quality, innovative clusters of activity. The city's al fresco Market Place is another example and each week these attract customers in their thousands.

We must make the city centre welcoming, safe and attractive and give people a reason to visit.

A Marketing Derby survey of 400 people in the city's hinterland identified the five top priorities that might drive their custom back into town: more culture, more leisure, more independents, greener/bluer environment and better parking.

The Covid pandemic has broken habits in almost everything we do. We must be under no illusion that this is a genuine existential threat to every city, but it is also an opportunity if we listen to the customer.

I believe Derby is ready, with the right partners in place, to meet this challenge of change head on as we place more pieces into our city jigsaw. 

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The Last Word

Since the coronavirus pandemic began, I have been closely following the recovery efforts in Derby city and I have been hugely impressed by what I have seen.

At the start of the pandemic Derby set up a recovery taskforce, which includes the city's major employers, such as Rolls-Royce and the University of Derby, Toyota, Bombardier and many others, including the city council and Marketing Derby, to help alleviate and mitigate the negative economic impact of the coronavirus and provide a clear long-term recovery plan.

This has allowed Derby to drive forward half a billion pounds' worth of building, regeneration and transport projects, supporting investors to create jobs and training opportunities to boost the local economy.

Rishi Sunak

Chancellor of the Exchequer



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