



# In sight

magazine

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The Journal of the

**WARRINGTON** CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

*in association with*  
**VR** VALE ROYAL  
The heart of Cheshire

# New opportunities to bid for £650m of public sector contracts

**BUSINESSES in Warrington and Cheshire are being urged to use the new year as their chance to bid for the £650 million of council contracts up for grabs each year.**

Cheshire and Warrington Growth Hub is holding a workshop next month to help businesses looking to bid for public sector contracts in 2022.

The three Cheshire local authorities have combined contracts each year of £650million, offering a huge potential boost to local companies if they are successful in winning them.

The workshop is on Tuesday, February 15 and aims to show Cheshire and Warrington businesses how to get started in the bid process, how to produce a tender response for the public sector and best practice in writing a bid response.

There will also be a chance to hear about opportunities for public sector tendering from HS2, Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, and Warrington Council.

Dave Powell, Managing and Creative Director at Thrive, a Congleton-based marketing and advertising agency will also be sharing his first-hand experience of winning public sector contracts.

Dave, who has secured public sector contracts with several local authorities, said "Many businesses avoid tender opportunities because of the investment in time and competitive nature. The trick is to identify opportunities where you can demonstrate relevant experience.

"Always take the opportunity to clarify and validate through Q&As and never be afraid to look beyond the brief for better ways of delivering on the requirement. You'll find the more tenders you respond to, the less time consuming they become – through practice and re-purposing information."

Andy Devaney, Director of Business Innovation at Cheshire and Warrington Growth Hub, part of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, said: "The new year provides a fantastic opportunity for people to think about potential new opportunities for their business, including public sector contracts.

"If a business has not bid for these contracts before, it can seem daunting but by coming along to our workshop, businesses will get a better understanding of what the process involves and learn some of the basics of successfully bidding.

"As well as offering information for businesses new to the world of bidding for contracts, there is also plenty for more experienced businesses to find out how to improve their chances of

winning contracts and hear about upcoming opportunities to bid in Cheshire and Warrington."

The Growth Hub's workshop will be split into two sessions, businesses can choose to attend both or just one session:

- The morning session is aimed at SME businesses with little or no knowledge of public sector bidding. This session will look

at how to 'get started' in the bid process, how to produce a tender response for the public sector and best practice in writing a bid response.

- The afternoon session is aimed at more experienced businesses who want to write the best responses and win more contracts. This session will also allow businesses to hear from a range of public

sector organisations on their upcoming opportunities.

The free workshop is being delivered by Jo Tillott from Strive Consultancy and is for businesses in Cheshire and Warrington only. Places are limited to one per business. To sign-up, go to: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bidding-for-public-sector-contracts-tickets-219219931717](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bidding-for-public-sector-contracts-tickets-219219931717)



■ Andy Devaney, Director of Business Innovation at Cheshire and Warrington Growth Hub



■ Dave Powell, Managing and Creative Director at Thrive

# From the Chief Executive

Stephen Fitzsimons



**WHEN I wrote my last column we were looking forward to members getting back to normal, however the omicron variant had other ideas.**

Leading up to Christmas, hospitality providers experienced multiple cancellations, especially from concerned company party organisers. In the new year, manufacturers found that a quarter of their workers were unavailable because they had tested positive over the festive period. Thankfully, omicron was relatively mild, businesses were allowed to continue trading and central government provided additional funding for those affected.

It does feel like whack a mole though because when Covid seems under control, other factors

have come to the fore. Energy prices are adversely affecting our members, with rises of up to 50% being reported. If they can absorb them internally, this leaves less money for future investment. If passed on to customers, it further fuels the rise in inflation of 5.4%.

We always talk about confidence being the crucial currency for business, and marketers talk about selling the right product at the right price. At the moment, UK companies do not know how much their costs will be in the next 6 months so it's very difficult to establish a fair price. CS Fertilisers in Cheshire produce 60% of the UK's carbon dioxide which is essential in a range of activities from fizzy drinks to abattoir animal stunning. However, because of energy prices they cannot produce

profitably without a government subsidy.

As always, there is plenty of optimistic sunlight to illuminate the gloom. We are working with several businesses that want to make Warrington their home, helping them find properties, staff and access to funding. Several of these are in the green economy, including car charging, heat pumps and off site house construction.

We even have a very exciting TVR-inspired electric bike that may be assembled here in the future. These companies all appreciate that Warrington is one of the best connected places in the UK with 2 airports (don't tell Liverpool and Manchester), three motorways and the West Coast Mainline. Indeed,

whilst recent rail announcements were disappointing for places like Bradford and Leeds, Warrington Bank Quay will be a hotspot for regeneration in the next 10 to 15 years as we benefit from better connectivity.

Onward to the spring and brighter days ahead – literally and metaphorically!

## Brothers raise an incredible £3,500 for Warrington Foodbank with their Stand out Socks!

**WARRINGTON brothers Christian and Ross Laing, who launched their own sock company – to help raise awareness of Down Syndrome, have raised an incredible £3,500 for Warrington Foodbank.**

They raised the money with the sale of their special Christmas sock and also donated over 500 pairs of socks for the foodbank to gift as presents.

A thrilled Christian, who launched the business with his brother Ross said: "We're delighted to announce that we raised £3,500 and donated 500 pairs of socks to Warrington Foodbank.

"Thank you so much to all our Stand out community that got involved your support continues invaluable."

The brothers, from Stockton Heath, launched Stand Out Socks to create jobs locally for Ross and other "stand out" people who find it difficult to find paid employment.

They decided to start the sock company as National Down

Syndrome Day features a lots-of-socks competition every year.

Ross, 30, had previously struggled to find work and had never had paid employment, despite having a range of abilities.

The idea of creating a job for Ross, rather than finding him one, was always in the back of Christian's

mind – and since their launch the business has gone from strength to strength, even featuring on TV.

Stand Out Sock's slogan is, 'Why fit in? When you are born to stand out'. The socks the brothers create are in bright, vibrant colours which will attract attention and, they hope, start conversations.

Prior to their fundraising campaign for the Foodbank in the run-up to Christmas 20 percent of Stand Out Socks' profits is donated to Scope – a charity that has a shared vision of equality in the community and supports disabled people finding work.

For more details visit [www.standoutsocks.co.uk](http://www.standoutsocks.co.uk)



**WARRINGTON**  
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Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive

# Lufthansa connects Liverpool to the world

**WARRINGTON Chamber and Business Exchange members will soon be able to take advantage of flying from Liverpool John Lennon Airport to a host of global destinations following the recent announcement by Lufthansa to open up a new connection between Liverpool and their main hub at Frankfurt.**

Starting 2nd May 2022 the German carrier will offer flights direct from Liverpool to Frankfurt, where all Lufthansa and Star Alliance carriers operate under one roof within one single terminal, enabling transferring passengers from Liverpool to easily connect to over 150 destinations in Europe, Asia, Middle East, Africa and the Americas.

Lufthansa is one of Europe's leading airlines and this will be the first time in their 66 year history that they will have operated from Liverpool. Flight time will be just one hour and 40 minutes with the route operated by their Airbus A320 (168 seats) or Bombardier CRJ900 (90 seats) jet aircraft.

Chamber member Liverpool John Lennon Airport is the award

winning faster, easier, friendlier Airport of choice for passengers from across the region and is recognised for its relaxed, hassle free environment and best in class operational performance with a record that shows that more flights departed on time from Liverpool than from any other airport in England.

Chamber CEO Stephen Fitzsimons attended the recent announcement of the new route by Lufthansa held at the airport and commented, "Improved international connectivity is really important for our members particularly as we all look towards recovery from the pandemic and Lufthansa's new flights now mean that members have the opportunity to travel globally with the added convenience and benefits of flying from nearby Liverpool John Lennon Airport."

"Lufthansa will be the first global network airline in Liverpool with easy reach to destinations on 4 continents", says Heinrich Lange, Senior Director Sales Northern Europe Lufthansa Group Airlines. "As a premium carrier we will be the only airline at John Lennon

Airport to offer seats in Business Class and all the amenities of a full service approach."

John Irving, CEO Liverpool John Lennon Airport commented, "It has been a long held desire of both the Airport and the City Region as a whole to reconnect Liverpool with the world and we are therefore absolutely delighted to be welcoming Lufthansa to Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

To be able to connect Liverpool globally via Frankfurt will bring huge benefits to the business sector across the region both now and into the future and of course will now enable the world to easily connect inbound too, helping visitors from across the world, to access the City Region."

Commencing 2nd May 2022, the new connection at a glance (all times are local):

Every Monday and Friday:

LH968 Frankfurt 16:05  
Liverpool 16:45

LH969 Liverpool 17:30  
Frankfurt 19:10

Every Wednesday and Sunday:

LH968 Frankfurt 07:25  
Liverpool 08:05

LH969 Liverpool 08:50  
Frankfurt 11:30

Seats on sale now at [www.lufthansa.com](http://www.lufthansa.com)

### Chamber parking discount

Warrington Chamber and Business Exchange members have access to an exclusive parking offer at Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

If you book to fly with Lufthansa from Liverpool, members have access to a 20% discount on FastTrack Parking at the airport, parking immediately outside the terminal, with a dedicated entrance into the building and able to speed your way through security if its busy with a Fast Track ticket included.

Simply email [info@warrington-chamber.co.uk](mailto:info@warrington-chamber.co.uk) with your flight booking reference and you'll receive a code for your 20% discount.



(L to R) Lufthansa's Heinrich Lange with LJLA's John Irving at the announcement of the new route.

## Grant funded social media training available in Cheshire

Do you live or work in Cheshire East, Cheshire West or Warrington?

If you do, you can access a 40% grant towards social media training.

If you or your staff need to upskill on social media the following workshops are available:

- Social Media for beginners

- Social Media Content Strategy and Planning Workshop
- Facebook and Instagram Advertising workshop
- Facebook business page workshop
- Instagram workshop for business
- Twitter workshop for business
- LinkedIn workshop for business
- Pinterest workshop for business
- YouTube workshop for business

Most workshops are delivered over a number of weeks where delegates will be encouraged to implement the learning as they progress, with the opportunity to gage feedback and support throughout the training.

Alternatively if you have a minimum of 6 staff that require training these workshops can be delivered inhouse no matter what size your business is.

For details please email Becs Bate, Social Media Executive: [Becs@SocialMediaExec.co.uk](mailto:Becs@SocialMediaExec.co.uk)

Training and grants are administered through Chester University's Accelerate programme.

Training costs start from £172pp (£103.20 with the grant)

# Warrington business park celebrates fundraising success

**BIRCHWOOD Park, the North West's largest out-of-town business destination, is thrilled to announce it has raised over £6,500 for charity in 2021.**

The Warrington-based business park managed to raise £6,564 for its chosen local charities, St Rocco's Hospice and Dogs for Good, despite reduced footfall due to the COVID pandemic.

St Rocco's Hospice provides free care for those with life-limiting illnesses, and the money raised will enable the charity to continue providing quality care to its patients.

Dogs for Good is a life-transforming charity which aims to create partnerships between people living with a disability, and specially-trained assistance dogs. Birchwood Park's donation will help support adults living with disabilities by transforming their lives and granting them greater independence.

The charitable sum was raised through a series of challenges, competitions, and events taking part both online and at the Birchwood Park premises: including Birchwood Park's annual DuckFest, which raised a tremendous £1,793.37, and a group of representatives from Birchwood Park bravely volunteering to climb Mount Snowdon in September.

Nicola Henshaw, Senior Relationship Fundraiser at St Rocco's Hospice said: "It has been a privilege to work with the team at Birchwood Park over the past two years. Even throughout difficult times due to Covid-19 they have continued to raise funds to help Warrington people living with life limiting illness, for this we are extremely grateful."

A spokesperson for Dogs for

Good added: "We've been so lucky to have been supported by Birchwood Park for two years and we are incredibly grateful for all the fundraising the park has done for us during this challenging time.

"It has not been easy to fundraise as a lot of community and face to face fundraising activities have had to be put on hold during the pandemic, but the amazing donation and support will help us to train more assistance dogs and create more life changing partnerships for children and adults with learning or physical disabilities here in the North West."

Martin O'Rourke, Commercial Director of Birchwood Park, commented: "Despite a reduction in events due to COVID-19 restrictions, Birchwood Park is proud to have raised a grand total of £6,564.00 for two brilliant charities close to our heart.

"In January each year the staff across Birchwood Park take a vote to decide on a beneficiary close to our hearts to receive all the charitable donations we collect. The park has supported Dogs for Good and St Rocco's for the past two years and we have loved to see first-hand how far donations can go in transforming the lives of people."

Fundraising will continue throughout 2022 in support of local organisations, as Birchwood Park is excited to announce its charity of choice for the year as the Walton Lea Partnership. Walton Lea is a Warrington based charity which empowers young people and vulnerable adults with learning disabilities through a variety of activities and learning opportunities, accessible at its two sites in Walton Lea Victorian Walled Garden and Walton Gardens Conservatory Range.

Martin continued: "Following our annual charity vote, it was decided that the Park would support the Walton Lea Partnership – a charity that supports those living with learning difficulties through activities such as gardening, art work and arts & crafts.

"Everyone at the Park is excited about the charity partnership and we are hopeful with restrictions set to ease in the coming months, we will be able to roll out a number of fundraising activities to encourage donations, as well as offering some great activities for employees and their families to get involved with!"

For ways you can help Birchwood Park support charities in the local area, keep an eye on its events schedule via parklife.birchwoodpark.co.uk



## New York-style restaurant signs up for Time Square

PARLOUR – a New York-style restaurant and bar – has become the first operator of the year to sign up to take space in Warrington's Time Square.

The company will bring what it claims will be a unique experience to the town centre, serving food made from locally-sourced produce and commissioning young, local artists to provide one-off pieces for the venue.

Cllr Tom Jennings, the borough council's cabinet member for economic development and innovation, said: "I'm delighted we've got 2022 off to such a great start by completing this deal with Parlour. It's yet another fantastic addition to the diverse Time Square offer, which continues to evolve and grow.

"It's very encouraging to see new businesses continuing to come on board at Time Square. It demonstrates the confidence businesses have in our vision to drive forward the renaissance of

our town centre and build a bright economic future."

Parlour director James Wrigley said: "We're thrilled to be opening the doors to our Parlour in Warrington. We're going to bring a warm, welcoming, independent new venue to Time Square.

"Our concept is centred around a quality food and drink offering brought to the table with care and attention. We're creating a place for the community – from weekend get-togethers with friends, to working lunches and family celebrations. At Parlour we'll create an all-day community hub in the heart of this exciting new destination."

The £142m mixed-use Time Square development is meeting the area's high demand for a fresh retail, leisure and entertainment destination. Alongside the new Warrington Market, Cineworld cinema, Gravity, bars and restaurants, Time Square is home to a new Warrington Borough Council office and a 1,160-space

carpark.

Leon Guyett, development director at Muse Developments, added: "Bringing a new concept such as Parlour to Time Square, as the first occupier unveiled in 2022, despite the challenging circumstances we're in, is a proud achievement for all involved and is a great way to start the year.

"We're seeing that the retail and leisure sector continues to be dynamic and evolving, with independent and regional

operators coming forward to expand in new regeneration schemes that blend high-quality, innovative buildings, with both the area's heritage and aspirations for the future.

"Working with our partners at Warrington Borough Council, we've delivered a truly special scheme that's a shining example of successful town centre repurposing that drives the local economy, local opportunities and prosperity for all."



# Chamber director completes marathon challenge raising nearly £5k for disability charity

**RUNNING on average three 5ks a week for a year, Chamber Director Gary Skentelbery completed a marathon challenge to help raise funds to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Warrington Disability Partnership, where he is also the longest serving Trustee.**

The challenge was completed at Victoria Park, scene of many Warrington Parkruns since lockdown restrictions were eased in the summer, as Gary was joined by his daughters Amy and Hannah for the final leg of the journey, cheered on by WDP founder Dave Thompson, his daughter Emma, Chairman John Gartside and inspirational fundraiser Jill Keast Doran, who recently took part in the charity's Santa Dash.

Gary, who only took up running less than four years ago after being inspired by former English Half Marathon Race Director Rob Griffiths, completed a 100k in a month challenge for St Roccas Hospice last December and took up the new challenge to help stay fit and motivated in what has unfortunately been another challenging year!

The mission was to run the equivalent of 30 half marathons in 2021 to help celebrate 30 years of Warrington Disability Partnership where he has been the longest-serving trustee. It meant running a minimum of 660k in a year!

For comparison his previous stats from when he first started running in 2018!

2018 110k.

2019 220k

2020 340k

2021 660k

During the year runs have taken place in Cornwall and North Wales, as there was no time to stop, even when on holiday.

Gary, who raised almost £5,000 for the charity said: "it has been an amazing journey and one I didn't think I was going to complete after picking up a few injuries on the way. But thanks to excellent support from Suzette Pulman from Lymm Osteopathic Practice, who donated her services towards my sponsorship, I've been able to get over the line – and am now about to set off on my next challenge in

the new year!

"A huge thank you to everyone who has supported and sponsored me on this journey. I have met some amazing and inspiring people and would recommend setting a challenge in the New Year to anyone looking to improve their health and well-being. Running is definitely a great way to help your mental health.

"All the sponsorship is greatly appreciated and will help WDP deliver great community services. But I must say a huge thank you to my friend Al Roskell from Chamber members Dante for his most generous donation as I crossed the finish

line to help me reach my goal and to my wife Janet and daughters and family for all their support throughout the year."



## Student research feeds into air quality project

RESEARCH by a student during her placement will feed into a national project to help improve indoor air quality in homes and at work.

Harriet Jones, from Chester, who

is in her penultimate year studying for a BSc in Chemistry, carried out a placement as a computational scientist, working for the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) in the Scientific Computing Department at Daresbury

Laboratory in Warrington.

Harriet investigated the application of Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) to problems involving airflow in houses and offices. Her preliminary results have feed into the STFC's Air Quality Network's (SAQN) project "Sources, behaviour and mitigation strategies influencing indoor air quality: A pilot study", to help improve indoor air in domestic and business environments.

Harriet said: "This placement has been an amazing opportunity for me and one that undoubtedly would not have happened without the support of the Chemistry Department at the University of Chester. The experience I gained during my second year Experiential Learning project gave me the edge I needed for my placement application and the support I received during my application process contributed greatly to its success.

"Over the course of my placement, I was able to observe cutting-edge scientific research in action, and I benefited from the provision of STFC's incredible facilities. These enabled me to gain skills in the use of High Performance Computing to solve mathematical problems that would be very difficult to deal with under any other conditions. Calculations that took an hour on the Scafell Pike supercomputer at STFC Hartree Centre could have

taken days if done on a standard laptop! The placement really allowed me to gain an insight into the qualifications required to fulfil a computational scientist's role, and has both furthered my knowledge of the field and enhanced my future employability."

Dr Mark Mc Auley, Deputy Head of Physical, Mathematical and Engineering Sciences at the University of Chester, said: "Everyone that has taught Harriet over the years will agree that she has been an absolute pleasure to teach. I am so pleased that the computing skills she acquired during my Bioinformatics module were of use to Harriet during this prestigious and richly deserved placement.

"Harriet is also going to put her computational modelling skills to good use next year when she undertakes her research dissertation in this field. There is no doubt it will be a success for her."

Dr Stefano Rolfo, Principal Computational Scientist at STFC, said: "It was a pleasure to have Harriet working with us. Harriet has passed a very tough selection process with more than 50 applicants from all UK universities. Her knowledge of air quality had been essential to the success of the project and results will be further disseminated and used to validate CFD modelling for air quality research."





## WERK: The future of home and hybrid working

**IT'S fair to say that the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated a generational shift in how we go about doing our work.**

Working from home has become a permanent part of the week for more and more of us.

Many didn't expect that remote workers would become more productive and healthier than they were before.

Hybrid working is here to stay, and it's turned out to be much more positive than imagined two years ago. WERK aim to do

home working right, and enable businesses to enjoy those benefits in the long term.

At WERK, they believe that now is the time to embrace this permanent shift and to tackle the long term challenges that the new hybrid worker faces. Working in a coffee shop or at the kitchen table can not be the solution for a productive business and healthy workforce in the long term.

WERK is a new company based in Frodsham with a long history in design and manufacturing.

Their first garden office is aimed at enabling hybrid workers to operate in an environment that is at least as good as they would expect from a city centre office.

The WERK garden office is designed to offer many benefits. It is a highly sustainable product, with an off grid solarpowered option, ergonomic furniture designed for well being as well as optimised connectivity. It will also be relocatable, without the need for a concrete base and can be installed within hours. Infrared radiant heating will keep you

warm. Fresh air will be filtered. It will offer a great place to work without compromise, and without the commute.

WERK are now keen to engage with companies in the Warrington area who operate a hybrid working policy. They want to speak with you to understand the real world challenges you face and how their products can help.

Let them know what you think, and if WERK Hybrid Working could benefit your business.

Contact [chris@mywerk.co](mailto:chris@mywerk.co)

## Paramedic dream a step closer for Sophie

A FORMER student who left Priestley College last summer is now well on her way to becoming a paramedic.

Sophie Nunn, who excelled in Applied Science as well as Health and Social Care at Priestley, is now at the University of Worcester studying Paramedic Science.

"The most enjoyable part of the course so far has been clinical skills and stimulation. The university has great equipment, which is identical to what we will be using on the ambulances," she said.

"It's bringing the theory side and applying it to the practical side of things and linking them together."

Worcester's Paramedic Science course is among the best in the

country and Sophie said the most interesting aspect so far had been learning about the skills she would need to be successful.

"We've covered professionalism and the different variety of topics such as legal and ethical factors and personal skills that contribute to paramedic practice which aren't really talked about."

In the summer Sophie was one of two Priestley students who received bronze certificates in the science category of the global BTEC awards.

The awards are an annual celebration of the outstanding achievements of learners, tutors, teachers, schools and colleges involved in the qualification.

Sophie achieved a Double Distinction\* in Health and Social Care as well as a Distinction\* and another Distinction in Applied Science after finishing her college studies.

The former Bridgewater High School pupil, who is from Stockton Heath, said the subjects she had studied at college prepared her for university.

"Health and Social Care helped me start to understand the different areas which are present in paramedic practice such as how the systems work together to provide care to service users," she said.

"Applied Science brought in the foundation for anatomy and physiology, which is taught in

bioscience.

"The university course is everything I hoped it to be and more, the description of this course online doesn't do it justice."



# Dealing with Covid and redundancy

**WARRINGTON solicitors DSM Legal have seen an increase in enquiries from employees wishing to bring an employment tribunal claim against their employer as a result of being dismissed due to Covid.**

Diane Massey employment solicitor at DSM Legal says;

"There is no doubt that many businesses, not just the hospitality and retail sectors, have been badly impacted by the pandemic.

Whilst there has been some financial support from government, such as the furlough scheme and the self-employed income support scheme, some businesses have not been eligible for grants and have had to take out loans to tide them over.

Unfortunately, however, the effects of the pandemic continue and many businesses are having to look at ways of reducing overheads to ensure that the business continues to remain sustainable. This can mean making the difficult decision to reduce staffing levels."

Some of the options available are to dismiss an employee on the grounds of redundancy or for 'some other substantial reason' for example, commercial/economic reasons.

## Redundancy

Examples of when a redundancy may be necessary include: :

- If company is closing down or moving premises.
- There is a need to cut costs.
- The job role no longer exists.

The legal definition of a redundancy can be found in the Employment Rights Act 1996.

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/18/section/139](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/18/section/139)

Useful information can also be found on the ACAS website at [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

Employees are entitled to the statutory redundancy payment if they have been employed for two years or more continuously.

## Possible Alternatives

An employer should consider whether there are any alternatives to dismissing a member of staff. For example, reducing their hours or introducing a pay freeze may be a preferred options for both parties, although consultation with affected employees should always take place before any decision is made to change terms and conditions of employment. A decision to unilaterally alter an employee's contract of employment may result in a claim being brought for breach of contract.

## Redundancy procedure

If redundancy is unavoidable the correct procedure must be

followed. All affected employees should be given as much warning as possible and an explanation for the need for redundancies. Once employees at risk of redundancy are identified they should be invited to one or more meetings at which the selection criteria (which must be objective) and the scores are discussed.

It is important that employees' representations regarding their scores are considered and any discussions as to how to avoid dismissal take place, including offering any suitable alternative employment.

Once all alternative avenues have been exhausted and the decision to make an employee redundant is made, the employee(s) must be notified that they are to be dismissed. The employee should always be given the right to appeal against the dismissal. Appropriate statutory redundancy payment and all contractual payments should be calculated and paid.

Failure to follow the correct procedures

Failure to follow the correct redundancy procedure can result in an employee claiming compensation for unfair dismissal in the employment tribunal. There will be legal costs for an employer associated with bringing and defending such claims even if the claim does not succeed.

Sometimes an employer may wish to avoid the redundancy procedures, perhaps to save time and money, or may have inadvertently breached them.

Some other substantial reason

This can apply to a number of situations but is not a substitute for a genuine redundancy situation.

In circumstances where an employee is being dismissed consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate to enter into a settlement agreement with the employee to prevent any claims being brought following the dismissal, such as unfair dismissal (if an employee has been employed for a year) or discrimination (for which no minimum length of service is required).



## Student praised after coming to aid of child struck by car



PUBLIC Services student Sean Bradbury has been praised for his courage and quick thinking in a challenging situation after coming to the rescue of an injured child, following a road traffic collision.

Sean Bradbury was returning from Warrington & Vale Royal College when he witnessed a child being struck by a car. He stayed with the child for over two hours; keeping them still, providing warm blankets and offering reassurance. While Sean was at the scene the attending ambulance was also involved in a road traffic collision, throughout which Sean remained calm and continued to comfort the injured child.

Sean's Tutor Andy Bramhall stated: "This is an exemplary display of behaviour from a Warrington & Vale Royal College student. Sean's actions have

shown a real dedication to the local community."

Sean's mother Karen Ramsden said of the incident: "I am very proud of Sean for helping and staying with the patient until the ambulance arrived. He stayed calm and caring throughout the incident and kept the patient talking and distracted."

Public Services student Sean also volunteers for PrimeCare Ambulance Services, a company providing mobile units, medical assistance and patient transport. Sean was also chosen to become a college Student Ambassador, an important role that involves attending college-wide events and assisting staff.

Warrington & Vale Royal College as a whole is incredibly proud of Sean's actions and would like to congratulate him on his outstanding conduct during such a serious situation.

## Survey of college life achieves fantastic results

WARRINGTON & Vale Royal College has received fantastic results after asking students to share their views about all aspects of college life.

In total, 2246 full-time students responded to the survey, representing an excellent 83% of the student population.

Some of the key results from the survey were:

97% of students felt welcome on their first day of college.

97% said they have received sufficient information, advice and guidance in relation to their course.

97% said the college promotes a culture of respect.

97% agree that their teachers know their subjects well.

96% rate the standard of teaching as good.

95% feel that staff have made their subject interesting.

95% believe they are developing employability skills.

94% said their teacher continuously challenges them to do their best.

College Principal Nichola Newton said: "The college is delighted with this brilliant feedback and pleased that students are enjoying their time at college despite the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic.

"College staff have worked incredibly hard to help students get back to normality, and their efforts are evident in these impressive results."



# Strictly St Rocco's 2021 raises £76,000!

**THIS year's Strictly St Rocco's saw seven couples take to the dance floor at the Mere Golf Resort and Spa, performing in front of over 400 guests, raising £76,000 for the Warrington based charity.**

The seven amateur dancers were paired with seven professional dancers from Cadmans Dance School in Sale where they have been learning to dance since September for the glittering event which took place on Sunday 12 December.

This year's winner of the glitterball trophy was Sean Preston of Sean Preston Hair in Latchford. Sean danced the Charleston with his professional dance partner Natalie and has so far raised £1519. Second place was won by Heather Baker, Furniture Shop Manager at St Rocco's Hospice. Heather danced the Waltz with her professional dance partner Michael and has raised £1656 so far.

The other amateur dancers were Jamie Porter (Sales Manager, Concept Car Credit), Lara Partridge (Director of Income Generation, St Rocco's Hospice), Trudie Newhouse (Director & Consultant, TLN Consulting), Christine Ditchfield (Director, 3 Pugs Gin) and Stuart Livingstone (Operations Director, Pets at Home). A special thank you to all the dancers who showed immense dedication to both their dancing and fundraising.

Guest speaker on the night was Caz Clair, Complementary Therapist at St Rocco's Hospice. There wasn't a dry eye in the house as Caz shared her story about the care her Dad received at the Hospice last year.

Judges were Victoria Millward (Principal of Cadmans), Ian

MacKinnon (Patron of St Rocco's), Elle Magee (Head of year at Bridgewater High School and former dancer) and Zac Clements (St Rocco's Hospice Trustee). Hosts were Ralph Casson (Professional dancer and actor) and Karen Rutherford (Fundraising Assistant at St Rocco's Hospice).

Charlotte Howard, Senior Events Fundraiser at St Rocco's Hospice said "After cancelling this event in 2020 we are thrilled to have hosted this year's Strictly and

raised such an incredible amount. This will help us to continue to provide our care and support to all our patients and their families, as well as the whole Warrington community, when they need us the most.

"We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone that donated and attended on Sunday"

Further thanks go to headline sponsor of the event, Ingevity and corporate table sponsors, Zachary Daniels, Moneybarn, Concept

Car Credit, Expedition (Stockton Heath) and iSupply Group.

Thank you to ACTS Sound & Lighting, DJ Chris O'Grady, LT Media, Moore Photography Club and Alison Hunt for the dancers spray tans.

Final thanks to David M Robinson, The Mere Golf Resort and Spa, 3 Pugs Gin, Beaverbrooks, Quintessential Brands, Pets at Home, Clubhouse Golf and Sean Preston Hair who contributed raffle prizes to this event.



## Challenger Bank shortlisted in UK's largest business finance awards

WARRINGTON-based Redwood Bank, set up less than five years ago, has been named as a finalist in three categories in the largest business finance awards ceremony in the UK.

The Challenger Bank has been shortlisted in the 'Best Business Variable Rate Deposit Account Provider' category at this year's Business Moneyfacts Awards. The Warrington-based Bank, which won the award in 2019, 2020 and 2021, is looking to see a repeat of its success in previous years.

The Bank's growing reputation for quick turnaround times on commercial mortgage applications has also been recognised, with nominations for two further awards: 'Best Service from a Specialist Buy-to-Let Mortgage Provider' and 'Best Service from a Commercial Mortgage Provider'.

The Business Moneyfacts Awards celebrate the very best brands in the business finance and commercial finance sectors. As

part of the shortlisting process, judges carry out thorough product monitoring and consider feedback from the broker and business communities.

The shortlists were announced on Twitter by the Moneyfacts Awards Team, with Redwood facing competition from Virgin Money, Lloyds Bank and Yorkshire Building Society across the three different awards.

The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on April 28 at Evolution London.

CEO and Co-Founder of Redwood Bank, Gary Wilkinson, said: "We're proud and excited to be named as a finalist in three categories in the Business Moneyfacts Awards, comprising both business savings and mortgages, and we're hoping for a fourth win in a row as 'Best Business Variable Rate Deposit Account Provider'.

"This particular nomination reflects our commitment to offering

business rewarding savings options, giving them flexibility when it comes to accessing their funds and making sure their cash is working hard for them.

"Our nomination for two mortgage provider awards is testament to our great team, who works closely with our intermediaries to help find a product that fits their customer needs and ensure deadlines are met.

"All three nominations demonstrate the important role Redwood Bank plays in the development and future of SMEs, something which we are proud to be part of."

The latest award nominations come fresh off the back of another win – last month, Redwood Bank was named 'Best Business Notice Account Provider' in the 2022 Savings Champion Awards for the fourth year running.



# Blue Whale Media wins the Web Excellence Award for Social Media project

A DIGITAL design agency based in Birchwood is proud to announce that they have won a Web Excellence Award for a social media marketing project.

Blue Whale Media received the Web Excellence Award for their "Warrington Web Design Instagram Social Media Marketing" project. The project included redesigning and developing their Instagram social media platform, matching the social media posts to the website colour scheme to create cohesion. From social content creation and the development of creative concepts, the marketing team dedicated their best efforts to showcasing their sister website on Instagram.

Operations Director at Blue Whale Media, Stephanie Sweeney said: "The Marketing Team have used a combination of grid effect and individual post design. This provides the page with a high-end look and enhances the user experience by providing clean and concise posts."

Businesses that have won a Web Excellence Award are

selected by a group of top-tier professionals consisting of web experts, communications specialists, advertisers, creative and marketing gurus, plus many more. The Web Excellence Awards promote excellence on the Web and set standards by honouring distinguished Websites, Web Marketing Projects, Videos, Mobile Sites or Apps, Social Media Campaigns created by digital and creative agencies, designers, creators, freelancers, and entrepreneurs worldwide.

The best entries will earn the highest scores in each category and those entries will receive the "Excellence Award." The annual competition is entered by companies around the world, including countries such as Australia, Denmark, Italy, the UK, Germany, Spain, and Switzerland. The international panel of judges was formed by industry professionals with diverse backgrounds.

With Blue Whale Media being a local company to Warrington it is a huge achievement for the digital agency and as a goal for the coming year, the team are eager

to achieve more awards for their projects and services. With 2022 well underway, the whole team at Blue Whale Media is eager to

achieve more awards and provide website and marketing solutions to clients in the North West and beyond.



## Key appointment at Warrington theme park



GULLIVER'S World has strengthened its leadership team after appointing a new resort director to oversee the Warrington theme park resort.

Craig Clews, 41, from Preston, joins Gulliver's from Blackpool Pleasure Beach, where he was assistant operations director.

He previously worked at Crealy Theme Park and Resort in Devon, including as assistant general manager, and as a Thomson Holiday rep in resorts all over the world.

As resort director, which is a brand new role at the park, Craig will oversee the whole business operation across the resort, supporting teams working in areas including ride engineering, hospitality and management.

"Gulliver's World in Warrington was my very first day out with my family that I can remember, so coming back 30 years later brings back great memories," Craig said.

"I've walked around the park alone recently pinching myself because I can't believe I'm here. It's exiting to be working with a passionate family and the team here at the park have made me feel welcome.

"My focus will be on setting the highest standards of customer service to help every guest make magical memories. I'm excited to be part of this journey and to support the leadership team as we continue to grow the business. We already have a fantastic team in place at Gulliver's World who are really customer focussed and I'm

really looking forward to working with them."

Craig joins as Gulliver's World embarks on a recruitment drive, with various full and part time positions available including fitters and ride operations to chef and hotel receptionists.

Added Craig: "It's a perfect time to join the business. We are busy planning for the season ahead and my main priority is to make sure we employ a good team. We take a lot of care to recruit good people with the right attitude and support them with training and benefits, including free tickets for employees and their families.

"The thing I enjoy most about this industry is the diversity of the people you work with and the fact no two days are the same. I want to ensure everyone here is happy in their work and the park is a safe and fun environment for families to be entertained every day we open the gates."

Julie Dalton, managing director at Gulliver's Theme Parks Resorts, said: "We are thrilled to welcome Craig to Gulliver's as we continue to grow and enhance the business.

"Our team is a vital part of what makes a visit to one of our resorts so special and we will continue to invest in good people with a passion for delivering first-class service."

For more information about jobs at Gulliver's Theme Parks, visit: <https://www.gulliversfun.co.uk/recruitment>

# College in partnership aiming to create world-class education

**WARRINGTON'S Priestley College is playing its part in a partnership that aims to create world-class education and a workforce with the skills needed by employers.**

Priestley is part of the collaboration that is Cheshire and Warrington Institute of Technology (IoT), which has just been awarded £120million by the Government.

Its vision is to ensure young people entering the workforce have the skills needed by employers to keep the region at the forefront of industry.

Priestley College Principal James Gresty said: "We fully support this investment and the Institute of Technology's plans to develop the region's dynamic workforce through the outstanding teaching and range of courses we offer."

Cheshire College is the lead organisation for Cheshire and Warrington's Institute of Technology.

Other collaborators include Macclesfield, Reaseheath and Warrington and Vale Royal colleges as well as the University of Chester.

The partnership, involving a range of leading names from the world of business such as Encirc, Warrington and Halton NHS Trust, Alderley Park Ltd and Case IH, will offer world-class training and education.

It will provide people with the most in-demand skills and address any gaps in the local workforce.

Institutes of Technology are unique collaborations between employers, colleges and universities that specialise in offering high-quality Higher Technical Education and training in subjects such as advanced manufacturing, digital and cyber security, aerospace and healthcare.

Across the region all industries have existing employees that will require ongoing re-skilling

and up-skilling because of the rising impact of automation and digitisation.

The Institute will deliver world-class higher technical skills in: Computing, Engineering, Health and Life Sciences, Agri-

Tech, Construction and The Built Environment, Science and Maths.

Those studying at the institute will benefit from state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, providing an ideal environment for learning.



## New Member profile: Flint Percussion Limited

FLINT® Percussion is a family business based in the North-West of England, established in 2005.

They began as a result of their young daughter wishing to play the marching drum in a local pipe band, but at only 10 years of age it was immediately apparent that the standard marching drum would be too heavy for her to carry and play. Coming from an engineering background, they began to look at redesigning these drums to reduce weight without impacting sound and material quality.

After several years of research and development, they invented the Suspended Shell™ system,

where only the drum skins are in contact with the shell and tension is achieved on both skins through the shell itself via a surrounding cage. This resulted in the lightest high-tension marching snare drum ever made. Flint then went on to produce other drums using the same Suspended Shell™ system, offering a full range of ultra-lightweight marching drums.

Today, they supply these lightweight drums to clients around the world, including countries in North America, Oceania, Europe and the Middle East. They are experts in instrument manufacture and delivery and apply this experience to ensure all musical

instruments they produce are of the highest quality upon arrival with our customers.

At the start of the pandemic, they were about to launch a new even lighter version of the high-tension marching snare drum and are still hopeful to enter the competition arena next year with this new drum.

Flint are constantly evolving their product range and are currently working on the development of a new snare wire with a unique 'positive contact' function.

All Flint products will be on display and available for testing on their

trade stand at the UK Drum Show in Liverpool next April including not just marching drums but also unique drum kit snares including the World's first ever dedicated 'Reggae' snare drum as played by UB40.



# Olympiad Gold for Priestley physicist

**A PRIESTLEY College student scored one of the top marks on a Physics paper taken by some of the brightest young scientific minds in the country.**

Tailun Sun, who studies Physics, Chemistry, Maths and Further Maths at Priestley, finished in the top 7% of the 4,400 students who entered the Physics Olympiad.

For Tailun, who has just received an offer from the University of Oxford to study Engineering, his achievement took him by surprise.

"I was over the moon when I heard and I still can't believe what I have achieved," he said.

"I genuinely feel happy for achieving so much in the competition and I am also grateful for all the support and help from

Priestley College, especially my Physics tutor. Without guidance from her I couldn't have come so far as to reach Gold."

Two other Priestley students entered the competition and also excelled with former Hope Academy pupil Toby Sharrock receiving Bronze (top 17%) and Emily Browning, who was a pupil at Padgate Academy, earning a Bronze II (top 35%).

This year 2,300 students from the UK took part with a further 2,100 in China also participating.

Organisers said the paper tested 'a range of student knowledge, preparation and ability' allowing good students to enter whilst also stretching the top young physicists.

Tutor Tory Mullineux said: "This is an amazing achievement for all three Priestley students. The Olympiad was incredibly challenging so to excel in this way is something to celebrate."

The Physics Olympiad develops a student's problem-solving skills – a talent that universities look for in prospective students.

Most of the questions went beyond the A-Level syllabus and

stretched even the most capable scientific minds.

Tailun said: "Participating in the Physics Olympiad gave me the opportunity to experience something similar to what I will learn in an Engineering degree.

"In short, I really appreciate this opportunity and enjoy the challenging time I faced in this process."



**Toby Sharrock, Emily Browning and Tailun Sun were presented with their Olympiad medals by Principal James Gresty and Physics Tutor Tory Mullineux.**

## St Rocco's Christmas Tree collection raises record-breaking £44,000



TEAMS of volunteers braved the atrocious weather on Saturday (Jan 8) to carry out the annual Christmas tree collection in Warrington, collecting over 2700 trees helping raise a record-breaking £44,000 for St Rocco's Hospice.

Local residents could easily recycle their unwanted Christmas trees by making a donation to the Hospice online, while the trees were then disposed of in an environmentally friendly way.

Charlotte Howard, events fundraiser for St Rocco's Hospice, said: "We have been blown away by the generosity of people this year. It has helped us raise a record-breaking £44,000, which will pay for patient care at St Rocco's. We are so grateful to everybody who donated and to all our volunteers who were out

in the awful weather from 6am on Saturday."

A huge thank you to the following companies and organisations who have supported the collection.

These included: Warrington Borough Council, BT Skip Hire, Victoria garage, Bagnalls, Beechwood Industries, Bmech, Beesley & Fildes, HMS, KD Building Renovations, Quickline Couriers,

S Xpress, Sandstone Supplies, Omega Access North, Taylored Signs & graphics, Warrington Electrical Supplies, Lymm Ruby Club, Partridge Lakes Fishery, Birchwood High school and Reddish Farm.

Thank you again for support, the dates for next year's event will be available soon at [stroccos.org.uk](http://stroccos.org.uk)



## Utility company praised for its efforts during the pandemic

UNITED Utilities' Priority Services team has been rewarded for its efforts with Warrington residents during the Covid pandemic.

Warrington Disability Partnership (WDP) gave them an "Appreciation of Efforts Award" as part of their 2022 annual general meeting.

The Priority Services scheme is completely free and aims to provide additional support for those who might be elderly, be in ill health, have a disability or mental health problems and those customers who may have financial worries or language barriers.

Commenting on the night, WDP chief executive officer Dave Thompson praised the Priority Services team for their work.

He said: "This team have provided an excellent service for those residents in need of extra support throughout the pandemic.

"The team has been exemplary by supporting vulnerable residents in numerous ways, be it; allowing extra time to answer the door due to mobility or hearing difficulties, prioritising water provision for those with various health or care needs, or enabling the use of passwords for staff visits. Users of this service believe it has been essential supporting themselves and other residents during a stressful and vulnerable time for many."

Amanda Phillips, Priority Services

Partnerships and Engagement lead for United utilities, said: "It really is an honour to receive an award such as this, especially in recognition of the help and support we provide to our customers living in vulnerable circumstances over the past two years.

"It makes it all the more special knowing it came direct from people with additional needs themselves that have experienced our services and appreciate the support we offer."

United Utilities Priority Services teams are based in Warrington and Whitehaven and 160,000 customers across the region are now benefitting from additional services.

Anyone who would like to register for Priority Services, or who has a family member, friend or neighbour who might benefit, can find more information on the company's website, which includes a secure online form to register. Alternatively, call their Priority Services team direct on 0345 672 2888.



**Dave Thompson.**

# New Chair appointed to lead Healthwatch Warrington

**HEALTHWATCH Warrington is excited to introduce Gary Skentelbery as new Chair and of the Healthwatch Warrington Advisory Board.**

Healthwatch Warrington is an independent organisation set up to champion the views of patients and social care users in Warrington, with the goal of making services better and improving health and wellbeing.

The Board is made up of volunteers that share the responsibility for Healthwatch Warrington, help make decisions and give guidance on projects and how the organisation is run.

Gary has been appointed as Chair and brings with him a wealth of experience from more than 40 years of working in Warrington as a journalist and managing Director of a family business, while taking on various roles in the town, including being a long-serving trustee at Warrington Disability Partnership and a director of Warrington & Vale Royal Chamber of Commerce. He was also instrumental in the launch of Warrington Worldwide.

He is a keen participant in the Warrington Park Run and a former Chairman at Warrington Town FC and a keen tennis player. Other

interests include Classic Rock music, hosting a weekly Rock Show on Radio Warrington.

Gary said, "The ongoing pandemic will pose many challenges and opportunities to health and social care providers, yet I am in no doubt that Healthwatch Warrington will continue to be at the forefront, working in partnership with stakeholders to continue to improve health and social care for all."

"I am honoured to have been appointed as Chair of Healthwatch Warrington and see my role as helping promote the role of the organisation in the town and tackling issues on the health agenda during unprecedented times. I am passionate about health and wellbeing, in particular mental health.

"As we continue to operate under Covid rules and restrictions during this pandemic, Healthwatch Warrington will aim to be at the forefront of ensuring the residents of Warrington continue to have their voices heard, and I look forward to supporting the CEO and wider team moving forward."

Lydia Thompson, Healthwatch Warrington CEO commented "Gary's appointment as our new Chair marks a new chapter in our

history, I think his experience and knowledge will be invaluable, as we work with patients, commissioners and providers to improve healthcare across Warrington."

Anyone can provide feedback to Healthwatch on any local health and social care service at <https://healthwatchwarrington.co.uk/services/>

This includes pharmacies, GPs, and NHS dentists, as well as

all hospital, mental health, community health, care homes and other social care services.

As part of Healthwatch Warrington priorities, we are seeking feedback on children and young people around mental health and wellbeing, carers feedback and pharmacy survey feedback.

Please visit [www.healthwatchwarrington.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwarrington.co.uk) or contact via [contact@healthwatchwarrington.co.uk](mailto:contact@healthwatchwarrington.co.uk)



## Lighting manufacturer plans year of celebrations

WARRINGTON-based leading lighting designer and manufacturer Ansell Lighting celebrates its 30th birthday in 2022 and has a year of events, launches and fundraising planned to mark the occasion.

Established in Belfast in 1992 before expanding into mainland UK in 2001, Ansell Lighting is a recognised market leader in the design and manufacture of high-quality luminaires for the commercial, domestic, industrial and architectural markets. Headquartered in Warrington, where it has a state-of-the-art showroom, Ansell operates across Europe, with showrooms in Belfast, Dublin and the recently-opened Madrid.

As part of the 30th birthday celebrations Ansell will be launching 30 innovative new products across 2022 to underline its commitment to developing and producing high quality products. The first of these products, an addition to the popular Z LED high bay collection, will be launched this month.

Throughout 2022 Ansell will be supporting Our Blue Light – a charity that provides mental health and wellbeing support to emergency services and essential services workers. Ansell staff will be supporting some of Our Blue Light's own fundraising events, as well as creating and holding their own activities with a view to helping the charity reach its fundraising

target of £30k for the year.

In addition Ansell will be sponsoring a number of high profile music events – providing the lighting at six Classic Ibiza concerts at stately homes across the country in July and August to showcase its product range.

There will be a community campaign launching in April which will enable wholesalers and installers to nominate deserving causes to win a lighting support package so they can enhance and continue their community work. And, in order to recognise the great work done by its partners, the #AwesomeAnsell campaign, which celebrates great projects completed by installers using Ansell products, will be extended.

Mark Abbott, Managing Director of Ansell Lighting, said: "Like all new businesses, Ansell Lighting began modestly with a first trading month of just £70 in August 1992. Since then, the business has gone from strength to strength, enjoying huge growth to become the multi-million pound business it is today.

"It is a real achievement to reach our 30th birthday and a great opportunity for us to reinforce our strong growth ambitions for the coming years. We are looking forward to sharing the celebrations – and the new products – with our wholesale customers, installers, colleagues and friends throughout the year."



## Warrington Business Conference 2021



Were you there? Highlights from the Warrington Business Conference are now live on Warrington & Co's YouTube channel.

# Northern Nuclear Alliance and Jacobs, taking nuclear industry forward together

**BIRCHWOOD** Park-based Jacobs has joined the Northern Nuclear Alliance, demonstrating its commitment to the region's nuclear industry.

As a Partner Member with a seat on the Northern Nuclear Alliance (NNA) Steering Group, Jacobs brings its experience of supporting hundreds of nuclear programs worldwide and more than 60 years of experience dating back to the

inception of the industry.

The NNA, based in Birchwood, Warrington, is the fastest-growing membership organisation in the nuclear sector. Its newly launched strategy is built on four pillars: New Business, Social Value, SME Development and Clean Growth and Innovation.

Jacobs Energy, Vice President Technology and Cyber Solutions,

Greg Willetts said; "We are looking forward to harnessing the potential of our NNA partnership. Together we can maximise the impact of our social value actions, working collaboratively to increase the benefits for our communities. The NNA is also championing nuclear for a net-zero future, looking at how nuclear can be part of a reliable, sustainable energy mix, working with other sectors

such as hydrogen."

Loren Jones, NNA Chair, said: "Having Jacobs as a partner member adds significant strength to the power of the collective voice which we use to communicate in the UK and internationally for our members. We are delighted to have their support and will continue to deliver against our three-year strategy for the benefit of the region and our sector."



## Top 20 place for Warrington as a place for new independent businesses

WARRINGTON has been ranked the 20th best town or city in the UK for new independent businesses to set up shop.

It comes above Manchester, Preston, Derby – and even London.

There has been a massive growth in small businesses across the UK over the past five years. More than 800,000 new business registrations have been made since 2018/19 – but this impressive 3.5 per cent increase in growth unfortunately slowed down due to the pandemic and the lockdowns which began at the start of 2020.

However, as the end of 2021 was drawing in and the nation worked its way towards a "new normal", business experts at Bionic, wanted to help local businesses get a running start to their 2022.

They created an index using nine different business metrics to reveal which UK town or city has the strongest independent economy,

where small businesses can thrive – and Warrington took 20th place!

The nine factors used were:

Business start-ups per 10,000 population 2019

- Five year survival rate
- Births of new businesses as a proportion of total active businesses (2019)
- Failure of new businesses as a proportion of total active businesses (2019)
- Percentage of small active businesses
- Active businesses 10,000 population (business density)
- Commuting on foot (%)
- Unemployment claimant count rate November 2020 (%)
- Rateable value per m2 of floor space



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# Danny Walker 'made up' after signing long term deal with hometown club

**WARRINGTON Wolves hooker Danny Walker says he is "made up" after securing a long-term contract extension at his hometown club until November 2024.**

Warrington-born Walker has made 44 appearances in the primrose and blue since joining in 2019, scoring eight tries.

The 22-year-old played for both Crosfields and Rylands Community Clubs as a junior and the hooker will now continue to represent his hometown club for at least the next three seasons.

Speaking on the contract extension, Walker said: "I'm made up to have signed a new deal.

"It's good to have that security under my belt for the next few years. Hopefully I can push on now and it will be a successful few seasons.

"It's been really enjoyable ahead of the new season and it's been refreshing with all the new faces coming in. There's loads of positivity around the place. We know what we need to get better on and we've all bought into what Powelly [Daryl Powell] and the other coaches have introduced.

"Warrington is the only place I want to be. Stepping out there

and representing the town means everything. Ever since I was three or four that's what I've wanted to do and it's a proud moment every week for me and my family.

Warrington Wolves Head Coach Daryl Powell added: "Danny's a really good player now and he's going to be an outstanding player in the future.

"He's got some really good leadership attributes and there's an edginess about him that you want hookers to have. He's a tough kid and his skillset is growing all the time.

"I'm delighted that he's extended his contract and he's a big part of the future of our club."



## Billy Magoulias to miss start of season after ankle operation

WARRINGTON Wolves has confirmed that Billy Magoulias has successfully undergone an operation on an ankle injury which will see him miss the start of the new Betfred Super League season.

The Greek international joined the club in October from Cronulla Sharks and sustained the injury in pre-season training.

Warrington Wolves Head Coach Daryl Powell said: "Billy unfortunately picked up a training ground injury which required an operation. This has now been completed successfully and he is working through his rehab.

"We expect him to miss the first four to five rounds of the season.

Billy has fitted in really well and we look forward to getting him back on the field as soon as possible."

Everyone at the club wishes Billy

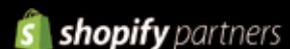
a speedy recovery and they look forward to seeing him run out in the primrose and blue in the near future.



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