Catenary



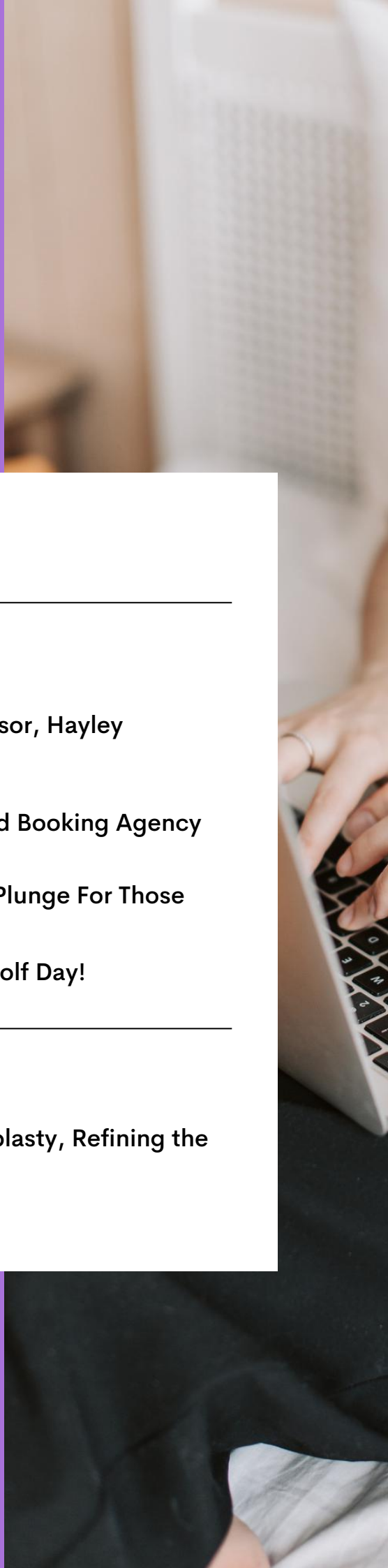
May Edition

THE CATENA NETWORK

CATENA

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CATENA

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MANUFACTURING
Sheona White:
Trent Business Process Management



WAREHOUSING & LOGISTICS
Peter North:
PHG Global Alliance



HEALTHCARE
Claire Bicknell:
Catena Network & Eudai Longevity Clinic



FINANCE
Imran Hussain:
Harmony Financial Services



CHARITY
Elliot Harris:
Strategy & Governance



AI
Dan Winters:
Winters Web



EDUCATION
Bev Crighton:
University of Derby



SPORT
Stephen Scott:
Shakespeare Martineau



HOSPITALITY
Jeremy (Jez) Scorer:
HIT Academy



PROFESSIONALS
Jay Sahota:
The Masala Mentor



SUSTAINABILITY
Tim Munton:
Champions & Zellar

May Events To Get In Your Calendar

- 12th: Coffee & Cannoli with Gusto Nottingham
- 13th: Sector Spotlight Property
- 14th: Sector Spotlight Sport
- 15th: Sector Spotlight The Professionals
- 18th: Sector Spotlight Charity
- 19th: Golfer/ Non-Golfer Dinner With Norwood Park
- 20th: Coffee & Cannoli with Gusto Birmingham
- 20th: Sector Spotlight Education & Training
- 21st: Leicester Link Up & Lunch
- 26th: Connecting Counties



A Quick Note From Our Editor

Welcome to the May edition of Catena Magazine for 2026. The recent spell of warm weather across the UK has certainly been a welcome change and brings with it a real sense of energy and optimism. Fingers crossed it sticks around as we head further into the year.

This month's issue is packed with exciting content, including updates from some of our regular Catena contributors, as well as celebrating a number of fantastic wins from across the network over the past few weeks. It's always great to see members progressing, achieving, and sharing their journeys.

Our Business and Lifestyle Hubs continue to grow, and that is down to the willingness of members to get involved and contribute. So, are you making the most of the Catena Magazine? Whether it is your story, a business update, or an insight you have learned along the way, we would love to feature more of you in future editions.

As always, this magazine is built around the community. If you would like to be included next month, please do get in touch and be part of it.

Here's to another positive and connected month ahead. I hope you enjoy this edition.

Emily Roberts

CREATIONZ
MARKETING





The Julian Hall Of Fame



In memory of Julian Hall, we're launching the Julian Hall of Fame to celebrate 1 member a month who has really embodied the qualities Julian was know best for: His resilient, inspiring personality, and how hilariously inappropriate he was at just the right moments. Know someone who lifts others up, makes the group smile, or just gets things done with Julian-style panache? Send their name and a quick note to claire@catena-network.co.uk - and watch them join along with other members to the Julian Hall of Fame. **Let's keep Julian's spirit alive, one brilliant member at a time!**



Stuart Webb: 150 Episodes Of The Complete Approach Podcast

This month, we celebrate Stuart Webb for reaching a major milestone, the release of his 150th episode of The Complete Approach podcast. What began as a small experiment in 2020 has grown into a standout platform featuring leading industry voices and fresh innovators. Stuart's commitment to sharing insight, expertise, and real conversations has made The Complete Approach a valuable resource for many. Congratulations to Stuart on this impressive achievement. We look forward to the next chapter.

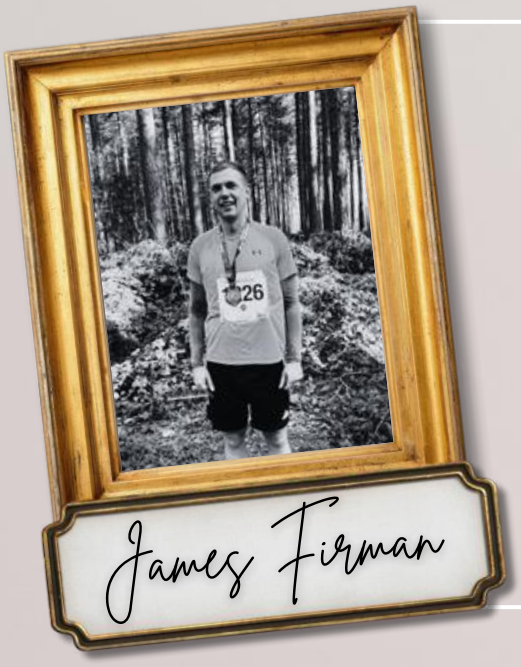
March Edition

Honest Inks Is Awarded 'Green Business Of The Year'

We are incredibly excited to share Honest Inks Ltd was awarded and named 'Green Business Of The Year' at the recent Leicestershire Business Awards hosted by the East Midlands Chamber. This award is a significant endorsement of the work they've been doing for years to embed true circular economy principles into the printer cartridge sector. Huge congratulations guys!



April Edition



Paragon Law's, James Firman Completes London Marathon

Paragon Law's James Firman completed the London Marathon at the end of April, raising vital funds for The Wolfpack Project along the way.

James shared that he couldn't have chosen a more meaningful charity to support. With a strong passion for tackling mental health and loneliness, he saw the marathon as an opportunity to raise awareness of the incredible work The Wolfpack Project does.

Congratulations, James - an outstanding achievement!

NEW MAY Edition

Know Someone Who Is Interested In Joining The Catena Network?

Having the right connections always makes the difference. Building strong, trusted business networks is no longer just a luxury, it's a necessity for growth, sustainability, and long-term success.

Whether you're looking to expand your client base, form strategic partnerships, or stay ahead of industry trends, surrounding yourself with the right people is crucial. That's where Catena Network comes in.

As a Catena Network member, you gain access to a wealth of benefits, including exclusive networking events, thought leadership discussions, business referrals, and even international connections.

Find out more about our member benefits or get in touch with **claire@catena-network.co.uk**

Catena Community

petaurum HR



Meet Hayley

HR Advisor

Before joining Petaurum, I spent years as a Police Inspector for Nottinghamshire Police and as a Strategic Lead tackling Sexual Violence before that for the local authority. I also created the Ask for Angela safety scheme in 2016, which has since been adopted by venues and organisations across the UK and internationally. Those experiences shaped everything about how I approach my work with empathy, integrity, and a genuine belief that how you treat people really matters. I hold a Level 5 CIPD qualification and am passionate about continuing to grow in my HR career. Outside of work, you'll find me training for Hyrox or out walking with my dog Harold, who is very much the centre of my world.

How I contribute to 'Better Workplaces'

My background has given me a real understanding of how people behave under pressure, how to have difficult conversations with care, and how to balance fairness with practicality. I bring all of that into my HR work whether that's supporting someone through a challenging situation or helping an organisation think about how it looks after its people.

My key to 'Better Workplaces'

Make people feel safe enough to be honest. When employees trust that they'll be treated fairly and with respect, everything else, performance, culture, wellbeing follows naturally.



Claire's Column:
The Missing Link

The question comes up at almost every Catena event; usually towards the end of the session, when the conversation has moved from business to something more interesting.

How did you get into what you do? How did Catena happen?

My honest answer is - look at my CV. Then people do, and their expression shifts - a kind of polite recalibration, like someone who's been told the house is charming and is now standing in it. On paper, it looks like I can't hold down a job. A new role every two or three years. Shipping, then technology, then pharmaceuticals, then manufacturing, then professional services, then fashion. No obvious thread. No masterplan. No discernible strategy at all, if I'm being frank.

What the CV doesn't say is that most of those roles were fixed-term contracts. Not accidents - apprenticeships, if you like, in how different worlds function. I started straight from school at Lloyds Register of Shipping. I learned quickly that every industry has its own jargon, and that learning it fast is not optional, it's the entry fee. Perhaps because it was my first role, it appeared that shipping's was particularly unforgiving but my knowledge of international ports and bodies of water improved considerably.

This was the early 1980s, during the Falklands War, and the work felt suddenly, unexpectedly serious. A number of the vessels we were working with were requisitioned by the MoD for the conflict. It was a brisk education in understanding that business does not exist in a bubble, and that what happens in the world has a habit of arriving on your desk.

"On paper, it looks like I can't hold down a job. A new role every two or three years... No obvious thread. No masterplan. No discernible strategy at all."

From there to EDS, as PA to the Director of International Real Estate at Stockley Park, which was itself a new ambitious project; a different kind of business campus, very much the thing in its day. The role turned out to be considerably more varied than the job title suggested. When the director was too deep in project management to travel, he would send me instead. On one occasion, this meant flying to Holland with the quantity surveyor to source the internal landscaping for the atrium of the new international headquarters. Not a couple of pot plants - we were buying trees. Full-grown trees, for an internal space. It was genuinely groundbreaking design for the time and negotiating it required a combination of logistical confidence and the ability to look entirely certain about decisions I had never previously made.

I also took on the snagging for the new executive briefing centre, liaising with the Project Manager of the construction company, working through every last detail before handover. That space was subsequently used as the setting for a Vauxhall television advertising campaign starring Tom Conti. I have always felt this was an under-appreciated line on my CV.

Then Unilever; in fact, two separate stints, which tells you something about how these things tend to go. The first involved the kind of projects that sound unglamorous until you're actually doing them: sourcing a new laundry supplier for factory workwear, cost-managing the installation of the first robot line in the liquids factory, genuinely new territory at the time, and acting as liaison on a rather unlikely collaboration between British Coal and Unilever. Different industries, different cultures, different definitions of what constituted a reasonable timeline. Excellent preparation, as it turned out, for everything that came afterwards.

The second stint came during the merger of Elida Gibbs and Lever Bros, which meant liaising with factories across Europe. This included a trip to Milan, which was lovely - right up until the moment it wasn't. We had a meeting scheduled with the management team and it became apparent early on that Italy were playing a World Cup match that day. To their considerable credit, the team got through the agenda in what I can only describe as record time. The difficulty came afterwards, attempting to find a taxi to the airport. Eventually I persuaded one driver to take me. He had the match on the radio, and even with my extremely limited Italian, it was clear from his expression that things were not going well for the national side. Italy was knocked out. I left a tip. I don't think it helped.

Then Eli Lilly, and here those who know me well have permission to pause and smile – I was manning the IT help desk. My lack of technical knowledge is, let us say, well-documented among my acquaintances. But it turned out to be an unexpected advantage. When someone rang to say they'd pressed the key that looked like a beetle and nothing was working, I knew immediately what they meant, and I could explain exactly what to do without a single word of jargon. Sometimes not knowing the technical term for something is precisely the qualification required.

My time in manufacturing also bore fruit: one project involved logging the processes for an animal feed factory, methodically working through how everything connected. Unglamorous, again. Invaluable, again. When I subsequently joined a law firm on a fixed-term project, that experience meant I could contribute meaningfully to merging two legal accounting systems - the kind of work that requires you to understand a process before you can improve it. A full-time role in legal marketing followed, arriving at an interesting moment in time; advertising had only recently been approved by the Law Society, which meant the whole sector was feeling its way into unfamiliar territory and was, cautiously open to new thinking. Connections were built. Relationships grew. Referrers became partners.

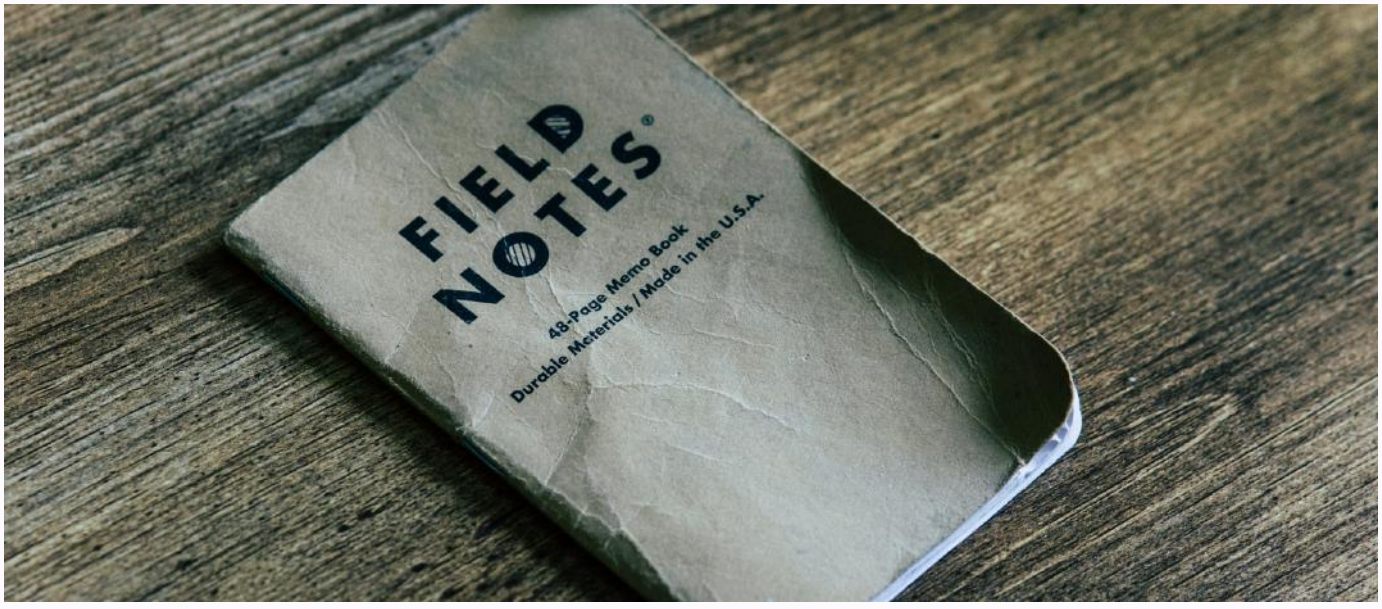
The fashion chapter arrived when the opportunity came up to work with an independent ladies' boutique, a role that made me, I believe, the oldest Saturday Girl in town. Which brought things full circle rather neatly, because my very first job had been as a Saturday Girl at Boots. That, too, was an education in how a large corporation actually operates at the point where it meets the public, which turns out to be rather different from how a 15 (and 3 months) year old imagines it does, but I think that ignited my interest in being able to go behind the scenes and see how a business works. The boutique eventually led to a qualification as a fashion stylist; a different language again and a different way of seeing.

But it's a moment from one of the law firms that I find myself returning to most often, because it captures something essential about what I now do. I had been asked to liaise with a client to explain a project management system the firm had implemented for them, to explain how it worked in practice.

> **"That gap, between how one world talks and how another one listens is what Catena exists to close."**

The meeting was going well. Then someone asked: who is Fiona? The firm had offices in several cities, including Liverpool, and throughout the project the legal team had referred warmly and consistently to Fiona (or so the Client thought),Fiona would be handling this, Fiona had reviewed that, Fiona would pick this up. By the time the question was asked in the London meeting room, I suspect something may have been lost somewhere between the Mersey and the Thames. There was no Fiona. Fiona was Fee Earner. I was, as it happened, well placed to join the dots, having spent enough time in enough different situations to understand both the question and the answer. Honours were saved all round, the meeting concluded smoothly - and I have dined out on the story ever since.

That gap, between how one world talks and how another one listens is what Catena exists to close. The name comes from the Latin for chain or link. Our logo shows two interlocking Cs, links open at the ends, because the point of a chain is that it can always be extended - always joined to something new. The podcast is called The Missing Link for the same reason, put the right two people in conversation and something clicks into place that wasn't there before. Every role I have ever held added another link, none of them looked essential at the time - all of them turned out to be. It wasn't a career plan. It was fieldwork.



Champions Speakers Has Been Named Booking Agency Of The Year 2026

Champions Speakers has been named Booking Agency of the Year 2026 at the Agents Association Business Awards 2026, securing the prestigious title for the second consecutive year. The awards, hosted by the The Entertainment Agents' Association (TEAA), recognise excellence across the music, keynote speaker and celebrity booking industries. Held at Athena Leicester, this year's ceremony brought together more than 300 leading agents, managers and industry professionals for one of the sector's most significant annual events. The consecutive win reinforces Champions Speakers' position as one of the most trusted and high-performing agencies in the UK.

Over the past year, the business has delivered more than 5,000 events across the UK and internationally, spanning keynote speakers, live music bookings and celebrity-led campaigns. Judged by an independent panel of association members and industry-leading voices, the award recognises the agency's scale, strategic delivery and consistent performance in a highly competitive global market. In a further success for the business, Rachel Hilton of Champions Speakers was named Agent of the Year 2026, recognising her outstanding contribution and role in driving continued growth and client success.



Jack Hayes, Director of Champions Speakers, said: "Winning Booking Agency of the Year for a second year running is a fantastic achievement for our team. It reflects the consistency, expertise and commitment that goes into every project we deliver. We are proud to support clients across the UK and internationally, and to see Rachel Hilton recognised as Agent of the Year makes this moment even more significant for the business."

The Entertainment Agents' Association continues to serve as the official governing body for the industry, promoting professionalism, transparency and excellence across the sector. The evening also celebrated wider industry achievements, with Tony Christie receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award. Guests were entertained by performances from Matt Terry and Twist and Pulse, adding to the atmosphere of the event. This latest award builds on a sustained track record of recognition for Champions Speakers, reflecting more than two decades of growth, innovation and market leadership.

The agency has been named among the London Stock Exchange Group's 1000 Companies to Inspire Britain and has featured in both the Insider Growth 100 and The Sunday Times Fast Track 100, highlighting its status as one of the UK's fastest-growing and most dynamic businesses. Recent accolades also include recognition in the Department for Business and Trade's Made in the UK, Sold to the World Awards, celebrating the company's international expansion and export success across 66 countries.

Further honours include being named Best Keynote Speaker Bureau 2025 – Europe and inclusion in JP Morgan's Top 200 Female-Powered Businesses, underlining both commercial strength and a strong commitment to leadership and diversity. With more than 20 years in operation, a global client base and thousands of events delivered annually, Champions Speakers continues to consistently set the benchmark for excellence in the talent booking industry.

Hayes added: "This award is incredibly important to us because it reflects the trust our clients place in us every day. We've worked hard to build an agency that delivers consistently, whether that's for a single keynote or a global campaign, and that focus hasn't changed. Winning this award again is a sign that we're moving in the right direction, but we're not standing still. We're continuing to invest in our people, our partnerships and our UK and global reach to make sure we keep raising the standard for what our brilliant clients rightly expect from a booking agency."

"An Award-Winning Keynote Speaker & Entertainment Agency"

champions UK plc
THE SPEAKERS AGENCY

0207 1010 553

agent@championsukplc.com

HELP for HEROES

THIS JUNE, TAKE THE PLUNGE FOR THOSE WHO TOOK THE ULTIMATE RISK



Join Help for Heroes' Operation Swim and commemorate the Normandy Landings.

Allied Forces crossed the English Channel to liberate Nazi occupied Europe. This marked the beginning of the end of World War Two. This June, you can honour their courage with Operation Swim.

YOUR MISSION: Swim the length of one, two, three or all five of the Normandy beaches across the month of June.

With distances from 5km up to 47km, you can choose a distance that works for you. Head to your local pool or see if there's an outdoor swimming club or wild swimming spot near you. However far you swim, every kilometre helps raise vital funds to provide life changing support for veterans and their families. Register, get your first donation, and you'll receive a free Help for Heroes swimming cap to wear with pride.

Are you ready to take the plunge? Swim to support our veterans of today and remember our heroes of yesterday.

Help for Heroes is a registered charity, also registered with the Fundraising Regulator.



A Big Win For Team BEST At Charity Golf Day!

Working with great kids is an absolute joy. Working with great people who have a passion for supporting our children is inspiring. Seeing children's skills and confidence develop is very special.

On 17th April, the team here at BEST took part and WON the inaugural Belvoir Cricket Club Charity golf day at Newark Golf Club! All the funds raised are going towards our new build where we can work and support thousands more children in the future.

Well done team #weareBEST

BELVOIR EDUCATION & SPORTS TRUST

Belvoir Education & Sports Trust

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Health & Wellness



The Rise of Liquid Rhinoplasty: Refining the Nose Without Surgery

For many people, the nose is the one feature they notice first - in photographs, in profile, in conversation. It plays a central role in facial harmony, yet even small irregularities can feel disproportionately noticeable.

Traditionally, surgical rhinoplasty has been the only option for those seeking change. However, for many, the idea of surgery can feel overwhelming - the downtime, the permanence, and the associated risks. Today, a more refined alternative is reshaping the conversation.

Liquid Rhinoplasty, a non-surgical approach to nasal refinement, offers a subtle, sophisticated way to enhance the nose without the need for invasive procedures.

At Eudai Clinic in Nottingham, this advanced treatment is performed exclusively by medical doctor Dr Dimi, who has become known locally as “The Nose Doctor” for his precision-led, natural approach to facial aesthetics.

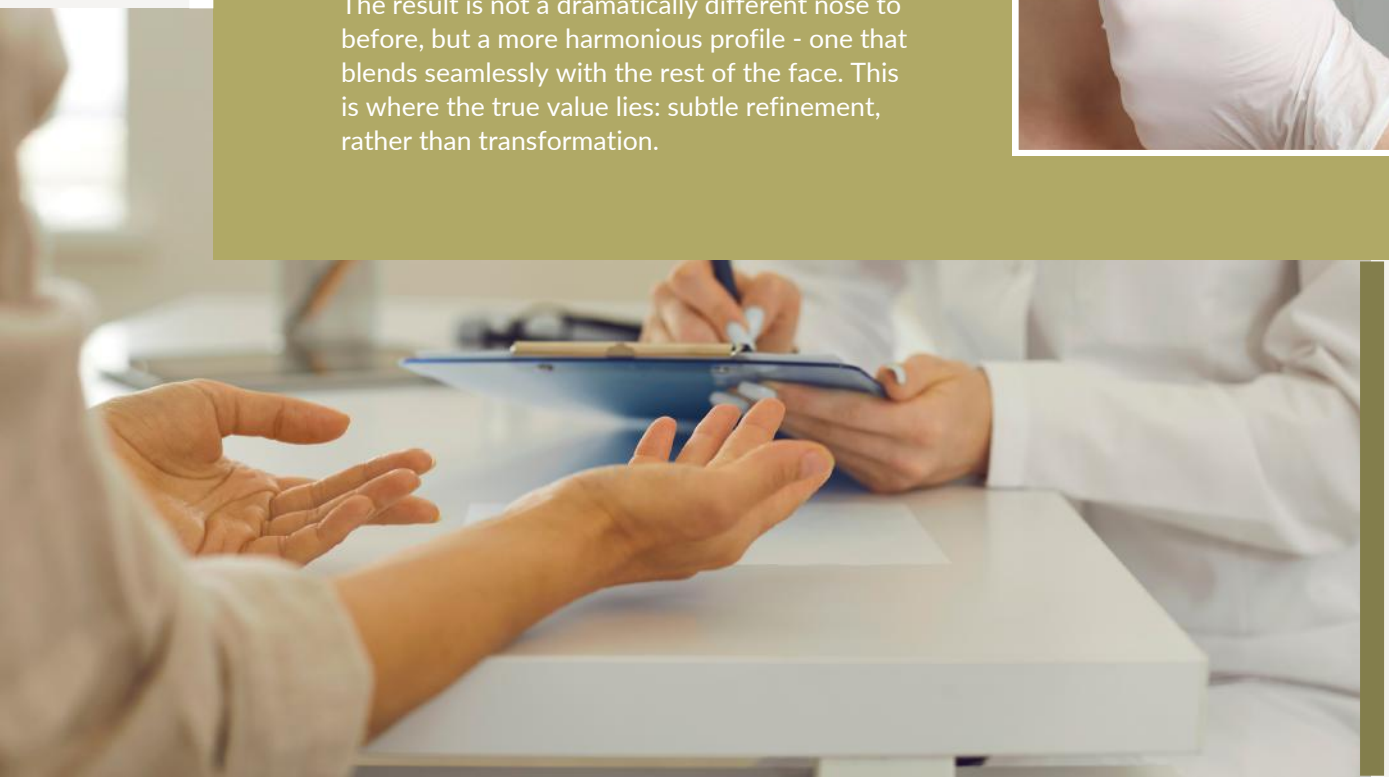
What Is Liquid Rhinoplasty?

Often referred to as a non-surgical nose job, liquid rhinoplasty uses carefully placed medical-grade dermal fillers to reshape and refine the nose. Rather than removing tissue, the treatment works by strategically adding volume in specific areas to create balance and proportion. **It can be used to:**

- Smooth dorsal humps
- Lift or support the nasal tip
- Improve symmetry
- Enhance overall facial balance

The result is not a dramatically different nose to before, but a more harmonious profile - one that blends seamlessly with the rest of the face. This is where the true value lies: subtle refinement, rather than transformation.





A Sculptural Medical Procedure

While the treatment itself typically takes around 20–30 minutes and involves minimal downtime, it should never be considered a simple or routine procedure.

The nose is one of the most anatomically complex and high-risk areas of the face. It contains critical blood vessels, and incorrect placement of filler can lead to serious complications. This is why a doctor-led approach is essential.

At Eudai Clinic, liquid rhinoplasty is treated as a precision medical procedure, not a cosmetic quick fix. Dr Dimi combines in-depth anatomical expertise with a highly trained aesthetic eye, ensuring each treatment is both safe and proportionally balanced.

Every consultation begins with a full facial assessment - not just an evaluation of the nose in isolation. Because true refinement is about how each feature works together, not individually.

Who Is It Suitable For?

Liquid rhinoplasty is ideal for individuals who:

- ✔ Have a small bump they wish to soften
- ✔ Feel their nasal tip lacks projection
- ✔ Want improved profile balance
- ✔ Are seeking refinement without committing to surgery

It is important to note that this treatment is not designed to make a nose smaller. Instead, it creates the illusion of straightness and proportion through careful contouring. For the right patient, the effect can be transformative - not by changing identity, but by enhancing facial harmony.



The Eudai Clinic Approach

Rather than focusing purely on cosmetic outcomes, the clinic takes a holistic, patient-centred approach, ensuring that every one of our treatment aligns with both the individual's goals and their long-term wellbeing.

All procedures are performed within a medical framework, making sure to prioritise:

- Patient safety
- Clinical precision
- Evidence-based practice
- Natural, long-term results

Considering liquid rhinoplasty?

Book a personalised consultation with our doctor-led team at Eudai Clinic:

Business Insights

CREATIONZ
MARKETING

10 Easy Ways To Fix Your Marketing



Marketing doesn't need to be overwhelming. Often, it's the small fixes that make the biggest difference.

That's why we created "10 Easy Ways To Fix Your Marketing" - a practical, no-fluff guide packed with quick wins you can action straight away .

Designed for busy business owners and small teams, we created this FREE guide to shows you exactly how to:

- Improve your website visibility with simple SEO tweaks
- Refresh your Google Business Profile
- Add clear calls-to-action that convert
- Focus your social media efforts
- Repurpose content that's already working
- Set up a simple 3-email nurture sequence



With over 24 years of hands-on marketing experience, we know most businesses don't need more complexity - they need clarity and consistency .

These are straightforward, practical improvements that can help you generate more enquiries without a full rebrand or a big budget.

If your marketing feels a little messy, this is your place to start.

Download Your FREE Copy TODAY

If you're wearing multiple hats, spinning plates, and know your marketing could be stronger than it is right now - this guide is your starting point.

You can now download your free copy of "10 Easy Ways To Fix Your Marketing" today and give your marketing the reset it deserves.

SCAN ME

SEO Is Like Getting Fit: The Results Are the Effect, Not the Work



Most people think getting fit means going to the gym. You sign up, show up a few times a week, lift some weights, do a bit of cardio, and hope that over time you will look and feel better. The gym becomes the focal point of the entire process. But the reality is very different. Fitness, health, and physical transformation are not the result of going to the gym alone. The gym is simply one component of a much larger strategy. The real work happens long before you step onto the gym floor. It starts with planning. Understanding your goals. Researching the most effective methods. Structuring a programme. Aligning nutrition, recovery, and training cycles. Tracking progress. Making adjustments. Only then do the physical results begin to appear. Muscle growth, improved health, weight loss, endurance, these are effects, not actions. They are the outcome of a carefully designed system. In many ways, **Search Engine Optimisation works exactly the same way.**

The Misunderstanding Around SEO

SEO is often misunderstood. Many businesses think SEO is simply a list of actions: Add keywords to pages, write some blog articles, build a few links, tweak a title tag and install a plugin. These activities are commonly treated as the SEO equivalent of "going to the gym". But just like fitness, those actions alone do not create the result. Search rankings, organic traffic, and inbound enquiries are not the work itself. They are the effect of the work. The real work lies in the strategy behind the execution. Without that strategy, SEO becomes reactive and fragmented. With the right strategy, however, SEO becomes one of the most powerful long-term growth engines available to any organisation. This philosophy sits at the core of how Thrive Online Group UK approaches search optimisation.

Rankings Are the Outcome of Strategy

When someone searches for a product or service on Google, a complex system determines which businesses appear. Search engines are trying to answer a fundamental question: Which website best satisfies the user's intent?

To answer that question, Google evaluates hundreds of signals, as examples:

- Website structure
- Page relevance
- Content depth
- User behaviour
- Authority and backlinks
- Local signals
- Technical performance
- Brand credibility snd topical authority

Each one of these elements contributes to the overall perception of a website. Improving rankings therefore requires far more than isolated SEO tactics. It requires understanding:

- How a market searches
- How competitors structure their sites
- What content Google associates with authority
- How users move from research to purchase
- How paid media interacts with organic search
- How brand perception affects click-through rates

This is why at Thrive Online Group UK, SEO begins not with implementation, but with investigation.

The Forensic Phase: Understanding Before Acting

Before any recommendations are made, before any implementation begins, and even before quoting on an SEO campaign, an agency should undertake a deep forensic research phase. **This phase is designed to answer one central question: What does this specific business actually need to win in Search?** Every organisation operates in a different competitive landscape. A strategy that works in one sector may fail entirely in another. For that reason, we recommend an extensive audit and research process that examines:

- Full website architecture
- File and URL structure
- Keyword demand and search intent
- Competitive landscape
- Backlink profiles
- Technical SEO performance
- Organic visibility across competitors
- Search Console and analytics data
- AI-driven search features such as Google's AI Overviews

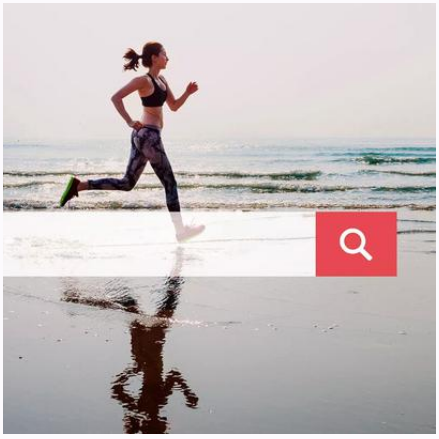
In many cases, this research produces **a full pack of supporting documents**, spreadsheets, crawl reports, ranking analyses, and competitor benchmarks. Only once this entire ecosystem has been analysed does the real strategy begin to take shape.

What a Real SEO Audit Looks Like

To illustrate the depth of this approach, consider a recent SEO audit conducted for a regional solar installation company. The initial audit document provided to client was accompanied by **over 50 supporting research documents.** The analysis included:

- Full site crawl and architecture mapping
- Keyword research covering thousands of search queries
- Visibility comparisons against key competitors
- Traffic channel analysis
- Backlink quality and authority evaluation
- Ranking distribution across hundreds of keywords
- Search intent mapping for high-value queries

One of the key findings was particularly revealing. The website was generating **tens of thousands of impressions in Google search results,** meaning it was appearing frequently in front of potential customers. However, almost none of those impressions were converting into clicks. In fact, more than **99% of people seeing the site in search results were choosing competitors instead.** The SEO Audit found that the issue was not demand, the issue was alignment. The website had been built primarily around informational content about solar technology rather than service-based pages targeting local installation searches. In simple terms, Google had learned that the site was a good place to read about solar, but not necessarily the best place to employ the client as a solar installer. This insight fundamentally changed the SEO strategy. Instead of simply producing more content, the recommendation was to restructure the website architecture around service-based and location-based intent. New hub pages would target high-value search queries such as regional installation services, supported by town-level landing pages designed to capture local demand. Over time, this architecture allows search engines to clearly understand the business as an authority within its service area. This is a perfect example of why SEO must begin with analysis rather than activity.



The Danger of Skipping the Strategy

Many SEO campaigns fail for the same reason many fitness programmes fail. They begin with action rather than planning. A business might publish dozens of blog articles, invest heavily in paid ads, or attempt link-building campaigns without ever addressing the underlying structure of their website. The result is often confusing. Traffic may increase temporarily, but meaningful enquiries remain low. In some cases, paid advertising masks the underlying issue entirely. The solar audit mentioned earlier revealed that more than 80% of website traffic was being generated by automated advertising campaigns, while organic search contributed only a small fraction of visitors. Without those ads, the website's visibility would have been dramatically lower. But once the underlying SEO architecture was identified and corrected, the opportunity became clear... Organic search demand was already present. The website simply needed to be positioned correctly to capture it.

SEO Is a Long-Term System

This is another important similarity between fitness and search optimisation. Neither delivers instant results. Building muscle takes months of structured training. Improving organic search rankings follows a similar timeline. Search engines need time to: discover new pages, understand topical authority, evaluate backlinks, measure user behaviour and reassess competitive positioning. A well-structured SEO strategy typically unfolds in phases. In the early months, new pages are indexed and begin appearing in search results. In the middle phase, rankings gradually move toward the first page for targeted queries. In the later stages, organic traffic begins compounding as authority builds across the website. Just as fitness rewards consistency, SEO rewards strategic persistence.

The Role of Integration

Another key factor often overlooked in SEO is integration with other marketing disciplines. Search performance is influenced by far more than just technical optimisation. Brand strength, advertising visibility, content marketing, and digital PR all contribute to how a website performs in search. SEO strategies often work alongside: brand positioning, PPC campaign insights, content marketing programmes, website design and development improvements and digital PR and backlink acquisition. When these elements operate together, the result is far more powerful than isolated SEO activity.

Strategy Before Execution

Ultimately, the most important message for businesses considering SEO is this: Search rankings are not something you "do". They are something that happens when the right system is in place. Just as getting fit requires a structured programme rather than random workouts, successful SEO requires a strategic framework before any implementation begins. This is why Thrive Online Group UK begins every engagement with deep analysis rather than immediate activity. Understanding the market, understanding the competitors, Understanding the structure required to win. Only once that picture is clear does the implementation begin. Because in both fitness and search optimisation, the results are never the work itself. They are simply the visible outcome of the system behind it.

About Thrive Online Group UK

Thrive Online Group UK is a leading digital marketing agency headquartered in West Bridgford. We specialise in:

- Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
- Digital Web Design and Development
- Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising
- Content Management via Direct Marketing

Contact Us: **info@thriveonlinegroup.co.uk**

thrive Online
targeted digital marketing

May at Nottingham Business School: Partnerships, Talent and Practical Support for Growth

By Angela Scott, Experiential Learning Manager, Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University

The year is moving quickly, and is an especially busy time for me and Regaynor Alldread as it's the month we launch our spring Consultancy Experience Projects. With 82 separate real-life business projects for postgraduate business students across marketing, finance, HR and international business, including three projects with Catena Network members, what stands out this year is the growing number of projects focused on data, digital capability and AI. Organisations of all sizes are no longer asking whether AI matters, but how to use it sensibly, ethically and in ways that deliver real value rather than noise. I'm therefore pleased to highlight in this article an upcoming NBS micro-credential short course that may be particularly relevant for business owners and senior leaders who want to move beyond surface level conversations about AI.

Developing Leaders for an AI Driven Business Landscape, June 2026

Alongside our work with students and partners, Nottingham Business School continues to support leadership development for organisations navigating change. The Leading AI driven Business Transformation micro credential is designed for leaders and SME directors who want to understand how AI can support real world decision making and operational improvement. Delivered over three intensive days in early June, the course focuses on practical use cases, SME relevant examples and hands on approaches rather than theory alone.

Participants will explore how AI can help automate low value tasks, support better decision making and free up time for work that drives growth. There is also a strong emphasis on governance, risk and scaling what works, helping leaders leave with a clear and realistic roadmap for their organisation. Successful completion leads to 10 level 7 credits that can be used towards further postgraduate study. For growing businesses under pressure to do more with less, the course offers structured time to build confidence, capability and clarity in an area that is moving quickly.



Find out more about our Leading AI-driven Business Transformation for C-suite and Business Leaders Microcredential by scanning this QR code:

Our student projects also reinforce something else we see repeatedly: good outcomes rarely happen in isolation. They come from strong partnerships, between universities, businesses and the public sector, and from creating practical routes for students and graduates to build confidence through experience. Those themes run through the other opportunities highlighted below, from partnership events and leadership development, through to graduate internships and enterprise activity.

Power of Partnerships: Keeping Talent in the Local Region

One of the key highlights this month is the Power of Partnerships: Keeping Talent in the Local Region event, hosted by Nottingham Trent University in collaboration with the University of Derby and the University of Nottingham. Bringing together colleagues from across the D2N2 region, the event focuses on how universities, public sector organisations and economic development teams can work together more effectively to strengthen skills pipelines and retain talent locally.

For small businesses, this matters. Access to graduate talent, clearer routes into local opportunity and joined up regional thinking all contribute to a healthier business environment.

The event provides space to share insight, learn from existing partnerships and explore what practical collaboration can look like in reality, not just in principle. If you work with or alongside the public sector, or have an interest in regional economic development and workforce planning, this is a valuable opportunity to connect and contribute. **More information: https://www.ntu.ac.uk/business-and-employers/recruit-students-and-graduates/keeping-talent-in-the-local-region**

Graduate Internship Scheme 2026: Now Open for Expressions of Interest

For organisations thinking about future capacity, recruitment or skills development, we at NTU have recently opened expressions of interest for the Graduate Internship Scheme 2026. This year, the scheme is operating an employer expression of interest process to better match graduate supply with employer demand. The scheme enables organisations to host a graduate for either six weeks full time or eight weeks part time. NTU employs the graduate through Uni temps and fully funds the salary for the internship. For small businesses, this removes financial risk while still offering access to graduate level talent.

Employers are initially asked to submit brief details of the role they have in mind. Based on the graduate applications we receive, the NTU Employability Team will then contact organisations where a good match looks likely and invite them to submit full role details. Internships can be office based, hybrid or remote in some cases, and are designed to provide meaningful, graduate level work alongside structured support and mentoring. We are particularly keen to hear from organisations able to offer opportunities in areas such as interior design, architecture or product design, where graduate interest is strong but suitable roles can be harder to source.

For businesses that are not quite ready to recruit permanently but need additional capacity, or want to trial future talent in a supported way, the scheme offers a practical and well established route. **Register your interest for GIS 2026 here: https://www.ntu.ac.uk/business-and-employers/recruit-students-and-graduates/employ-our-graduates/graduate-internship-scheme**

Supporting Enterprise: Exhibitions and Research

May also sees students engaging directly with enterprise and entrepreneurship. During the Undergraduate Enterprise Exhibition, level 5 students will present their business ideas, with academics and NTU alumni invited to offer feedback, challenge thinking and support development. For students, this is a valuable chance to pitch ideas and respond to questioning; for visitors, it offers insight into emerging entrepreneurial talent and thinking. Alongside this activity, NTU has launched the 2026 Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs Survey, inviting businesses and entrepreneurs across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to share their experiences of enterprise support. **Find a link to the survey: https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/ntusurvey/small-business-and-entrepreneursurvey-2026-master-v6?preview=cmmwlfbti000002ld6r7g8udc**

The survey explores how people engage with enterprise education, learning activities and events, and seeks to identify barriers that may prevent engagement. It is open to small businesses with up to 49 employees, regardless of whether they have previously worked with NTU. Researchers are particularly keen to hear from groups who may experience structural or social barriers, including women, minority ethnic entrepreneurs, migrants, disabled entrepreneurs, and individuals at different life stages.

The findings will help NTU and its partners design enterprise support that is more inclusive, relevant and responsive, informed directly by lived experience rather than assumption.



Get Involved

Whether you are looking to access graduate talent, develop leadership capability, contribute to regional conversations, or help shape future enterprise support, there are several ways to engage with NTU this spring. If any of the opportunities above are of interest, or you would simply like to explore how Nottingham Business School could support your organisation, we would be pleased to talk. We value long term partnerships with businesses of all sizes and welcome open, practical conversations about what works for you and your context. Feel free to get in touch with me if you have any questions.

angela.scott@ntu.ac.uk

The True Cost of Compliance – And Why "Simpler Regulation" Isn't So Simple

A Growing Operational Reality

For small businesses across the UK, compliance is no longer a background administrative task. It has become a central part of everyday operations, shaping how firms allocate time, manage risk, and make decisions. Whether it is tax reporting, employment obligations, or health and safety requirements, regulation now sits firmly within the day-to-day running of a business rather than on its periphery.

According to a recent report from the Federation of Small Businesses, the scale of this burden is significant. Its research estimates that compliance costs small and medium-sized businesses around £36 billion annually and consumes approximately 379 million hours each year. If reduced by the government's 25% target, this could return around £9 billion and 95 million hours to businesses to reinvest in growth. These figures are striking, but they point to a deeper question: not whether regulation is necessary, but whether the system is working effectively for the businesses expected to navigate.



A System Under Strain

The FSB's position is not anti-regulation. The report recognises the importance of rules in protecting employees, consumers, and markets. Instead, it highlights how regulation operates in practice, and where this creates friction for smaller firms. For many business owners, compliance is highly time-intensive. Without dedicated support functions, responsibility falls directly on those running the business. Time spent interpreting guidance, completing returns, or responding to regulators is time diverted from customers and growth.

The system is also widely perceived as fragmented. Different regulators operate independently, each with their own processes, terminology, and digital systems. While each serves a clear purpose, the combined effect can be difficult to navigate, particularly where similar information must be provided multiple times in different formats. Guidance adds to the challenge. Businesses often report difficulty in finding clear, practical information, and delays in receiving answers when clarification is needed. In response, many adopt a cautious approach, leading to over-compliance and additional cost. Crucially, the burden is not evenly distributed. Larger organisations can absorb compliance through dedicated teams and systems. Smaller firms must manage it directly, making the same requirements significantly more onerous.

The Case for Reform – and Its Limits

In response, the FSB calls for a 25% reduction in the administrative cost of regulation, alongside better coordination between regulators, clearer guidance, faster support, and stronger scrutiny of new rules. These proposals are appealing. A system that is clearer, consistent, and easier to engage with would benefit businesses of all sizes.

However, regulation is not a single system but a collection of frameworks designed for different purposes. Tax systems prioritise accuracy and consistency. Health and safety regulation focuses on preventing harm. Corporate reporting supports transparency and accountability. These differences shape how each operates and the level of detail required. As a result, there are limits to simplification. Some complexity reflects the real-world risks being managed. While administrative processes can often be improved, underlying obligations - particularly in higher-risk areas, - are less flexible. Simplifying a form may be straightforward; simplifying a safety requirement is not.

Regulation, Growth and Real-World Trade-offs

Recent government policy developments reinforce this tension. The paper "New approach to ensure regulators and regulation support growth" sets out an ambition to reduce administrative burdens, simplify the regulatory landscape, and encourage a more proportionate approach. In many respects, this aligns closely with the concerns raised by the FSB.

At the same time, the practical reality is more nuanced. Alongside efforts to streamline regulation, new consultations - such as proposed changes to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations - highlight the need for detailed oversight in higher-risk areas. Proposals relating to occupational disease and exposure to hazardous substances, including carcinogenic and mutagenic materials, underline that in some areas regulation is becoming more targeted rather than less. This reflects a broader balance. While administrative processes may be simplified, the underlying requirement to manage risk effectively - particularly where health is concerned - remains unchanged.

Where Practical Improvements Can Be Made

Despite these constraints, there are clear opportunities for improvement. One of the most significant is duplication. Businesses are often required to provide the same information to multiple regulators. Better coordination and data-sharing could reduce this without weakening oversight. Guidance is another area where relatively small changes could have a large impact. Clearer explanations, practical examples, and more responsive communication would help businesses comply more efficiently. In many cases, the issue is not the rule itself, but how easy it is to understand and apply. There is also scope to improve system design. Many regulatory processes have evolved over time, often reflecting institutional needs rather than user experience. Designing them around how small businesses actually operate could reduce friction significantly.

Compliance in Practice: Chemical and Materials Management

These challenges are particularly visible in areas such as chemical and materials management. For many small businesses, this is not immediately recognised as a major compliance issue, yet it appears in a wide range of everyday activities, from cleaning and maintenance to construction and manufacturing. Managing substances safely requires an understanding of hazards, appropriate storage and handling, and access to clear information. These are practical responsibilities embedded within wider health and safety obligations. Here, the limits of simplification are clear. The risks associated with hazardous substances mean that a certain level of diligence is unavoidable. However, better guidance, clearer labelling, and accessible information can make compliance more manageable. Small, practical improvements can reduce both risk and administrative effort.

The Role of the Professional & Business Services Sector

The Professional & Business Services (PBS) sector - covering accountancy, legal services, consultancy, and advisory support - is a key part of the government's industrial strategy. Its role is to help businesses interpret and implement regulatory requirements in practice. For small businesses, access to this expertise can make a significant difference. However, it is often constrained by cost, meaning many firms manage compliance internally.

The government's focus on strengthening the PBS sector, particularly through digital tools and new technologies, has the potential to improve this. If compliance-related services become more standardised and scalable, they may also become more affordable and accessible to smaller firms. If achieved, this could ease the practical burden of compliance - not by removing obligations, but by making them easier to manage. The key question is whether these developments translate into genuinely usable, cost-effective support for smaller businesses.

Rethinking Compliance as an Opportunity

Taken together, this suggests a more balanced perspective. The FSB is right to highlight that the current system can be complex and resource-intensive, particularly for smaller firms. Its focus on coordination, clarity, and usability is well placed. At the same time, expectations of large-scale reductions in compliance costs may need to be tempered. Some level of burden is inherent in a system designed to manage risk and ensure accountability. For businesses, there is also an opportunity to shift perspective. Compliance is often seen primarily as a cost, but it can also support more efficient and responsible operations. Clearer processes, better record-keeping, and improved risk management do not simply meet regulatory requirements - they can strengthen resilience and performance.

Looking Ahead

The challenge is not to remove complexity entirely, but to ensure it exists only where necessary. For policymakers, this means focusing on how regulation is experienced in practice. For the PBS sector, it presents an opportunity to make compliance more accessible. And for businesses, it reinforces the value of engaging with compliance as part of running a well-managed operation.

Better regulation is not simply about reducing cost. It is about creating a system that works - supporting responsible business practices while enabling firms of all sizes to operate with confidence.

The 3 Day Leadership Reset Challenge

Christine Coates - U Transition

So, I've been wanting to run a leadership challenge for a long while, but if I'm being completely honest, I've been procrastinating on it and making excuses about it forever...

Not because I didn't want to do it, but because leadership is such a big topic and if I'm being honest I couldn't work out where to start without trying to cram everything in.

Everything felt like I could do a challenge about it, so I parked it instead and procrastinated a lot more.

Recently though, I ran a free masterclass about creating a self driven team, and a few people asked if I was running a challenge alongside it, so I decided yes i was !

So I started there and have finally created a free 3 day Leadership Reset challenge, which is not about fixing all things leadership, it's about pausing, seeing what's really going on, and making one small, intentional shift because when I look at where most founders are struggling, it's not with everything, it's often with a very specific moment in time, the point where they realise they have become the safety net, the point of all reference, holding everything together in their business for their team.

If you've been feeling overloaded or too involved in your business and aren't sure how to identify it or what to stop doing first this will probably resonate..

Sign up here if it feels relevant: I'd love for you to join in

https://lnkd.in/e-a-USdz

Soft Skills Are a Lie: The Real Power Behind Business Success

We've been sold a myth. That communication, empathy, self-awareness, resilience and collaboration are "soft skills" – nice-to-haves, the warm fluffy stuff you work on after the real work is done.

But here's the uncomfortable truth: Soft skills aren't soft at all! They're everything!

In fact, calling them soft undermines their critical importance to leadership, team dynamics and the bottom line.

There's nothing soft about navigating a conflict between team members, giving difficult feedback, staying composed when everything's on fire, or making decisions that align with values under pressure. earning trust, managing your emotions when the pressure's on, or keeping a team aligned during uncertainty.

Try leading a team, managing a crisis, or growing a business without them. Let me know how that works out. Let's cut to the chase. We've been wildly mislabelling the most important skills in the workplace.

Where "Hard" Skills Get You In...

Sure, your qualifications, experience and technical expertise will land you the job. But they won't help you when:

- A top performer suddenly disengages and you're not sure why
- A team is stuck in toxic conflict and productivity grinds to a halt
- You're leading change and the team resists with passive-aggression or silence
- Feedback conversations turn defensive or emotional
- You're exhausted because no one else is stepping up – and you're doing it all

In all these cases, your spreadsheet, strategy deck, or subject matter expertise won't save you. You need emotional intelligence. You need real leadership. You need human skills.

What Actually Goes Wrong in Business?

Spoiler alert: It's not usually the numbers. It's rarely the system or the process. It's often not the product or the plan. It's the people stuff. And when that breaks down, it all breaks down.

Let's look at what I see in businesses and leadership teams again and again:

- Misunderstandings due to poor communication
- Talent leaving because of poor management
- Lack of trust slowing everything down
- Teams confused because leaders don't clearly set expectations
- Resentment building because no one's talking about the real issues
- Decision-making stalling because no one feels safe to speak up

This is a human need. And it requires leadership that's emotionally intelligent, self-aware and genuinely connected. Sound dramatic? Perhaps. But it's also real. I see it all the time in organisations that prioritise technical capability and strategy while underinvesting in the human element that holds it all together.

What Actually Goes Wrong in Business?

These so-called soft skills are the visible edge of emotional intelligence – a powerhouse of self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation and relationship management. EQ is not a fluffy leadership buzzword. It's a critical predictor of success.

- 90% of top performers score high in EQ
- People with high EQ earn on average more per year
- Teams with emotionally intelligent leaders outperform others in collaboration, resilience and results

And in small businesses? EQ is your secret weapon. It's what turns overwhelm into opportunity, conflict into clarity, and team chaos into momentum.

So Enough of the "soft." These are: Power Skills. Leadership Skills. Human Skills. Success Skills. Whatever label you prefer, just don't underestimate them.

Because the truth is – your technical expertise gets you in the door. But it's your human skills that build the trust, engagement and impact that make you unmissable.

Coaching Questions for your Self-Reflection:

When was the last time a conversation didn't go as planned and what was going on for you emotionally at that moment?

This helps you identify emotional triggers and explore how self-awareness (or the lack of it) impacts communication and relationships.

How do people experience you when you're under pressure and how do you know?

Encourages reflection on self-regulation and perception vs. reality. Great for building emotional intelligence and presence.

Which human skill do you avoid developing and what might change in your leadership if you leaned into it instead?

Shines a light on growth edges, blind spots and the stories we tell ourselves about what matters in leadership.



Fancy a virtual coffee?

I help business owners and senior leaders spot, support, and supercharge the people in their teams who are ready for more and need the right environment to rise.

Book a complementary call here if you'd like to discuss working with me

The Latest Updates From National Law Firm, Shakespeare Martineau

Law Firm, Shakespeare Martineau Advises On Landmark Barratt Redrow Joint Venture For 8,500-Home Garden Town Scheme

National law firm Shakespeare Martineau has advised Barratt Redrow on a major joint venture with Places for People to deliver one of the UK's most ambitious new community developments.

The scheme will create a pioneering garden town-style development in East Hertfordshire, delivering around 8,500 homes, including at least 1,950 affordable properties, across a network of six walkable villages on the outskirts of Gilston. In addition to housing, the development will incorporate infrastructure and placemaking features, including integrated green space and allotments, 15km of heritage trails, schools, leisure facilities, 29,000 sqm of commercial space, and community hubs – highlighting the scale and complexity of the transaction.

The joint venture brings together Barratt Redrow's delivery capability as leading UK housebuilder with Places for People's expertise in long-term stewardship and community management, creating a partnership model that offers enhanced certainty, credibility and longevity for a project of this scale. The deal was led by residential development partners Lucy Haynes and Debbie Irwin, with corporate support from James Hawkeswood.

Lucy Haynes

"This is a landmark project not only in terms of scale but also in how it will be delivered. Structuring a joint venture of this nature requires careful alignment of long-term objectives, risk allocation and delivery mechanisms, and it has been a privilege to support Barratt Redrow on such a forward-thinking development.

"The transaction reflects a growing trend toward risk-sharing joint venture structures in large-scale, long-term residential schemes. As planning, infrastructure and phasing risks become more pronounced, developers are increasingly seeking partners who can contribute more than capital – bringing land control, asset management capabilities and community stewardship credentials. It also highlights a broader shift in the residential development sector. While housing numbers remain critical, there is a clear and increasing focus on design quality, sustainability and long-term legacy, as demonstrated by the garden town model underpinning this scheme.

"The complexity of a project of this scale reflects the evolution of the market. Developments of this magnitude require sophisticated legal frameworks capable of supporting phased delivery, major infrastructure commitments and long-term stewardship arrangements."

The joint venture is forecast to generate more than £6 billion in economic impact – creating thousands of local jobs, apprenticeships and opportunities for local Hertfordshire businesses.

David Thomas

"Working with Places for People offers the opportunity to show what large-scale, responsible, community-led development looks like.

"Our new joint venture will deliver up to 8,500 new homes, featuring our three brands – Barratt Homes, David Wilson Homes and Redrow – plus Places for People so giving customers the best possible choice for their new home. This is a once-in-a-generation project where we can create a modern garden town, connecting people to nature and growing with the community."

Greg Reed

Greg Reed, CEO of Places for People, added: "The UK cannot meet its housing targets without partnerships that deliver differently. Our vision for this development is a new blueprint for modern garden towns, shaped by deep community insight and a commitment to doing things the right way from day one. By combining Places for People's long-term stewardship and social value approach with Barratt Redrow's exceptional capability to deliver homes at scale and like-minded approach to social value, we can accelerate one of the most significant new communities in the UK.

"This partnership unlocks delivery at a pace and scale that neither organisation could achieve alone and ensures we deliver the infrastructure, green space and high-quality homes that people deserve. They say the time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, and with Gilston we did that. It's taken two decades to get to this point and we are ready to roll."



SHAKESPEARE MARTINEAU

Shakespeare Martineau Announces Midlands Promotions

National law firm for life and business Shakespeare Martineau has announced 17 promotions across a variety of teams and locations, including 12 in the Midlands. Promoted to partner are real estate finance experts Afreen Cole and Hannah Pickering, both based in Birmingham, and debt and asset recovery specialist Katrina Gibson in Stratford-upon-Avon.



- **Afreen** works across commercial and residential property finance, advising lenders on due diligence, title reporting and the drafting of facility documentation. She has particular expertise in Islamic finance.
- **Hannah** advises lenders and borrowers on a wide range of property finance transactions including development lending, portfolio refinancing and Islamic finance.
- **Katrina** has operational responsibility across contracts within the debt and asset recovery team, including onboarding, performance tracking and service levels.

Employment solicitor Lubna Laheria, based in Birmingham, has been promoted to legal director. Lubna advises employers on HR issues and employment tribunal litigation, including unfair dismissal and discrimination claims. Lubna also specialises in corporate support work.

New senior associates are residential conveyancer Raza Ali in Nottingham; real estate finance specialist Ian Cole in Birmingham; real estate disputes lawyer Selica Khan in Birmingham; legal planning expert Josh Morley in Nottingham; and family lawyer Deanna Phillips-Mills in Stratford-upon-Avon.

- **Raza** advises individuals and companies on the sale, purchase and refinancing of freehold and leasehold property. He has also started to specialise in Islamic finance and Building Safety Act matters.
- With more than a decade of experience in property law, **Ian** plays a central role in supporting key client relationships and leading major process innovation and transformation initiatives.
- **Selica** advises on complex land and landlord and tenant disputes, including restrictive covenants, lease renewals and Building Safety Act matters.
- **Josh** specialises in planning law, advising clients on a broad range of contentious and non-contentious matters including planning obligations, appeals and judicial review.
- **Deanna** is a family lawyer, advising clients on divorce, complex financial settlements and children matters. She also advises on pre- and post-nuptial agreements as part of clients' overall wealth protection.

Promoted to associate level are commercial real estate specialist Sukhpal Bhamrah in Leicester, tax expert Stefanos Giailidis in Birmingham and Ryan McNally in the debt and asset recovery team in Stratford-upon-Avon.

- **Sukhpal** has a breadth of experience in commercial property matters including landlord and tenant work, asset acquisition and disposal, corporate support and commercial development transactions.
- **Stefanos** advises individuals, estates, partnerships, trusts and private companies on a wide range of matters, including succession planning, reorganisations and HMRC representations. His work frequently involves cross-border elements such as residence and domicile, the application of Double Taxation Treaties and UK anti-avoidance rules.
- **Ryan** specialises in civil and commercial litigation, including debt recovery, defended claims and insolvency.

Victoria Tester

Victoria Tester, managing director at Shakespeare Martineau, said: "Our people are at the heart of everything we do and their development remains one of our most important priorities as a firm.

"These promotions reflect the breadth of talent across Shakespeare Martineau and the continued investment we make in supporting colleagues at every stage of their careers. It is always a pleasure to see individuals progress in this way, taking on new responsibilities and continuing to grow their impact across the business. Congratulations to all those who have achieved this well-earned recognition."

Scan Me For More Information About Us Shakespeare Martineau

SHAKESPEARE MARTINEAU

Innocent Until Proven Awesome AKA "Pi**sing About At Work"

"Watch your back."

I should have known this was going to be a lively event when I checked out expert speaker Helena Langdon's LinkedIn title before settling into my seat at last week's EC Plus+ "Icons of the Industry" event.

Badged as "How To Talk To People On The Internet", this was a marketing wakeup call.



Helena was the brilliant brain and mischievous mind behind the tone of voice and epic social media antics of Innocent Drinks.

You remember the brand because it was cheeky, it was naughty, at times surreral.

Most of all, because it was human. This is more crucial than ever, in a world where content can be rustled up in moments.

Top Tip: The story about the 4th floor stapler... trust me, look it up!

Helena gave the room permission to embrace creative chaos, encouraging delegates to resist the urge to use Ai when brainstorming ideas and to just let the brain fire.

It was really interesting to watch the embers slowly come to life, fanned into small sparks and finally a few flickering flames, as HUMANS recalled what communicating on that level feels like. It's FUN!

People were giggling away sharing what they'd drafted for their TRUE "out of office" statement before dialling it down a tad for public consumption or as they crafted their replies to reviews with extra mischief dialled WAAAAY up.

Helena's highlights? (Stapler aside): **Get Noticed. Be Remembered. Make Money....Build Fans For Life.**

That last bit is crucial. FANS!

Not recipients. Not casual browsers. FANS.

Start small, keep it human and PLEASE "never underestimate the power of nonsense."

PS keep an eye out for my Out Of Office's going forwards but for now, the 2-week holiday one I drafted that I will NOT be using was; "Seriously?! I'm in the pool. This had better be about a cold beer!"

Maybe one day I will dare to use it....we shall see.

Greg

Press For Attention

greg@pressforattention.com

Let's Talk Sports



Derbyshire County Cricket Clubs April News

Falcons Women Sign Yorkshire duo

Derbyshire Falcons Women have signed Yorkshire duo, Ria Fackrell and Rebecca Duckworth, on-loan until July.

Both players were key parts of the Yorkshire squad which lifted the Metro Bank One-Day Cup trophy in 2025, as well as reaching the final of the Vitality Blast.

Fackrell, 26, was the leading wicket-taker in the Vitality Blast League Two last season, claiming 16 wickets at an average of just 10.37 across nine games.

Top-order batter, Duckworth, scored 310 runs across all formats in 2025, including a half-century in the Vitality Women's County Cup.

Fackrell has appeared in The Hundred with Birmingham Phoenix and both players will bring top-level experience into the Falcons Women dressing room.

The duo (Ria Fackrell and Rebecca Duckworth) will be available for selection by Derbyshire when not involved with Yorkshire's Tier One fixtures until the start of The Hundred in mid-July, with the Tier Two season kicking off with a home game against Middlesex on Sunday 12 April.

Head of Women's Cricket, Jon Dyson, said:

"These are two marquee signings for our squad and we could not be happier with our winter recruitment.

"Adding two top-level professionals, in addition to Liv Baker from The Blaze and a number of players from Tier One academies, will provide huge experience for our core to learn from and develop alongside, which will raise the level of our squad long-term.

"Both players are proven winners, they know how to compete and succeed at this level. Ria was the leading wicket-taker in the Vitality Blast last season, so to bring in that kind of quality is brilliant for us.

"I'd like to thank Yorkshire for their co-operation in this process and we look forward to seeing Ria and Rebecca in our colours this summer."

NOTTINGHAM PADEL NETWORK



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PLAY.
CONNECT.
GROW.

Nottinghamshire County Cricket Clubs April Updates

Haseeb Hameed Named Wisden Cricketer Of The Year.

Haseeb Hameed has been named a 2026 Wisden Cricketer of the Year.

The Nottinghamshire captain led his side to their first County Championship title for 15 years last summer, while also scoring the second-most runs in Division One.

Hameed hit 1,258 runs, passing the thousand-run milestone for the second season in succession, at an average of 66.21. His runs included four centuries – two of which he doubled up on – while his leadership took Notts to the domestic game's most coveted crown.

The Cricketer of the Year award is the oldest individual award in cricket and dates back to 1889. Selection is primarily based on performances in the previous English summer, which is judged as the major criteria for inclusion. No one can win the award more than once.

Hameed is the sole English representative on the 2026 list, and is joined by four India players who starred in last year's Test series – Shubman Gill, Ravindra Jadeja, Rishabh Pant and Mohammed Siraj.

He becomes the first Nottinghamshire cricketer to make the list since Chris Read was named among the five recipients in 2011, having led his side to the Championship crown.



Nottinghamshire's Wisden Cricketers of the Year

1890
1890: W Barnes
1890: W Gunn
1890: A Shrewsbury
1891: M Sherwin
1892: W Attewell

1900
1900: A O Jones
1903: J Iremonger
1904: J Gunn
1908: A W Hallam
1908: T G Wass

1910
1914: G Gunn
1914: A W Carr

1920
1924: W W Whysall
1927: H Larwood
1929: S J Staples

1930
1933: W Voce
1938: J Hardstaff jr

1940
1949: W W Keeton

1950
1950: R T Simpson
1955: B Dooland

1980
1980: D W Randall
1981: C E B Rice
1982: R J Hadlee
1986: R T Robinson
1989: F D Stephenson

2000
2008: R J Sidebottom

2010
2010: S C J Broad
2010: G P Swann
2011: C M W Read

2020
2026: H I Hameed

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Our Business Hub Features:

Paragon Law

Paragon Law is a specialist UK immigration firm, established in 2003 and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. Focused solely on immigration law, it advises businesses and individuals on complex matters with clarity and commercial awareness. Its Corporate Immigration team supports employers with sponsor licences, Skilled Worker and Global Business Mobility routes, compliance and workforce planning, while also assisting individuals and families with settlement, citizenship, family visas, appeals and human rights cases. Ranked top-tier by the Legal 500 and Lexcel accredited, it delivers technical excellence with a clear, supportive approach from its Nottingham and London offices.

Engage & Prosper

Human Clarity Architect is a framework helping individuals, organisations and educators strengthen thinking, communication and long-term impact. Built on the belief that performance and confidence stem from self-understanding, relationships and navigating complexity, it combines behavioural insight, neuro-inclusive practice and systems thinking to support leadership, career development and workplace design. It underpins initiatives such as the Career Confidence Collective and North Star–aligned programmes focused on agency and employability. Current work includes pilots and education partnerships advancing inclusion, early intervention and future-ready talent development at scale.

Smart Business Recovery

Smart Business Recovery was created to give business owners clear, practical support. Behind every struggling business, charity or partnership are people who have invested time, energy and money, so when rising costs, cash flow pressures, late payments, HMRC arrears or economic changes hit, the next steps can feel overwhelming. As licensed Insolvency Practitioners, we provide an impartial voice to explain your options, from recovery and restructuring to Members' or Creditors' Voluntary Liquidations. We also support retiring owners seeking a beneficial exit. With jargon-free guidance and an empathetic, professional approach, we help you plan next steps with clarity and confidence.

The Complete Approach

Imagine being the P.A.T.H. that shapes ambitious strategies and turns them into reality. That's what we do, helping organisations strengthen performance and grow with clarity. For over two decades, we've supported businesses transforming operations, developing plans and connecting with the right investors. We help owners scale, build tailored AI automation and lead generation systems, and create value-focused exit strategies. Clients rely on our ability to listen, understand goals and deliver practical insight. Our approach gives founders clarity, confidence and direction to achieve sustainable growth.

Derbyshire County Cricket Club

Situated in the heart of the UK, The Central Co-op County Ground is ideally located with excellent transport links, making it a convenient choice for your next event. Our conference and event spaces offer stunning panoramic views of the cricket ground. Recognised as one of Derbyshire's most versatile venues, we can host up to 300 guests with ample free on-site parking. From meetings and conferences to team-building days and celebrations, our indoor and outdoor spaces offer something unique. We create tailored packages to suit your needs, ensuring your event runs seamlessly.

The Cyber Resilience Centre

The EMCRC is a police-led, business-focused partnership between universities and organisations, improving cyber resilience across the East Midlands. Membership provides guidance, training, support, and a network of businesses committed to reducing online risk. Members can connect with cyber security providers to achieve Cyber Essentials or Cyber Essentials+ certification. EMCRC offers Cyber PATH services—from website vulnerability checks to staff training and policy reviews—and promotes Police CyberAlarm, a free tool to monitor malicious activity. Our mission is simple: helping businesses protect themselves against cybercrime.

Balance: Wealth Planning

Balance Wealth Planning is an award-winning financial planning firm serving clients across Nottingham, Lincolnshire. Our experienced advisers take a goals-based, holistic approach, helping individuals and families understand where they are today and what their future could look like. We provide clear, straightforward advice on investments, tax efficiency and planning for life's uncertainties, turning complex financial matters into simple, actionable plans. Recognised as one of the UK's Top 100 Financial Planning firms for seven years, we focus on helping clients achieve financial independence, retire with confidence and build a sustainable lifestyle for the long term.

John Harlow Insolvency

Harlow Insolvency provides clear, practical and compassionate commercial advice when it matters most. Based in Leicester and supporting clients across the United Kingdom, the team brings over 80 years of combined insolvency and recovery experience. If you're facing creditor pressure, cashflow issues or early signs of distress, early conversation leads to better outcomes, so Harlow Insolvency offers a free, confidential consultation. The approach is straightforward and supportive, explaining options clearly so you can make informed decisions. From rescue and restructuring to orderly wind-downs, the team combines technical expertise with a human touch to protect value, reputation and future prospects.

Stratagem IIS Limited

Stratagem IIS Limited delivers intelligent strategies that help businesses and commercial property owners save money and unlock income streams. Founded in 2013 by Managing Director Ian Patrick, the company uses deep expertise and a national network to identify opportunities for clients. Based in North Yorkshire, the team works with leading financial partners across the United Kingdom to provide a professional, transparent, results-driven service. Its work covers grant and loan funding, capital allowances, property tax relief, R&D and Patent Box relief, energy and water solutions, pensions, employee benefits and invoice finance. It offers a no-obligation, risk-free service to uncover new income opportunities.

NSM HR Consulting

Nazma Mulla FCIPD is an HR Consultant and Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development with 20 years' expertise in people strategy, organisational transformation and HR governance in the UK and Canada. As founder of NSM HR Consulting, she works on a fractional and project basis to strengthen governance, conduct HR audits, resolve people challenges and design scalable HR solutions. Nazma is known for identifying risks, simplifying complexity and giving actionable recommendations. Her senior roles shape her commercially minded, people-focused approach. As a Catena member, she supports leaders to strengthen compliance, navigate change and scale confidently.

Benton Communications

With over 25 years' experience in internal and external communications, Communications Consultant Rachel Benton works with leaders and teams to shape strategies that deliver impact. Her portfolio includes communication audits, insight gathering, strategy and change communications, event messaging, and newsletter creation with ongoing support. Whether you need fresh perspective, a trusted sounding board, or hands-on delivery, Rachel can help. If communicating with your people feels new or evolving, she'll guide you to build clarity, confidence and long-term capability.

PAB

PAB delivers practical communication solutions that help organisations reduce misunderstandings and connect with confidence. By combining human expertise, AI technology, and language services, PAB removes communication barriers and unlocks growth potential. From award-winning translations in over 200 languages and face-to-face interpreting, to intercultural training and 24/7 AI-powered multilingual support, PAB helps organisations operate confidently across borders and cultures. Accredited with Cyber Essentials Plus, ISO 9001:2015 and ISO/IEC 27001:2022, PAB is trusted across the UK for quality, compliance and a results-driven approach.

About U Transition

U Transition Ltd specialises in leadership coaching and development, focusing on core drivers of performance, retention and culture: soft skills like communication, empathy, self-awareness, resilience and collaboration. Founders often face the cost of firefighting instead of leading. We start with the person in the mirror, helping leaders create clarity, set expectations and shape culture to have braver conversations, build clear communication and grow teams that own outcomes. Through the BraveTalk Academy, ASCENTS pathways, Top Team Tune-Ups, coaching and bespoke programmes, we deliver evidence-based, practical, human change that lasts.

Our Lifestyle Hub Features:

Cowens

Cowens helps individuals and families achieve financial confidence through clarity, protection, and informed decisions. Our integrated approach combines mortgage advice, insurance, and protection planning, ensuring every decision fits your lifestyle and long-term goals. We specialise in residential and buy-to-let mortgages, life, income and critical illness cover, home insurance, and holistic protection. Clients value our clarity, responsiveness, and ability to simplify complex decisions, while we provide support through all life stages. Cowens exists to deliver one simple goal: protection, prosperity, and peace of mind.

Swings Golf

Swings Golf is a modern, tech-led venue making golf more accessible and engaging for all abilities. Whether refining performance, trying golf for the first time, or hosting a corporate event, it offers a premium, welcoming space to practise, play and connect. Powered by TrackMan IO, it delivers tour-level data, immersive simulation and interactive games that remove traditional barriers. Swings Golf also offers flexible corporate hire and membership options, ideal for client entertainment and team building. With coaching from TPI-qualified professional Cameron Murry, it provides a performance-driven yet social golf experience.

Belvoir Educatioin & Sports Trust

The aim of the Belvoir Education & Sports Trust (BEST) is to 'inspire children to lead happy, healthy, active lives through sport and countryside education'. We work throughout the year in schools and in the community and host unique Cricket & Countryside Education Days on the Belvoir Estate. We actively target disadvantaged groups such as children of low-income families and SEND youngsters Since we were founded in 2009 we have reached over 47,000 children. In 2025, we engaged with a record 5,419 primary school children and youngsters with special educational needs and disability (SEND) in the East Midlands.

TBA Executive Search & Management Consultancy

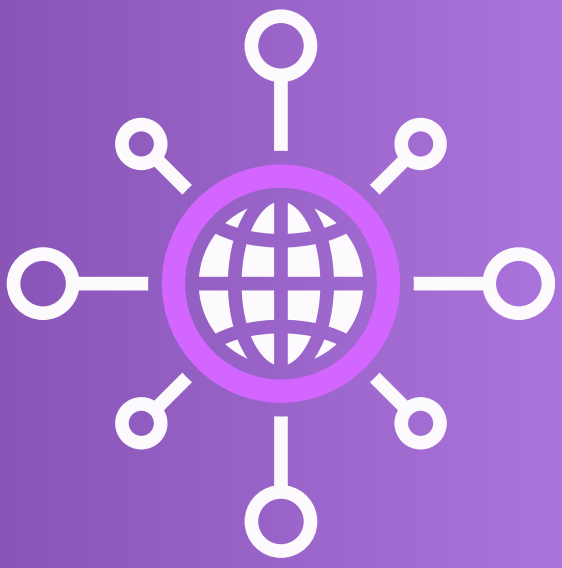
For over 36 years, Mike Butler has led TBA Executive Search & Management Consultancy, delivering strategic executive recruitment, retention and leadership coaching to strengthen organisational performance. Through partnerships with Empowered and Coaching on the Go, TBA supports employee satisfaction and retention, helping organisations build productive, healthy workplace cultures. Mike is known for tailored executive search strategies that meet diverse client needs. As a Non-Exec Director and Chair of Transform Trust, he helps guide 28 schools. He also chairs Nottingham Sea Cadets, supporting young people to develop resilience, teamwork and leadership skills.

Nottinghamshire Hospice

Nottinghamshire Hospice is a local charity providing vital care for adults with terminal or life limiting illnesses, as well as support for their families and carers. Our mission is to help people live as well as possible and die with dignity, choice and comfort at home. Last year, we cared for 1 in 4 people who died in Nottinghamshire. Our services include Hospice in Your Home, wellbeing sessions in the community, and free bereavement support for anyone who needs it. All care is free, however much of our funding comes from community generosity. Support can include fundraising, partnerships or taking on a challenge event.

Leicestershire County Cricket Club

LCCC offers a unique and versatile venue for conferences, meetings, networking events and private celebrations in the heart of Leicester. Located at the iconic Uptonsteel County Ground, the club provides a range of flexible event spaces with pitch views, modern facilities and on-site parking. Whether you're hosting a small board meeting, a large corporate event or a special celebration, our experienced team will help create a memorable experience for your guests. Alongside venue hire, the club also offers matchday hospitality, corporate memberships and partnership opportunities, giving businesses the chance to connect, entertain and engage in a truly distinctive setting.



Feature Your Business In One Of Our Hubs

Want the opportunity to showcase your business in our Lifestyle Hub or Business Hub? This is your chance to get your brand in front of a wider audience, including professionals, decision-makers, and local businesses actively looking for new products and services.

Simply send over a short 100-word description of your business, your website link, and your logo. We will review your submissions, and your company could be selected in our next feature. This is a great way to increase visibility, build credibility, and connect with people who are already engaged with our community.

Email or get in touch on the below for more information:

claire@catena-network.co.uk

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