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Innovation: What does it mean to you?

Innovation in its modern meaning is “a new idea, creative thoughts, new imaginations in form of device or method” (Wikipedia).

But is that what innovation means to you?

We hear term innovation floating around, which is often described as an ‘overused buzzword’, but in business, innovation and smarter working is of utmost importance to keep ahead of the game.

Innovation can mean many different things, to many different people, businesses and organisations, so we’ve asked a variety of Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce members to tell us what innovation means to their business.



Ellie Lowe, Lincoln University Technical College, a college for Science and Engineering.

“Innovation is about coming up with new ideas and finding better ways to operate, and the notion of always striving to be new, different and better which is at the heart of how Lincoln UTC operates. Innovation is the bread and butter of an engineer.

All of the objects that we rely upon throughout our daily lives have been designed and made by engineers.

“Our curriculum and timetable are very different from what you would find in an

‘ordinary’ school. Students are given much more opportunity to work collaboratively on projects that develop creative and innovative engineering skills that prepare them for life in the real world.

“Some of our young engineers have recently entered a number of new eco-friendly product designs into the school’s challenge at the Lincolnshire Show. Included among these was a novel approach to beekeeping, which is vitally important for the agri-food business so dear to the hearts of Lincolnshire, as a result of this we were invited to speak at an international conference in Hong Kong.

“Innovation is the core of Lincoln UTC and by encouraging our students to develop questioning, logical minds we ensure that they are fully prepared for the next step of their chosen career.”



Will De Ath, Tapkit, a company delivering interactive experiences for the physical world.

“When you’re looking to innovate, I think you should always strive to make something 10 times better than the previous alternative.

“In order to do this, it’s better to be



Innovation is the core of Lincoln UTC

on the cusp of the curve of a technology which is growing at an exponential rate. This way you’re using it to its greatest advantages to radically improve the way that you solve a problem at such a high rate, and at just the right time.

“At TapKit, we operate under this mindset and it has allowed us to think far greater than we could’ve ever imagined before. This is something I think is clear in one of our newest software products, Everfund, where charity donors can tap their phones using contactless technology on practically any physical point in the real

world to then make one-off and monthly digital donations directly to a charity with gift aid processed automatically. This is saving charities an immense amount of time and money when trying to collect and process donations.

“Radical 10x innovation over 1 per cent increases in efficiency is worth doing as it has the potential to positively impact and improve the quality of an immeasurable amount of lives, and I think that is exactly why you should always strive for it.”

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BBQ Birthday Bash

It's our 130th anniversary and we want to celebrate it with you!

8th August 2pm - 5pm

Charlotte House Hotel
Lincoln, LN1 3BJ

Book via our website!



Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce
The Ultimate Business Network

130 Years
of supporting
Lincolnshire businesses

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A note from Simon Beardsley CEO of Lincolnshire Chamber

Welcome to July's edition of Chamber Matters and our focus is on innovation and what this means to some of our members, as we hear from Tapkit, Lincoln University Technical College, SproutBox and Micronclean.

Over the coming months, we are looking forward to many opportunities to network, learn new skills and meet new contacts, with local events across Lincolnshire.

In May, we saw the Chamber turn 130, we have such a rich history and some of you may have seen lots going on across our social media platforms, but our big Chamber birthday celebration will be our Birthday BBQ Bash on 8th August at Charlotte House Hotel and we'd be delighted to welcome our members to celebrate with us.

Also in May, we hosted our first Quarterly Economic Survey Breakfast Briefing, which sparked some very interesting conversations and food for thought from some of our members, we will be holding these each quarter to keep our members informed on the current Lincolnshire economic climate.

At Lincolnshire Chamber we are proud to support our members in many areas and more recently have met up with many of you at our sector forum meetings and Lincolnshire Show, where many of our food, drink and hospitality members enjoyed a very successful show.

Keeping in touch with our members is a top priority for us and we are always really pleased to see all your success stories, whether it be an award win, a new starter or a new service offering, it's all great news.

Innovation can mean many different things

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Taking a slightly different and much more sustainable and environmental focus to innovation is Kate Plumb, SproutBox, a dedicated one-stop shop for all things sustainable in the home space.



"Without doubt innovation is needed to help fight climate change and it is essential that we limit our carbon footprint through sustainable design without compromising the quality.

"At SproutBox we have a holistic approach, looking at both the built environment and the consumer home environment, with one simple overlying goal to reduce our carbon footprint.

"So where can we start? Energy is the most obvious one, our buildings need to evolve in accordance to climatic conditions. Where technologies are integrated in the design stage, for example, solar technologies, with photovoltaic and thermal roof system hybrids, we need to look at our building materials in some instances the reusing of existing materials, such as reclaimed floorboards, but also a mix of more sustainable building materials such as mycelium. In the home environment SproutBox is using a mix of rescued vintage, up-cycled lighting and furniture, and contemporary products utilising sustainable materials.

"In the end buildings always take energy and resource to build. Our ethos at SproutBox to design good architecture, that is adaptable and built with quality and environmentally considered materials so that our buildings quite simply stand the test of time and throughout their lifetime adapt to the inhabitant's requirements.

"Good design is the key to a sustainable future, we design holistically, with joined up thinking. This includes consideration for environmental and landscape design, infrastructure and communities to provide innovative and environmentally responsible architectural solutions."



Mike Webb, Micronclean, a specialist supplier of workwear rental and laundered cleanroom garments.

"Micronclean has a track record for innovation and introducing disruptive product such as our unique Trigger Spray bottle but in order to continue to flourish and own our future we have to embed innovation in our Business culture.

"Micronclean is the largest family owned laundry business in the UK and has



Will De Ath of Tapkit

been owned by one family for three generations. The current owner and chairman Simon Fry is very much hands on as he pilots the business from its current turnover of £32m, to his aspiration of a £100m business in 2027 by adhering to the principles defined in our Purpose Statement.

"At Micronclean, our passion is to be the first to develop new technological solutions that change the shape of the markets we serve creating quality and efficiency for our customers".

"Micronclean is unusual in that it has a dedicated discrete RD&T Unit but the key to mobilising our purpose statement



Simon Fry, Micronclean

is to ensure that innovation and creativity is everyone's responsibility and not just a function of the RD&T unit. As a result, Micronclean formed the Creativity Support Group who have a responsibility to support creativity sessions throughout the business. The group is formed from people across every level within the company who have been trained to facilitate creativity and innovation sessions but the original request for a session must come from outside the group.

"To get the process moving short creativity sessions were held at each of the three company days we ran in February. These sessions generated around four hundred ideas which have now been sifted and graded with the key ideas being worked on now."

Charlotte Watson, Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, said: "We can see here that the meaning of innovation varies dependent on the industry you work within, but with a few common themes running across them all; collaboration, implementation, passion and positive change.

"Ultimately, as well as innovation focusing on new and creative ideas, it's also about working smarter and recognising when something doesn't work anymore or isn't working as well as it once did and putting those innovative changes in place to ensure that process works smarter for the greater good of the business.

"There is scope for all businesses to innovate, if you are looking for ways to help, check out our Collaboration 4 Growth project here: <https://www.lincs-chamber.co.uk/projects>

College hosts Chamber members

Businesses from across the county toured conferencing and corporate entertainment facilities during a session to discuss training solutions.

Lincoln College, a Patron of the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, showed employer guests its training facilities, along with its conferencing suites, Escape Rooms, Gym and Spa and digital training centre.

Lincoln College Director of Business Development and Partnerships Mark Taylor said he was delighted to host so many employers at the networking event. "Whenever we show people around and talk to them about our training options they are always surprised about the range of services we offer to businesses. We have a great restaurant they can use to entertain clients and they can use our Escape rooms for staff development days."

Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce Head of Business Development Nicola Johnson said: "As Patrons of the Chamber,



we work really closely with Lincoln College. Our Lincoln Business Network provided a perfect platform to further promote the facilities and services they are currently offering not just to students, but also to employers and the wider Lincolnshire business community."

Award-winning agency grows PR team

Lincoln-based digital marketing agency, Distract has bolstered its PR team with the addition of Andy Clowes as a Digital PR Executive.

Andy, who graduated from Leeds Beckett University last year, offers a new perspective on PR with the combined knowledge from his degree in Public Relations with Journalism.

Managing Director at Distract, Peter Watson, says: "2019 continues to be a big year for Distract. Andy is going to make a big impact within the PR team and we're looking forward to seeing what new ideas we can create with him on board."

The award-winning agency now boasts 15 members of staff, covering paid search, paid social and digital PR.

Head of PR, Mike Shields, added: "I'm very excited to welcome Andy to the team. Having started the department in January this year we're already seeing impressive coverage for a wide range of clients."

Commenting on taking the new role, Andy says: "I'm delighted to be joining



Andy Clowes, Distract PR department

the Distract PR team at a time of new growth. It's an exciting time for PR at the moment, and Distract is finding new ways of making the sector exciting."

Almond Financial top performer



New Lincolnshire Chamber member Almond Financial Ltd has been named as one of the top-performing financial specialists in the East Midlands.

The brainchild of Director Samuel Robinson, Almond specialises in pension management and retirement planning. The firm has just been named as finishing 14th in the East Midlands following an internal report by Intrinsic, out of more than 250 firms. This is based on the number of clients helped within the first quarter.

Sam Robinson said: "We're delighted to have been placed 14th in the region. For a firm so young and competing against companies that have many more advisors,

we feel strongly that this shows our innovative approach is working."

This news comes following Almond Financial's launch last year, where the company raised more than £1,200 for the charity CALM – Campaign Against Living Miserably.

Sam added: "Our focus is going to be on customer service first and foremost. Our bespoke offering works so well because we have close working relationships with all of our clients.

"We can't wait to see what the rest of 2019 brings."

Launched in 2018, the company is based in commercial offices at The Point, close to Lincoln's Teal Park development.

Eminox delivers exhaust solution to new LNER Hitachi Azuma fleet



High-performance exhausts specialist Eminox has provided key components to LNER's new Hitachi Rail hybrid electric and diesel Azuma trains, which entered service last week. Part of a major investment in the East Coast Mainline, they are the first new trains on the route in 30 years.

Working with Hitachi Rail, Eminox has created and manufactured specially designed exhausts and insulated pipework for LNER's entire 65-locomotive fleet. Modelled on the Japanese bullet train and assembled in the UK, they will initially operate between London Kings Cross and Leeds, before being rolled out across the LNER network.

Eminox has worked with Hitachi since 2014 and has supplied over 550 systems, many of which are already in service on trains operated by Great Western Railway and TransPennine Express.

Hitachi chose Eminox for the project due to its concept-to-manufacture capabilities, expertise and experience in exhaust and emissions control, and strong track record.

"As a Lincolnshire business we're delighted the Azuma fleet will be passing through the county, showcasing our local design and manufacturing expertise to the world," said Cyril Journoux, Original Equipment (OE) Sales Director, Eminox.

Chamber welcomes Begbies Traynor as patron

Leading insolvency specialist, Begbies Traynor, has become the latest patron of Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce.

Operating nationally but with an office in Lincoln, Begbies Traynor provides independent professional advice and solutions in corporate recovery and restructuring.

Commenting on the recent partnership is, Gareth Rusling, Partner at Begbies Traynor, said: "We are absolutely delighted to become a Patron member of the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, recognising the strategic importance of the Chamber and its key role in supporting the Lincolnshire business community."

"As we have recently opened an office in Lincoln, we are keen to raise awareness of our services locally and work more closely with the Chamber and its members to support the growth of Lincolnshire and the business community."

Simon Beardsley, Chief Executive of the Chamber, said: "It's fantastic to have Begbies Traynor as our newest patrons, bringing to the Chamber skills and expertise in their respective field.

"Patrons are such a driving force in economic growth and development in our area and key to equipping smaller

businesses with the knowledge and skills that are vital to their future and we are really looking forward to developing this new relationship through 2019 and beyond."

The Chamber has eight other patrons, including University of Lincoln, Anglian Water, Duncan & Toplis, Lincoln College, Lincoln City Football Club, Siemens, The Lincoln Hotel and Lincolnshire Cooperative.

If you are interested in becoming a Patron of the Chamber, please get in touch on 01522 523333 or email enquiries@lincs-chamber.co.uk



Gareth Rusling, Begbies Traynor and Simon Beardsley

DBS Internet Marketing is UK's Employer of the Year



DBS Internet Marketing in Navenby are celebrating after they fought off competition from more than 100 UK-wide applicants to take the coveted Employer of the Year prize at the FSB's Celebrating Small Business Awards 2019 in London in May.

Founder and Director David Clarke handed over all the shares in the business to his employees in 2017 and DBS became the first 100 per cent employee-owned company in Lincolnshire – a fact which impressed the award judges.

DBS Director Julie Priestley and her colleagues Matthew Rayner and James Hopkins received the award from Julie Lilley, Chief Executive of the Federation of Small Business.

After winning the award Julie said: "Our business is service-based and so relies on our employees to give the best service to our clients. By investing in our employees and giving them a vested interest for the business to do well we can give the best customer service to help our clients succeed."

Director David Clarke added: "For me, it makes great business sense to reward the very people who have helped to build DBS. Now that the whole team has equity, we have an incentive to grow the company even more."

DBS won the Employer of the Year award at the East Midlands heat of the Celebrating Business Awards in Nottingham in March, which qualified them for the national final in London.

Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance flies its 20,000th mission

The Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance has reached a significant milestone after flying their 20,000th mission on 12th May, just hours before celebrating the Charity's official 25th birthday.

The week marked the Charity's 25th Anniversary, with the crew airlifting their very first patient on May 13, 1994. Today, the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance provides a high-quality Helicopter Emergency Medical Service, able to deliver advanced clinical procedures, including roadside open chest surgery, anaesthesia and blood transfusions directly at the scene of an incident.

To mark the Charity's silver anniversary, the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance hosted a celebratory event on Monday 13th May for special guests at the Fire and Rescue Training Ground in Waddington. The event was attended by Charity ambassadors, clinical crew, Trustees and former patients who have been helped by the service over the last 25 years.

Karen Jobling, Chief Executive Officer at Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance, said: "This is one of many landmarks for us this year, and we are incredibly grateful for the



wonderful support we have received to keep our Ambucopter flying. Without their generosity, we would not have been able to make such a significant difference to so many people's lives."

The Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance receives no direct Government funding, meaning they rely solely on the support of the local community to raise the funds they need to keep their helicopter flying. Each potentially life-saving mission the crew are called out to costs approximately £2,500.

Support local children living in challenging environments

Local charity Lincolnshire Action Trust (LAT) asks for help to make the summer holidays more enjoyable for children affected by a family member's problematic drug or alcohol use.

The charity's Young Oasis project is currently providing support, guidance and encouragement to 58 Lincolnshire children aged five to eighteen.

Following the success of its campaign at Christmas, when the team was inundated with gifts thanks to the generosity of several businesses, LAT has launched a similar appeal for the summer.

"The school holidays can seem especially long for the young people accessing our service, we want to

give them things to look forward to," explains Senior Young Oasis Practitioner Kim Thompson.

LAT is keen to hear from anyone who is willing to donate tickets for any activities and days out such as the cinema, wildlife parks, restaurant vouchers or even a safe space for crafts and games.

Kim said: "Engaging the children in enjoyable activities not only provides them with some much-needed respite but will help them to build self-esteem, mitigate feelings of isolation and – most importantly – have fun."

Businesses interested in donating can contact Debbie Harris at LAT on 01522 806611.



The young oasis team. Angela Wildman, Kim Thompson, Laura O'Sullivan and Sue Jarrett

Solicitor appoints new head of children's law

The partners at Ringrose Law are delighted to announce the promotion of Costa Kyriacou to the Head of the newly formed Children Law department. This is the first in a number of announcements concerning the Children Department.

Costa has grown our involvement in Children Law significantly over the last 18 months, particularly in Lincoln where he is based. He has become a familiar, trusted and respected Solicitor in the Children Law arena and has worked on some of the largest and complex cases in the County recently. He now manages all six of Ringrose Law's offices across Lincolnshire and into Nottinghamshire.

Costa said: "Ringrose Law has always held a very strong reputation for family

work and Children law within the County. The newly reorganised team bring with them a wealth of knowledge and expertise, coupled with our ongoing Legal Aid contract we are often the first choice Solicitor for such matters"

"I look forward to taking on this challenge moving forward and building on the strong foundations we already have and thank the partners for having the confidence in me to do so."

This announcement is part of a recent internal restructure of the Family Department at Ringrose Law. This department continues to grow and to offer even greater specialism to their clients.



Costa Kyriacou

Sales up by 3.4% at Lincolnshire Co-op

Community retailer Lincolnshire Co-op has seen sales grow by £5m to £165m this half year, with a strong performance by the society's food stores leading the way. Total sales in the six months to 3rd March 2019 went up by 3.4 percent compared to the same period last year.

Sales growth has enabled Lincolnshire Co-op to invest in valued services and new developments across its trading estate - using green power and focusing on reducing energy use.

The Society has invested in energy-saving technologies like LED lighting and

building management systems in food stores.

Large-scale property developments progressed in the half year with Lincolnshire Co-op's Cornhill Quarter development in Lincoln city centre welcoming new businesses including coffee roaster and wholesaler 200 Degrees, cookware retailer Lakeland and clothing shop Seasalt.

Lincolnshire Co-op's Chief Executive Ursula Lidbetter said: "Our sales performance shows the quality of our offer across a range of diverse businesses."

Lincolnshire Co-op needs you

Do you want to shape the future of a busy, multi-million pound business - and give back to the community at the same time?

Lincolnshire Co-op is looking for talented and experienced individuals to stand for election to join its Board of Directors, and it couldn't be easier to start your journey.

As an elected member of the board you'll help oversee the running of the Society and build strength for the long-term, all to make life better in our local communities.

Lincolnshire Co-op President Reverend Barbara Hutchinson said: "We're looking for passionate people with specialist skills that could add to the expertise we have on the board already, particularly those with a finance or accountancy background. If you think this could be you, then why not get in touch?"

To register your interest and to find out more, simply visit lincolnshire.coop/joinourboard and complete the online form.

Selected applicants will be invited to an event to find out more about the role of the board of directors. Further shortlisting

will then take place, and final candidates who are eligible will have the opportunity to stand for election by the Society's members next May.

The Society recently welcomed new directors Nicola Berry and Richard Wills to the board following a contested election in May, which saw six candidates vie for five vacancies and over 4,000 votes cast by members.

Lincolnshire Co-op has 280,000 members in Lincolnshire and the surrounding counties and its elected Board of Directors represent their views. A competency framework for directors has also recently been introduced.



Lincolnshire Co-operative Lincoln AMM

Fancy a chat? Law firm develops 2nd Interactive Chat Bot

Sills & Betteridge LLP have launched its second online Chat Bot - this time to help employees with issues at work.

The Employment Law Bot provides users with information tailored to their circumstances in seconds and is accessed via the firm's website.

It is quick, easy and free to use, allowing users to select the area of employment law they wish to consider and asks questions in a short text message format to enable

them to apply the legal basics to their own situation. Where appropriate, the bot informs the user which statute the relevant law is set out under, provides information about time limits within which a claim must be brought and even suggests other causes of action that could also be considered.

Stephen Britton, Partner and Head of Employment Law at Sills & Betteridge, who helped create the Bot commented:

"We were very hopeful that this tool would work well for employment law. We are always available by phone or face to face if clients wish to take matters further but consider the bot to provide a very useful platform for initial information gathering."



Stephen Britton

Shooting Star enlists Google to help put businesses on the map

PR, marketing and digital agency Shooting Star, which has offices in Lincoln and Newark, is teaming up with Google to help businesses grow their presence online.

The agency will be hosting a free Google Digital Garage workshop at the Everyday Champion Centre in Newark in partnership with Newark & Sherwood District Council, Invest Newark & Sherwood and Robert Jenrick MP on 12th July.

The event will consist of three sessions covering social media strategy, an introduction to digital marketing and guidance on getting a business visible on Google. There will also be a networking session at the end of the day.

Kerri Saxby, Senior Account Manager at Shooting Star in Newark, said: "As a PR professional it was great to hear that we're delivering the most up-to-date services to our clients and the Google Garage training re-affirmed that for me."



Kerri Saxby

Now I'd like to help more businesses get access to this training."

The event is free to attend and refreshments and a light lunch will be provided. Places are limited to 80 and are available on a first come, first served basis.

Kerri added: "We want as many business and organisations as possible to benefit from this event, so I'm asking people to send just one representative." To book your free place and confirm any special dietary requirements, visit the Eventbrite page: <http://bit.ly/GoogleStar19>

Agency expands with new staff

Lincoln based inbound marketing and growth agency Digital Media Edge are pleased to welcome two new additions to their marketing team, Laura Gates and Sam Taylor.

Laura is completing her masters degree in Sports Journalism at the University of Lincoln. She said, "I can't wait to start learning more about the industry and the practical application of marketing whilst supporting our clients. Working with a diverse range of clients, planning and implementing effective campaigns for them using the latest software and tools is the part I am looking forward to most."

Sam Taylor is joining the team on a three-month internship to further develop his marketing skills, having just finished a Journalism degree at the University of Lincoln. Sam said "I am really looking forward to learning about different software, including HubSpot, providing great content and how to set up and manage a campaign for clients."

Digital Media Edge specialises in helping Lincolnshire business to grow through driving targeted website traffic, lead generation, customer acquisition, client engagement and helps companies offer a competitive advantage in a

connected world.

Richard Mawer, CEO of Digital Media Edge, said "Providing innovative inbound marketing and sales services to our clients is an obsession for the team at DME."

"Each client is unique, and we focus on their growth goals, challenges, gaps and timescales to plan out a measurable digital strategy for growth. Both Laura and Sam have gone through a rigorous recruitment and training process, they will be an integral part of our digital marketing team, providing innovative growth advice and support to Lincolnshire businesses."



Sam Taylor and Laura Gates

Online marketing experts expand

The successful Gainsborough marketing company Drumbeat Marketing have expanded into a second unit less than 12 months after relocating to the Pattern Store offices at Marshall's Yard.

The company, which has a team of seven, specialises in all aspects of online and digital marketing including Search Engine Optimisation, social media, e-commerce and web design.

They have now relocated their former Retford based company, Drumbeat Local to the unit next door. The move allows the team to offer a more cohesive marketing service to not only large international companies but also local smaller start-up



Matt Williamson and Chris Allbones

businesses, helping them with their social media, print, graphic design and e-marketing activity.

To find out more about Drumbeat Marketing go to www.drumbeatmarketing.co.uk

Long service celebrations

A senior accountant has recently celebrated working at Nicholsons Chartered Accountants for 15 years.

After taking early retirement from his long-term career with HMRC, Paul Grafham joined Nicholsons in May 2004. At this time the firm was based in the city centre but moved out to Weaver Road a few months later.

Paul started as a Tax Senior and has taken on a varied and increasing portfolio of personal tax cases and clients over the years. Since joining Nicholsons he has been able to put

Paul Grafham

experience from working with HMRC and has specialised in dealing with 'benefits in kind work'.

Paul says "Over the years I have seen many changes and none so much as the people I have worked with. I enjoy working with my colleagues who have also been supportive."

When Paul is not at work, he likes to dedicate some time to his on-line business where he deals with collectable model railway items.

Paul also enjoys his rail travel, visiting historic buildings and playing his guitar.



Local video production company launch team introduction advert

Local video production company, Wallbreaker, have just launched a new and exciting advert that introduces their team, explains their video-making process and showcases their unique and creative approach to video production.

The award-winning agency specialises in results driven video marketing campaigns and offer services including TV and social media adverts, content marketing, corporate videos, drone recording, conference filming and event highlight videos.

The business has recently turned five years old and relocated to a new office on Doddington Road, Lincoln and decided to market their new video shortly after.

Creative Director at Wallbreaker, Luke Winter, said: "For our new advert we wanted to do something different and memorable. Our previous adverts have all been centered around a seasonal theme, whether it be Halloween or Christmas and following the success of these campaigns we wanted to create something that



The production team

celebrates Wallbreaker, what we do and how we do it differently."

The team filmed the advert on some of the most high end cinema cameras and equipment before editing it in house. Lead Editor at Wallbreaker, Ronnie Bushell, said: "We often find that clients don't realise just how much work goes into a video project."

Check out Wallbreaker's latest process video here: <https://wallbreaker.co.uk/about/>

Midlands universities awarded £6m mental health contract

The Midlands Engine has awarded £6.8m of Government funding to a consortium of health professionals, academics and business leaders to improve mental health and productivity in the workplace.

Headed up by Midlands Enterprise Universities partner Coventry University, the consortium will launch a pilot scheme to find innovative ways of reducing levels of sickness absence and the number of people falling out of work because of mental health conditions.

Midlands Engine Programme Director Fiona Piercy said: "Mental health has a huge impact on productivity with 15.4 million working days lost every year due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2017/18. This pilot is a fantastic opportunity for the Midlands to find new and proven ways to support people with mental health conditions to remain in work and be effective in their roles."

Professor Guy Daly, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Health and Life Sciences at Coventry

University, said: "Over the next three years, the Midlands Engine Mental Health Productivity Pilot will engage with over 1,600 businesses, train 45,000 staff and offer a free online resource that aims to reach one million people."

The pilot will focus on the early identification of mental health problems and how mental health specialists can work more effectively with businesses and mental health providers.



Guy Daly

Two new hires for marketing and design agency



Chris Leontiou, and Nicole Purdy

Lincoln based marketing and design agency Purple Robot has hired two new designers to support the business' growing client base across Lincolnshire and the UK.

Nicole Purdy joins as a Graphic Designer, having previously been a designer at cosmetics firm Beauty Boulevard. A former winner of Apprentice of the Year at the Lincolnshire Business Awards, Nicole brings several years of design experience.

Nicole said: "I'll be supporting the growth of the design side of the business, helping companies to really stand out from the crowd with attention grabbing, professional graphic design."

Also joining the company is Chris Leontiou, taking on the role of Marketing

Intern. He will be bringing his expertise in design as well as his passion for learning how marketing and design work together.

Chris said: "I'm really excited to get out and work in the industry after university. The team at Purple Robot are really friendly and helpful. I've learned so much already and I'm looking forward to seeing what I'll be able to produce over the coming months."

Founder and Managing Director of Purple Robot, Damien Howard-Pask said: "I'm thrilled to be welcoming Nicole and Chris to the team. Both of them have really impressed me with their skill and passion. The coming months will see even more big news for our business with another major step forward."



New Partner at Wilkin Chapman

With a wealth of experience in employment and commercial law, Richard Parnell is welcomed as a new Partner at Wilkin Chapman solicitors.

Richard's career has grown within the county as he has progressed from trainee, through to senior solicitor and partner level – now joining the region's leading law firm as a Partner within the highly-regarded Employment team.

A keen follower of all sport, he enjoyed a working life in the field of employment law before undertaking a Master's degree in Sports Law. This led him to step out of private practice for a time, with experience as the first Head of Legal at the newly promoted Lincoln City FC.

Of his time at Lincoln City, Richard reflects: "It was wonderful to be there at such a successful time, which saw the club first promoted back into the Football League, and then to promotion to League One this season."

His new role at Wilkin Chapman comes at a time when Richard has also embarked on a PhD, in which he is examining the classification system within Paralympic sport.

Welcoming Richard, Partner and Head of Employment Teresa Thomas said: "We are delighted that someone with Richard's experience and breadth of knowledge has joined our progressive team."

Pop-up store a great success

The St Barnabas Hospice pop-up charity shop in the Waterside Shopping Centre was originally planned to stay until April, but due to its overwhelming success was asked to remain until the end of May.

Caroline Peach, St Barnabas Hospice Head of Retail, said: "Dean and the team from the Waterside have been so welcoming and helpful. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my team of staff and volunteers who have tirelessly worked together to make the pop-up shop a success. This will not be our last 'pop-up' shop, as we intend to travel the county with this initiative."



How LORIC is changing the way Lincolnshire businesses use data

Having only launched in September 2018, the Lincolnshire Open Research and Innovation Centre (LORIC) has already transformed the way several organisations across the county do business. From designing insight-led business strategies, to using data and research to empower companies, in less than a year LORIC has guided multiple socially-conscious organisations across Lincolnshire to investment and innovation.

One example is Every-One, a charity that supports unpaid carers and the people they're responsible for.

Utilising open data, LORIC's Open Research Fellow, Katya Bozukova created a calculator that shows companies why it's

important to support unpaid carers in the workforce. The calculator is one-of-a-kind in the industry, but Every-One hopes their success with the tool will inspire similar organisations to adopt their own version.

Another business who has received support through LORIC is the Acts Trust, a charity whose goal is to end poverty in Lincoln.

LORIC's Data Analyst, Kay Purle educated the charity on which datasets would be most beneficial to their projects.

To find out more about LORIC's services, or how they can use data to boost your business, visit their website www.bishopg.ac.uk/loric/loric-home/ or email loric@bishopg.ac.uk.

No business sector is immune from recruitment difficulties

Recruitment intentions were strong in the first quarter of the year but nearly 75 per cent of firms reported a shortage of suitable candidates, according to the landmark publication of the Quarterly Recruitment Outlook released today (Wednesday) by the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) in partnership with Totaljobs.

To help businesses better understand the recruitment climate in the UK and help them find the best talent, the BCC partnered with Totaljobs to survey more than 6,000 businesses across a broad range of sectors. The Quarterly Recruitment Outlook will provide a temperature check of recruitment in the UK every three months.

The inaugural report finds that businesses are showing strong hiring intentions overall, although there were sector and location variances. However, recruitment difficulties are prevalent across all categories.

The results show that half of business-to-business and business-to-consumer companies (49 per cent respectively) tried



to find staff in the previous three months. The construction sector showed the strongest appetite for labour growth, with 65 per cent of respondents attempting to recruit but four-fifths of those struggled to find the right people.

Reflecting the ongoing difficulties in the sector, retail businesses were the least likely to have grown their labour force in the past three months or to expect to grow it in the coming three months. In the hospitality industry, 60 per cent of firms had attempted to recruit in the previous quarter but reduced access to lower skilled workers was the main cause of recruitment difficulties.

According to the findings, firms in the

Midlands and the North of England are more likely to have attempted to recruit and expect their workforce to expand than firms in the South of England.

Over 900,000 jobs have been advertised on Totaljobs in the first three months of 2019, signalling confidence among employers across the UK. Notably, the thriving job markets in the North and Midlands have been met with a 39 per cent increase in adverts listed in Manchester, 47 per cent increase in Birmingham and 33 per cent in Leeds over the last two years.

While the labour market remains resilient, with employment levels standing at record highs, skills shortages are acting as a drag on business growth and potential. As the report highlights, labour shortages are affecting firms of all industries and locations across the UK. To future-proof the economy, ensuring business has access to the right people is critical.

BCC and Totaljobs believe that Brexit has been a distraction for both government and business for too long, and now is the

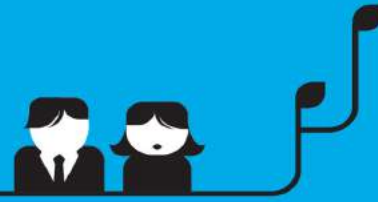
time for a renewed focus on improving the UK's training system as well as supporting firms to invest in people and training. In addition, the leading business group is also calling for the government to ensure its future migration system allows for access to people at all skills levels without heavy costs or bureaucracy.

Claire Walker, Co-Executive director at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said: "There is clearly an appetite among firms to grow their teams but we're seeing significant problems across the board with companies struggling to find the talent they need."

"Getting the UK's skills system fit for purpose, reforming the apprenticeship levy, and unlocking untapped segments of the labour market will help deliver a pipeline of talent that companies are so hungry for."

Patrick Wehrmann, CEO of Totaljobs, said: "Just last year, employers told us that they believe Brexit will worsen the skills shortage. What is apparent is that continued uncertainty has done little to abate these concerns."

Welcome to our new members



Stadia Utilities
www.stadiautilities.com

Healing Manor Hotel
www.healingmanor.co.uk

Flowers By Suzanne
www.flowersbysuzanne.co.uk

MRSM Recruitment Limited

NB Proofreading Service

Digital Media Edge
www.digitalmediaedge.co.uk

Almond Financial
www.almondfinancial.co.uk

InvestSK
www.investsk.co.uk

Space 22

Charity Events



AS A CHAMBER MEMBER I'M WELL CONNECTED

Duncan & Toplis renew Lincolnshire Chamber patronage

Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce is delighted to announce that Duncan & Toplis have renewed their patron membership for another year.

This renewed patronage marks the third year of partnership between the Chamber and the East Midlands accountant and business advisers.

Commenting on the partnership is Mark Taylor, Tax Director at Duncan & Toplis: "Continuing our patronage for the third year with the Lincolnshire Chamber was a natural decision to make. We have a great presence across Lincolnshire with eight of our 11 offices situated in the county. We have strong connections with leading businesses in the area, so it makes sense to keep building those relationships with the community through the Lincolnshire Chamber."

"We're looking forward to continuing our work with the Chamber to connect with more businesses in the area and further afield with the Chamber's excellent national and international connections."

"At Duncan & Toplis, being an advocate for local business and the community is fundamental to our values, working



Simon Beardsley, Chief Executive of Lincolnshire Chamber and Mark Taylor, Tax Director of Duncan & Toplis

with organisations like the Lincolnshire Chamber enables us to continue this reach."

Simon Beardsley, Chief Executive of the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, said: "We are absolutely delighted to welcome Duncan & Toplis as patrons for the year

2019 – 20 marking the third year of this continued relationship.

"It's fantastic to see our business community expanding and diversifying, and we are looking forward to strengthening the relationship with the team at Duncan & Toplis."

Events

QES Breakfast Briefing

9th July 2019
Time: 7.30am – 9.30am
FREE
Location: Commerce House, Lincoln

Construction and Property Network

16th July 2019
Time: 12.30pm – 2.30pm
Member Price incl VAT: £13.20
Non-Member Price incl VAT: £24.00
Location: Windmill Farm, Lincoln
Sponsored by Duncan & Toplis

Chamber Birthday BBQ Bash



8th August 2019
Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Location: Charlotte House Hotel
Member Ticket incl. VAT: £36.00
Non-Member Ticket incl. VAT: £54.00

Save the dates for our annual events:

Select Lincolnshire Awards on 19th September at Lincoln Minster School

East Lindsey Business Awards on 27th September at Woodhall Spa's Petwood Hotel.

For more events and bookings, please see our events page: www.lincs-chamber.co.uk/ or call the team on 01522 523333.

South Holland Business Awards

The South Holland Business Awards are back again for another year and are taking place on the 14th November at Springfields Conference & Events Centre in Spalding.

The awards will celebrate the outstanding achievements and the very best in business across the South Holland business community.

Eight awards are open for entry until 7th October and Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce are encouraging businesses in South Holland to enter in the following categories:

- Apprentice of the Year
- Business of the Year
- Business Innovation of the Year
- Business Person of the Year (in memory of Phil Scarlett)
- Excellence in Customer Care
- Food and Farming Business of the Year
- Small Business of the Year
- Supporting the Community

Tickets for this event £40 + VAT for members and £50 + VAT for non-members.

Visit www.shb-awards.co.uk



All the winners from the 2018 South Holland Business Awards with the event's host, BBC Radio Lincolnshire's Melvyn Prior