



BUSINESSWORKS

Winter 2023 Hull and East Yorkshire

HIRE GROUND

How Sally Wray has found the tools for success

RAISING THE BAR

Great Newsome's Matthew Hodgson brews up a storm

A SOCIALIST APPROACH TO PERSONNEL

'I'm more left-wing than Corbyn,' says Novum's Tom Simpson



A FORCE FOR GOOD

John Good Group CEO Adam Walsh on his vision for the sixth-generation family firm

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WELCOME

Where has this year gone?

For me, this feels like the fastest 12 months I've experienced in my life so far. They say that's a sign of age, but it's also more than likely because I've been busier than ever before. Time flies when you're constantly working!

I've often smiled wryly at BW's regular "Self-care Sunday" social media posts because I rarely take this magazine's own advice – it's not often that I properly disconnect from work at weekends. I didn't even fully switch off when I went on holiday in October for the first time in 18 months, as there were bits and bobs that I just had to keep an eye on.

But I think it's about what works for you – if being away from things would cause you far more stress, then it's perhaps best that you don't disconnect entirely. If you can keep things ticking over with a sangria in one hand, then that's a million times better than not taking any sort of break.

In an ideal situation you'd have your systems and processes properly written down somewhere, and not just in your head, so a deputy can pick up your work when you're away – but of course this isn't always possible for some entrepreneurs, especially when starting out. You are often your business. Ultimately, though, you do need an exit plan. As I learned on the FEO 360 course a couple of years ago, much as we like to think we're unique, we're almost certainly not the only people who can do our jobs – so let go to grow. Who knows, you might find someone who is better at your job than you!

However, if you enjoy what you're doing, and it hardly seems like work, then crack on, I say. I've long come to realise that I thrive on always having a fair bit of stuff to do. I will, however, be taking a break over Christmas – which is when I book a solid week of lazing on the settee in front of the darts, necking good ales and dipping into the Celebrations.

Times are still tough out there, though, especially for hospitality, and it's hard not to ignore the general feeling that the world's gone insane. All we can do is keep on keeping on, maintaining a positive attitude and rolling with the punches – which is certainly what our entrepreneurs in this issue are doing. As ever, I hope you enjoy reading their stories and I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous new year.

Sam Hawcroft,
BW Editor



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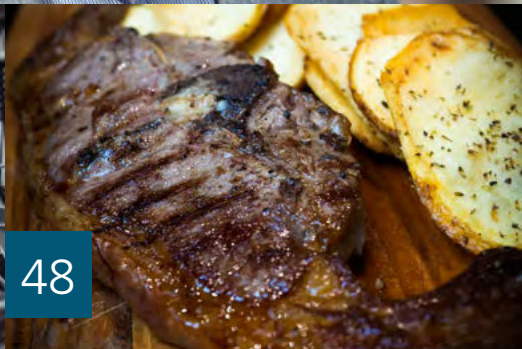
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Christina Colmer McHugh: A Pioneer in Mental Health, Emotional Resilience, and Technology

In the realm of mental health and emotional resilience, Christina Colmer McHugh has emerged as a visionary creator, leveraging technology to revolutionize the way we approach these critical aspects of well-being. Her innovative work has not only empowered individuals to navigate their emotional challenges but has also paved the way for a more inclusive and accessible approach to emotional health support.

HARNESSING PEOPLE POWER AND LIVED EXPERIENCES: THE RISE OF BRILLIANT NEW EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE TOOLS

In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, technology has become an integral part of our lives. However, it is not just about convenience and efficiency anymore. Technology is now harnessing the power of people and their lived experiences to create brilliant new emotional resilience tools. These tools are revolutionising the way we cope with and overcome emotional challenges.

One of the most significant ways technology is harnessing people power is through crowdsourcing. Online platforms and communities allow individuals to share their personal stories, struggles, and triumphs. By connecting people with similar experiences, these platforms create a supportive environment where individuals can find solace and learn from one another. This collective wisdom helps in developing emotional resilience tools that are rooted in real-life experiences, making them more relatable and effective.

Technology has also facilitated the creation of peer-to-peer support networks, enabling individuals to connect with others who have faced similar emotional challenges. These networks provide a safe space for sharing experiences, offering advice, and providing emotional support. By leveraging technology, these networks can reach a wider audience, breaking down geographical barriers and ensuring that no one feels alone in their struggles. The lived experiences shared within these networks serve as a foundation for developing tools that address specific emotional resilience needs.

Gamification, the application of game elements in non-game contexts, has emerged as a powerful tool for enhancing emotional resilience. Technology has allowed the development of interactive apps and platforms that gamify the process

of building emotional strength. These tools engage users through challenges, rewards, and progress tracking, making the journey towards emotional resilience more enjoyable and motivating. By incorporating elements of competition, collaboration, and achievement, gamified emotional resilience tools tap into our innate desire for growth and self-improvement.

Virtual reality (VR) technology has opened up new possibilities for emotional resilience tools. VR therapy allows individuals to immerse themselves in simulated environments that replicate real-life situations, triggering emotional responses and providing a safe space for practice and growth. By exposing individuals to controlled and guided experiences, VR therapy helps build emotional resilience by gradually desensitizing them to triggers and teaching coping mechanisms. This technology

harnesses the power of lived experiences by recreating scenarios that resonate with individuals' specific emotional challenges.

I hope you agree that today's technology is transforming the way we approach emotional resilience by harnessing people power and lived experiences. Crowdsourcing, peer-to-peer support networks, gamification, and virtual reality therapy are just a few examples of how technology is revolutionising the development of brilliant new emotional resilience tools. By leveraging the collective wisdom and experiences of individuals, these tools offer innovative ways to navigate and overcome emotional challenges in our modern world. Humans can only continue to enhance the emotional resilience of us all, as a society, if we embrace technology, rather than criticise it for its shortcomings. ●





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Rescue is an
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established with the
support of the local
community, who
believe our services
are needed in a
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that attracts
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throughout the year

Some people really are lifesavers



Hornsea Inshore Rescue first became operational in 1994 as an independent lifeboat organisation and registered charity. Over the years it has saved hundreds of lives and developed into a multifaceted organisation dealing with water safety both at sea and inland. It is situated at the very end of Hornsea's South Promenade by the boat slipway.

It is fully self funding and relies on donations, grants and its own various fund raising activities. To this end it has become a fully accredited RYA training centre covering the following courses: RYA power boat handling levels 1 and 2. VHF/DSC Radio Course, RYA PWC (personal watercraft) Courses, RYA One Day First Aid Course, First Aid at Work Courses, one day Emergency First Aid Course with add ons tailored to your needs. The courses are run at our specialised boathouse facility by highly qualified instructors and we can even come to you!

Educational visits for children are very popular. They are tailored to fit the needs of the children depending upon the age group and teachers' requirements. They cover water safety with regard to both the sea and inland lakes and rivers. The children have lots of fun dressing up and enacting rescue techniques.

They also learn about the sea and the many species that make it their home.

Adults can enjoy the much acclaimed "Fish and Ships" dinners and lunches where groups of up to fifty are entertained to an illustrated talk about Hornsea Inshore Rescue's organisation and history along with lots of examples and anecdotes ranging from the hair raising to the amusing. The group is then treated to fish and chips delivered piping hot from Hornsea's National Award winning fish and chip restaurant and the visit ends with a guided and informative tour of the Boathouse, Lifeboat and equipment including the chance to dress up as a lifeboat crewmember.

Hornsea Inshore Rescue also runs the adjacent "Hornsea Boatlaunch" boatyard with its quirky little cafe and a lovely outside eating area as well as an upstairs lookout. Here you can sit and enjoy the amazing view of the bay. It has a selection of hot snacks and lovely cakes, Mr. Moos ice creams, teas and coffees and other hot and cold drinks. All of the profits going to Hornsea Inshore Rescue to ensure it can continue its work to save lives.

The volunteers of Hornsea Inshore Rescue look forward to ensuring you have a lovely time and a memorable visit. ●



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Is your business ready?



For the past few years, telecom network providers like KCOM and BT, have been moving all the UK voice networks over to VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). These major changes are well underway, and your business needs to understand how these changes will affect your communications – doing nothing is now not an option! seriously, it's not an option!

Most of the existing copper landlines across the UK are no longer fit for purpose - they were never designed to cope with the demands the modern world puts on them, and they were certainly never built to carry high-tech broadband services! Businesses who currently rely on ISDN or analogue lines for their communications, will need to upgrade or replace their current telephone systems to allow the calls to route over the new internet protocol.

A key factor to consider when you're switching to VoIP: Is your internet connection good enough to deliver a business grade VoIP service whilst still coping with the day to day running of your business's IT data demands? Across the UK, the Government's broadband initiative 'Project Gigabit' aims to enable businesses and homes access to superfast speeds. By 2025, broadband companies will have laid enough fibre to go five times around the world, connecting 80% of the country. Thanks to the collaboration between the commercial sector and the Government, over 77% of homes and businesses in the UK now have access to gigabit capable broadband, a huge leap from January 2019 when it was just 6%.

Here at Cobus, we have always prided ourselves on recommending the best solution to suit your business needs whilst considering

the features, the infrastructure, and the price, as well ensuring we future proof your business with the chosen platform, after all we have been established for over 32-years, so we do know a thing or two about telephony, communications, and technology. Reducing the overall telecoms costs is a main priority for most businesses, and being able to increase call features and functionality means it's a win-win for organisations looking to upgrade and gain additional benefits. Most new office phone systems already support VoIP, but if yours doesn't, you can either replace your phone system with an IP system or switch from a fixed, on-premise phone system, to a cloud-based Hosted telephony service.

Most of the eligible UK market has already switched over to a VoIP/SIP solution as it provides several key benefits including: -

- Reduce operational costs, typically by up to 50% or more.
- Increase the mobility and productivity of staff.
- Easier deployment, configuration, and maintenance.
- Scalable and flexible, allowing individually tailored growth..

If you want to make savings on your current telephone line rental and call costs, or your telephone system is out of date and not offering you the new features, options, or reliability that's now in the marketplace, then now is the right time to review your options and switch to VoIP, SIP or Hosted technologies. Make the change now (before the network is switched off!) and contact our dedicated and award-winning team today on 01482 2256661 ●

Tigers Sport and Education Trust

Voluntary Opportunity - Trustee

The Tigers Sport and Education Trust is the registered charity affiliated with Hull City Football Club. The Trust works across the communities of Hull and East Riding delivering a range of programmes, activities and opportunities to individuals aged 2-80+ years, driving our Vision 'Inspired and integrated communities, living active, healthy and happy lives' and delivering positive outcomes and impacts.

We are proud of the guidance and support our valued Trustees have continued to provide throughout a changing landscape, particularly following the pandemic years. The Trust has recently undertaken a strategic review and have identified an opportunity to strengthen our Board by seeking a maximum of two more passionate trustees who can contribute to the Board and reflect The Trust values.

This is an exciting time to join the Trust and you will help us continue our important

journey. Aligned to our strategy, you will be committed to helping us make a difference with an understanding of the valuable role charities play in communities.

The role of the Board is to ensure the vision for the Trust and strategic objectives are achieved, and trustees are responsible for overseeing and guiding our future growth and increased impact.

Candidates will be able to demonstrate a proven skillset and professional understanding gained in one of the following key areas: health & safety and/or safeguarding from a senior role from the private / public / voluntary sector. You will also be able to think creatively and strategically and have the skills and personality to challenge current thinking at a Board level.

The Trust considers the current Board of Trustees is unrepresentative of the local

community population it serves. We therefore welcome applications from under-represented groups, including but not exclusive to young people, Black and Ethnic Minority groups and the LGBTQIA+ community. ●

For more general information about the Trust please see <https://www.tigerstrust.co.uk/> or you would like to speak to someone in more detail about the role, please contact Sean Royce (Chair) or Catherine Bishop (CEO) by emailing sean.royce@tigerstrust.co.uk or catherine.bishop@tigerstrust.co.uk.



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A force for Good

John Good Group CEO Adam Walsh tells Sam Hawcroft how the sixth-generation family business is focused on reinvesting in its own operations – as well as its charitable foundation

Adam Walsh was always the team captain in school sports – and leading people to success has been his ambition ever since.

He's always had an entrepreneurial spirit, not that he likes to call it that – entrepreneurs never do – but since graduating with a marketing degree in 2006, Adam has been a leader in everything he's done.

"I've always been interested in growth and change," he says, "and taking on responsibility or authority has always been something that has come naturally, regardless of in work, life or sport. I think those ingredients have been in me for a long time, and if I'm honest, I thrive in those situations." ►



When he graduated, he was drawn to the oil industry and says he was fortunate to join the Leeds-based family business, the Bayford Group, which was on a big growth trajectory. An early mentor was its chief executive, Jonathan Turner, once described by the Yorkshire Post as the county's "swashbuckling entrepreneur".

"It was a brilliant environment to learn," adds Adam. "They were superb at giving young people opportunity. Throwing people in the deep end was a big part of their culture. And, after a couple of setbacks, I learned confidence in my ability to think and work out problems and really try to go for it and do something a bit different."

Adam moved through the ranks in several marketing and commercial roles before his "big break" – being appointed director of the Right Fuelcard Company in Leeds, later becoming group managing director and then chief executive.

"That was really my first leadership role," he says. "The business was in a bit

of a mess when I first got involved. They'd bought a business but hadn't made the most of it and needed someone to turn it around. For me, it was continuing on from the Bayford environment – that entrepreneurialism, throwing people in the deep end – and I was able to properly leave a mark on a business for the first time. We went on an amazing run. It's definitely, to this point, a career highlight."

How did Adam achieve this turnaround? Crucially, he had a vision for the business, which was the starting point, along with identifying the strengths of the people working within it, which in turn allowed him to pinpoint the gaps.

"One of the crucial parts of building a high-performance team is to get people to be brilliant at one thing rather than being OK at a few," Adam says. "We brought in sales and marketing infrastructure and made a significant investment into service and account management – but making sure that everybody aligned with the

vision was the secret sauce in all of that, ensuring that everybody contributed up the line and that everyone was incentivised in the same way."

A steep curve followed, during which the company went from about 20 staff members to nearly 100 and to making about £5 million profit before acquiring sister companies in the Bayford Group and becoming a £300 million turnover company almost overnight. It was eventually acquired by the French company Edenred, with whom Adam worked for just less than a year.

"It's fair to say PLC life wasn't for me," he says. "It just wasn't an environment that got the best out of me. I then moved roles to another organisation, looking for something that gave me the same feeling as I got from the Right Fuelcard Company, but, to be honest, I didn't find it. That was when the entrepreneurialism started kicking in, and Driving Down was founded."



Adam teamed up with some former colleagues to launch firm Driving Down, a fuel consultancy based in Leeds. Despite this, Adam still rejects the entrepreneur tag. "I don't think of myself as an entrepreneur. I have entrepreneurial tendencies, but I don't mind working for other people. A lot of entrepreneurs say one of the worst things they could think of is working for someone else. I don't have that fear. My drive is about working with people, helping them go on a journey."

After a year with Driving Down, things had bedded in, the business was growing well, and Adam had taken a less hands-on role – this is when the opportunity to join the John Good Group came along.

Major owner Tim Good and chairman Stewart Oades are men after Adam's own heart – they knew what they wanted and what they didn't. "Tim and Stewart were looking for a chief executive who wanted to take hold of this business," says Adam. "They were very clear on that. They're both passionate about certain elements but, ultimately, they wanted me to grab the business and run with it. That was really important."

The role suited Adam down to the ground because it was a role that combined purpose and performance – the goal was to ensure the company went from a sixth-generation business to a seventh-generation, as well as reinvesting profits back into its operations and its charity arm, the Matthew Good Foundation.

"The business is very focused on its social impact, so it's a different and powerful way to work," says Adam. "That appealed strongly. Last but not least, it was a business in a similar position to the Right Fuelcard Company in that, operationally, they were very competent, but they lacked some of my skill sets: strategic planning, sales, marketing, and some commerciality across the group's businesses. When you put those things together, it was the perfect opportunity for me."

When Adam joined the John Good Group – whose diverse companies include travel, maritime, warehousing, logistics, and property divisions – in January 2022, it was during a period of change.

"The group had recently sold its largest trading business, Good Logistics, which was about 200 of the 300 headcount of the group at the time, so it was a pivotal

moment in our history. Not only did the trading business go, but all the group's central infrastructure went too – the leadership team, finance, HR, IT, marketing, etc. When I landed at the group level, I was employee number three. I describe it almost as the UK's oldest start-up because it had 190 years of history while being a blank canvas to rebuild and align around the vision of Tim and the board of directors."

Nearly two years on, things are moving in the right direction, says Adam. "The early signs are good. Is it perfect? Absolutely not. But are we on the right path? Yes."

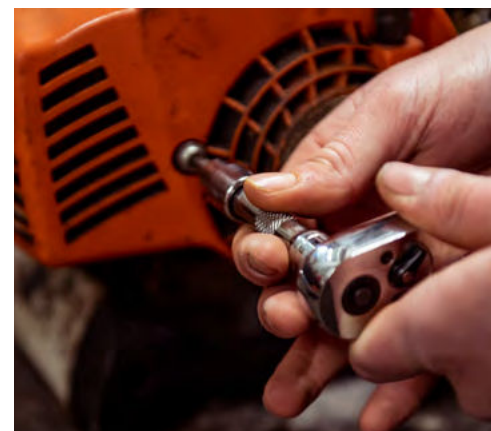
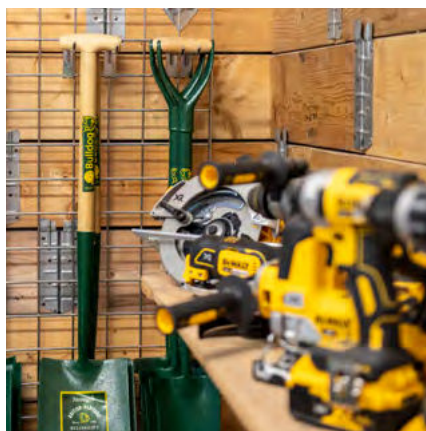
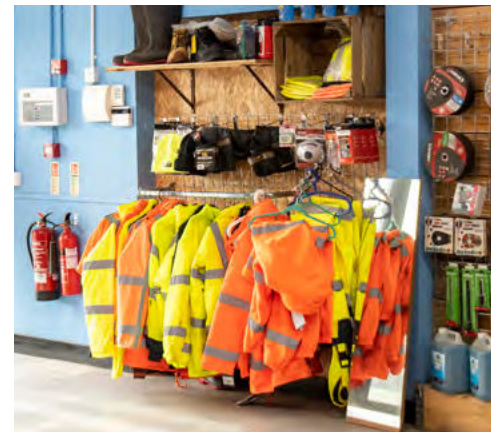
The impact of the pandemic and Brexit have inevitably been mixed – the maritime division emerged relatively unscathed because it was part of the supply chain, but the travel business was "decimated", and the haulage business has felt the effects of the rise in energy and oil prices.

The group's social impact is something Adam is keen to highlight. "There are a lot of better-known businesses in this region

than the John Good Group, and I feel we're off people's radar, but that'll change in time. We're one of only a few organisations whose whole purpose is directly aligned to deliver additional profit straight back into the business or into charitable endeavours via the Matthew Good Foundation. It's a thrive and grow strategy, with the results of that meaning we can increase the scale of our social impact, Tim's ultimate aim."

The Matthew Good Foundation, set up 11 years ago, is named after Tim's brother, who died aged just 32 after collapsing less than a mile from the end of the 2011 Humber Bridge half-marathon. For understandable reasons, its focus in the early days was on sports medicine, but it has evolved to encompass communities, the environment, and helping support initiatives in developing countries – the three things that "excite and energise Tim", Adam says.

The key to "putting a rocket" under the foundation's social impact is the involvement of other third-party businesses, ►



who can use it as a platform to achieve their own philanthropic ambitions. It's an area Adam and the team are keen to push in the coming year.

"My job is to make sure we're growing successful businesses that have profile – people understand why we're here and

what we're trying to do," Adam adds. "All of that helps to build a greater awareness of the John Good Group and the Matthew Good Foundation. That doesn't just mean externally. Internally, you also need the teams to understand their roles and make sure they're aligned with our purpose and level of ambition. Once everyone understands their roles, you can start to accelerate and move things forward at pace."

The third important "P", after people and performance, is "planet", and John Good Group is now operationally carbon-neutral – not an easy thing for the industries it operates in. Things are by no means perfect on this score, though, Adam admits. "We've got several reduction workstreams that we're starting to roll out over the next couple of years to reduce our carbon impact. We've also got a lot of work to do with our customers because while we are operationally carbon neutral, our non-controllable scope three emissions are 100 times the group's operational carbon impact."

What about the fourth P – planning? Perhaps surprisingly, Adam isn't someone

who lives and dies by spreadsheets and to-do lists. "I have a strong sense of direction, but I'm lighter on detail. I have people around me who are heavier on detail in their fields, and that's why the team works. The team are clear on the plans. We do a process every year to update our budgeting and strategic plans. That brings together all the detail and planning by function and operation. But me, I'm quite a high-level guy. I'm about themes. I love turning strategy into operations and the change management that comes with that. But it's the teams that handle the detail."

So... what's Adam's vision for the next few years? "I think we'll have two or three divisions in their own right that will be bigger than the group is today. I also think we'll have diversified further and look at the emerging markets. Renewables would be a key one, but our strengths in B2B service businesses are also transferable."

And it may seem a while ahead yet, but Adam is already thinking of the "200-year view" – the next big anniversary for the John Good Group in 2033. Now that's visionary... ●







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The Tigers Trust Wellbeing Fund enables people who may otherwise struggle to engage with and participate in physical activity and Trust delivery, to do so

Tigers Trust host annual 'A Question of Sport' 2023 fundraiser



On the evening of Thursday 9th November 2023 the Tigers Trust (Charitable arm of Hull City Football Club) proudly hosted their highly anticipated third "A Question of Sport" night at the MKM Stadium, drawing in a sell-out crowd.

Compered by Alex Burgess, three spirited panels engaged in friendly competition throughout various sports-themed rounds, including the lively charades, a rapid-fire question session, and the timeless 'Home or Away' challenge.

The team of current players featured Hull City defenders Jacob Greaves (making his third 'A Question of Sport' appearance), Sean McLoughlin, and Andy Smith; while the coaching trio of Andy Dawson, Justin Walker, and head coach Liam Rosenior formed an exhilarating panel of coaches. On the legends panel, the formidable duo of two-time promotion winner David Meyler, club icon Ian Ashbee, and the legendary Jason Price provided a nostalgic touch.

Between the rounds, the stage welcomed Kasper Newby, a Premier League Kicks Inclusive participant and valued match ball assistant, along with the Headteacher of Broadacre Primary School, Mr Mackinder, where the Trust deliver the Premier League Primary Stars Programme. Mr Mackinder eloquently conveyed the profound impact the

Tigers Trust has on the primary school and how many children who have lived in Hull all their lives, had never seen the MKM Stadium before Tigers Trust brought them along this year on a school trip. For some children it has ignited a hobby and new love for Hull City Football Club and for all children it was an experience they would forever remember.

Amidst suspenseful battles, infectious laughter, and excitement, it was the legendary trio of Ian Ashbee, David Meyler, and Jason Price who emerged triumphant, securing the coveted trophy and local sporting bragging rights for the night.

The event was kindly sponsored by local company ATR Building Services and the Tigers Trust would like to pledge a special thank you for their generous support which raised valuable funds for the Wellbeing Fund.

The Trust were pleased to double their fundraising totals from last year's event and consequently, will be able to provide more opportunities, support and physical activity to children, young people, adults and individuals with disabilities across Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire.

Please visit www.tigerstrust.co.uk to keep updated with upcoming fundraising events, highlights from this years' Question of Sport evening and information of all Tigers Trust sessions and community work. ●

LEADING GIN DISTILLERY BUSINESS GOES ON THE MARKET



An award-winning business has gone on the market with the owners promising would-be buyers the chance to purchase a lifestyle experience.

Emma and Simon Pownall are highlighting the exciting variety of products and profile-raising events that await the new owners of Hotham's Distillery – and high on the list is the front-page coverage in BW.

Simon said: "We've had a great time. We were interviewed on BBC TV, we were on *Four in a Bed* on Channel 4 and we were on the cover of BW Magazine. For months people were sending us that picture. It was in the dentist's, the solicitors and the garage!

"I've run businesses elsewhere and what's special about Hull is how the business community works together. It becomes a support network. Everybody is there to help everybody else and I haven't seen that in any other city."

The couple launched the business in 2018 running it from home until they were able to move into their first premises in Hepworth's Arcade. A move to The 55 Group's building in Whitefriargate doubled the space and provided a platform for significant growth in terms of gin school class sizes and new products.

Less successful was expansion to Leeds only days before the pandemic hit, but that site closed last year and now the focus is purely on the Hull operation and its habit of racking up prestigious awards.

Emma said: "People were coming to gin school and suggesting that rum would be the next big thing so we tried it and vodka followed straight from that. Then we came up with Bodka – a uniquely Hull thing – and then mango vodka for the summer.

"We have won three REYTAs and got a highly commended. We also got a silver in the Visit England New Tourism Business Awards and we are one of the top hospitality businesses in the UK based on our Tripadvisor reviews and three consecutive years based in the top 10 per cent of hospitality businesses in the world."

Now the couple are exploring new projects, but first they'll be delivering a comprehensive support package for whoever takes on the Hotham's lifestyle.

Simon said: "It was always part of the plan to build something up to the point where we could sell it on as a whole package and we made the decision to do that sooner than we had anticipated.

"We have struggled to find the time to tackle all the commercial opportunities including markets, which have a lot of potential but which don't really match our skill set.

"We know where the opportunities are that we have not yet capitalised on and we're halfway through a five-year lease which gives the buyer a decent amount of time to take things forward. The package includes full training from us so they can continue in the way we have or they can bring in their own ideas and put their own mark on it." ●

Six benefits of having a business coach

If you are serious about growing and improving your business, then hiring a business coach can be a wise investment.

A good coach can help you to achieve your goals faster and more easily than you could on your own.

Six benefits of having a business coach:

1. **Clarity and focus:** A business coach can help you to get a clear focus on the goals for your business and how they align to your personal goals, and to develop a plan to achieve them.
2. **Accountability and support:** A business coach can provide you with the accountability and support you need to stay on track and make progress towards your goals. They can also help you to overcome challenges and setbacks.
3. **New perspectives and ideas:** A business coach can provide you with new, impartial perspectives and ideas on how to grow and improve your business.
4. **Improved decision-making:** A business coach can help you to make better decisions by providing you with objective feedback and advice. They can also help you to consider all of your options and to identify the best course of action.
5. **Increased confidence and motivation:** A business coach can help you to build your confidence and motivation. They can also help you to overcome self-doubt and limiting beliefs.
6. **Overall business success:** Studies have shown that businesses with coaches are more likely to succeed than those without coaches. Coaches can help businesses to grow faster, increase their profits and improve their overall performance.

Phil Ward is a seasoned business coach with real life experience of starting, establishing and selling businesses and has helped 100's of business owners increase their sales and profits, achieve a better work-life balance and regain their spark.



HIRE GROUND

Things have certainly not been easy since **Sally Wray** decided – almost on a whim – to buy a tool rental company, but she's learned to roll with the punches, writes *Sam Hawcroft* ►

EUK.com



Sally Wray had always harboured entrepreneurial ambitions – but it took her a long time to realise them.

As it does with many people, the attraction of a secure, though unspectacular, position, kept her from taking the plunge and going it alone, yet she was to find that it was very much a case of better late than never.

Sally began her career as a legal assistant at Hull City Council. “It was almost like being a paralegal, but without the qualification,” she says. “I never really got the opportunity to do the qualification, and to be honest, when I first went into it I thought it’d be really glamorous... a bit like it is on the telly!”

It turned out to be anything but. There was little room for creativity or progression, but Sally stuck with it for just over a decade because of the security the job gave her. “The council does look after you – you get a good package,” she acknowledges. But after she had two of her three children, she went part-time – which, Sally says, proved to be the beginning of the end of her time at the council.

“I found I had less and less to do, because being part-time meant others were taking the work that I had while I was not there.”

Then the authority made a round of cuts and Sally was among those who were offered voluntary redundancy. “I took it, and my redundancy package was about £9,000. I vowed that I would turn it into a million! So I spent a bit of time at home to have a think and figure out exactly what it was that I wanted to do.”

Her husband Gav was working in the oil and gas industry at the time, which gave Sally a bit of time and space to ponder her next steps – but nevertheless, even though she had the relative luxury of being able to sit at home and do nothing, this was the last thing she wanted to do. She needed to “keep her brain ticking”, so took a casual job in adult education as a learning mentor at East Riding Council.

This was in 2012, which wasn’t a great year for the British economy (but, in hindsight, positively rosy compared with now). “The majority of people coming in were men in their 50s who had been in work all their lives, and they weren’t very

“*“I really do enjoy my job, and I’m really ambitious. I’m keen to keep growing for as long as I’m enjoying it.”*”

happy because the jobcentre was sending them to me and telling them they needed to do English, maths and IT, which they called ‘functional skills’. I can’t think of a more patronising term for people who have worked and been successful all their lives, and then find themselves out of a job through no fault of their own, to come and be told to do ‘functional skills’.”

Sally suggested to her manager that they think about ways to help individuals get back into work; she thought the council could be innovative and set up a not-for-profit recruitment company. However, she was told “quite abruptly” that wasn’t what they were paid for.

She felt the same kind of disillusionment that she’d experienced working for legal

services, frustrated yet again by the lack of opportunity for innovation and creativity. And then a comment from one of her daughters stopped her in her tracks.

It was around the time Prince William married Kate Middleton, Sally says, and she’d been explaining to her children that marrying a “commoner” was a relatively modern thing.

“We’d been reading Cinderella and all those sorts of stories and my middle daughter was sitting on the bed. I could see there was a question brewing. She just said, ‘But when did Prince William rescue her?’ Then my eldest said, ‘You don’t need a man to rescue you. Sometimes you just have to rescue yourself.’”

Out of the mouths of babes, indeed. Sally went to bed with those words ringing in her



ears. "Sometimes you just have to rescue yourself... sometimes you just have to rescue yourself..."

"It was going over and over, and I made a decision. I thought, right, I'm going to change things now."

She didn't really know what she was looking for, but she knew she wasn't looking for another job. "I wanted autonomy – so that if I had an idea, I wouldn't have anybody telling me I couldn't do it. I wanted freedom."

It would be many months (and a fair way into that £9,000) before she came across a tool and plant hire company for sale. "I remember my husband coming home and I told him, 'I've got this really good idea. If we remortgage the house, I think we could have a chance. We might be able to do it.' And he was just like... what on earth are you talking about?"

Sally puts it down to a gut feeling that she can't quite explain. "When I first walked in it was kind of a backstreet, spit

and sawdust, run-down industrial estate with a tin roof. I just thought, 'Oh, I love it – it's brilliant.' But it wasn't brilliant. I don't know what it was. I don't know what was going on in my mind. It was the power of naivety at play, really strongly."

She stuck to her guns, took legal advice, agreed the price and everything began to fall into place. On first meeting the staff, though, the enormity of what she'd done began to sink in. "By that stage it was too late to start having doubts. I was already too far in to walk out. Not that I wanted to, really, I still believed in what I was doing – but it was just so daunting and frightening that the 'fight or flight' kicked in."

Being a relatively young woman in a male-dominated environment was also extremely challenging.

"I've had people come in and say, 'Hiya, love – is your dad about?' I could write a book on the comments and conversations I've had with men, and how I've been treated by men. The three staff were all

men, and all older than me. I very much felt like I needed them more than they needed me, and they ran rings around me. It was a really difficult period. But I didn't have a choice, I just had to make it work."

To do this, she quickly realised that the company needed to move premises if it was to improve its professional image and customer base, and along with that came a name change.

Relaunching as GoHire was a risk, as the previous company had a certain amount of history attached to it, but Sally felt the brand needed to be more dynamic and help drive the growth she was intent on achieving.

She spent the first months "wearing all the hats", working all hours, until she reached a stage where she knew she had to take another member of staff on to lighten the load. This proved the catalyst for an "upward trajectory" that enabled the company to take on a driver and a hire controller. ▶



They also reached a point where they needed more storage for their equipment – but, rather than just renting some units, Sally decided to buy a premises and put the GoHire name on it. She found an ideal place in Chamberlain Road, which would expand the company's presence into east Hull – but Covid put a major spanner in the works and the sale took well over six months to complete.

During 2020, a call came out of the blue asking Sally if she'd be interested in buying a tool hire firm in Grimsby. "I'd identified that as being our next location, and I thought, well, the timing's not great, but what an opportunity. It was like it was meant to be. We completed on the east Hull branch on October 30, having bought the Grimsby firm on October 1. So, as we got into November, suddenly, my whole world had shifted because I wasn't prepared for the busyness and how difficult it would be to manage three places in one go."

Sally is one of those people who finds it difficult not to work – and there have certainly been ups and downs along the way. "I really do enjoy my job, and I'm really ambitious. I'm keen to keep growing for as long as I'm enjoying it. There are really

high highs as well as really low lows – it's about learning to roll with it. I always try to be professional, do the right thing, and not compromise on my integrity – because that's the one thing no one can take from me. But it's my business and I know challenging times come with the territory."

The nature of the tool-hire industry is in itself fairly turbulent. "It's a bit of a money pit," says Sally. "You've got to spend a lot of money before you start seeing a return on it. Everything is a long-term game, you've got to manage your stock really carefully and at times you have to create value out of nothing."

Rising interest rates mean housebuilding has slowed down, which in turn has an impact on demand for tools, and consumers are being more careful with their cash, too. But one constant is GoHire's attention to customer service. "We're a relationship business that just happens to do tool hire. We really do care, and I think that's where we have been able to be a bit disruptive. It's a saturated market, and the majority of our competitors are multi-branch nationals with seemingly endless resources, people and power. But local independents tend to work really well together, and we realise that we

need to do this so we can stand strong in the market."

Now with a team of 21, Sally says her experiences have given her resilience and greater confidence in her abilities. She still battles with imposter syndrome – but then tells herself that she's taken the company's turnover from £80,000 to £1.6 million. And, following the major investments of 2020, the coming year will be one of consolidation, she says, "just to get everything running nice and lean. But my mindset is growth. As soon as I want to stop growing, I think it's time to sell."

While on paper the figures are an indicator of success, what really drives Sally is creating a "brilliant" company that people want to work for.

"I try to make sure that all the team are well looked after," she says. "Everyone has access to a counsellor, we have pizza nights together, and we're trying to be really flexible and supportive employers. These are the things that motivate me through the challenges. And I know it's cheesy, but what was it Rocky said in the film? It's not about how hard you can punch – but how many times you can keep getting back up." ●



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International Men's Day

International Men's Day, observed annually on November 19, serves as an opportunity to highlight and address issues facing men and boys while also celebrating their achievements and contributions to society

Its inception can be traced back to 1992 when Professor Thomas Oaster, the director of the Missouri Centre for Men's Studies, invited organisations in the United States, Australia and Malta to hold small events.

However, these received little attention and the day was not celebrated annually until 1999 when Dr Jerome Teelucksingh, a history lecturer at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago, revived it.

Dr Teelucksingh chose November 19 to honour his father's birthday and to commemorate a football event in Trinidad and Tobago which was aimed at promoting gender equality. His vision was to create a day that celebrated the positive aspects of masculinity and highlighted the importance of men's roles in society. International Men's

Day aims to promote positive male role models, not just celebrities and sportsmen but everyday working-class men, too.

This day emphasises several core objectives: promoting male health, improving gender relations, highlighting male role models and fostering gender equality. One of the critical aspects of this day is the focus on men's and boys' health, advocating for improved mental health and a better understanding of male-specific diseases such as prostate and testicular cancer.

Additionally, it seeks to promote gender equality by addressing issues such as men's and boys' social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and by highlighting the discrimination and challenges they face.

Another key facet of International Men's Day is the encouragement of men to lead by example in their communities, families and relationships, fostering positive values and respect towards all. It's a day that not only reflects on the struggles and achievements of men but also on the broader societal dynamics that shape male experiences.

Overall, the day plays a crucial role in fostering a balanced and open discussion about the diverse experiences and challenges men face, while also celebrating their positive contributions to society.

As BW marks this year's International Men's Day, leading local architect Alex Caruso tells us about his journey into business – which was certainly not been plain sailing... ●



*International
Men's Day*

Alex Caruso

Managing director and principal,
Alessandro Caruso Architecture and Interiors

'I've been on a truly extraordinary business journey'

To mark International Men's Day on November 19, Alex Caruso of Beverley-based Alessandro Caruso Architects told us his story

Since I can remember, I've been a part of my father's architecture business in Sicily, which sparked my passion for the industry. I went to study in Palermo where I had a serious motorbike accident – which was perhaps the catalyst for my career in design for wellbeing. Long hours confined to a bed brought my social life a halt, and I developed a genuine interest in healing architecture.

In 2001, I moved to Hull with my girlfriend, Amelia, who is now my wife and co-director. When I arrived, my language skills were poor and I faced less-than-appreciative attitudes from colleagues. While not explicitly racism, it was a glaring weakness that some felt compelled to highlight. However, with determination, I attended interviews offered in various cities, eager to showcase what I had learnt during my travels. With my ability to quickly sketch and visualise buildings, I could express myself more effectively with my pen than with words alone.

I didn't have anyone near me with similar experiences to learn from, and I wasn't always able to hide my frustrations from Amelia; I sought solace in my design work, daydreaming of creating transformative environments. I learned to embrace the ups and downs that come with any career.

From 2001 to the end of 2013, I dedicated my career mostly to one architectural practice, before I made the bold decision to run my own. In January 2014, it was born with Amelia's assistance. Like many others embarking on similar journeys, we started from our dining room table, armed with a laptop and the software I knew inside out. It was the beginning of something truly extraordinary.

From the start, we embraced technology. Through cutting-edge VR software, we can swiftly transform our ideas into tangible prototypes.

Our team now consists of experienced architects, designers, technicians and project managers, most of whom joined us as students. Mine and Amelia's differing backgrounds proved a definite formula for our growth, and over the years we have enjoyed working with apprentices from Italy, Poland, Pakistan, India and Middle East as well as the UK.

With a specialisation in the health and social care sector, we excel in designing innovative spaces for a range of facilities, including

health centres, hospitals, care homes and more. We also take pride in catering to the unique needs of dementia and mental health patients. One of our notable projects is the award-winning Allam Diabetes Centre at Hull Royal Infirmary, and we have achieved a 100% planning approval success rate.

We are passionate about pushing the boundaries of design, which we believe is key to creating outstanding buildings of lasting value. ●





*International
Men's Day*

Simon Burbridge

**Head of Sales & Marketing,
Nationwide Business Sales**

Yorkshire born and 'bread', Simon has business in his blood.

Born in Leeds, the son of a baker with a family business established in 1868, gave Simon a thorough comprehension of the core values of hard work ethic and business acumen.

Working in hospitality throughout the 90's in Yorkshire and London, Simon was fortunate to work for some of the most successful and forward-thinking organisations of the time. Quickly scaling the management ladder and managing his first bar and restaurant in London at the age of 22.

Simon opened his first business when he was 26 years old, 'The Nought E Food Company' in York in 2000, which he then sold in 2007, opening a wedding venue, outside catering company and finally a award winning restaurant in York.

The success of Simon's businesses much like baking the perfect loaf, is all about the best ingredients, excellent recipes, hard work with lashings of customer service on top!

In 2015 Simon made the decision to change career completely and became an estate agent in York, jumping in at the deep end, self-employed with a large

national brand. In order to stand out from the crowd Simon brought an extraordinary element of customer service into the property market where it all too often falls short of expectations.

This change of career at the tender age of 40 turned out to be 'the best thing since sliced bread' quite literally.

As a winner- of a national award for the best estate agent in the North of England, Simon soon started utilising his business knowledge to sell businesses in addition to residential properties.

The combination of running businesses for twenty years and understanding how to sell businesses brings knowledge and skill, enabling a tailored approach to every business scenario in its own unique fashion

After working with a large corporate business agency for two years Simon then decided it was time to shake up the industry and set up a challenger organisation...

Nationwide Business Sales was born in 2021 and has gone from strength to strength.

Buying and selling a business is very challenging for both the buyer and vendor, by understanding this journey from personal experience, the goal from the outset was simple, be honest, be flexible, approachable, work hard and deliver the best product available on the market.

The results speak for themselves and are plain to see, with over 100 businesses and properties currently on the market, worth over £80m across the whole country

'I absolutely love doing what I do best, having the opportunity to be really creative and think outside the box.'

'We have invested in the best marketing tools and equipment to deliver a quality product backed up with extraordinary customer service.' ●





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We catch up with Alan Gordon-Freeman of Sirius and find out about the support they offer business start ups and those wishing to expand

Sirius has been helping businesses succeed for over two decades



Over our 20 years of operation Sirius have financially assisted approximately 370 businesses which has helped create 1,750 jobs. In addition to that number, we also assist approximately 300 further individuals or businesses per year with our free, qualified, advice and support to either start up or grow their businesses. That's over 6,000 self employed or businesses!

Sirius, over the last 20 years has loaned over £3,119,000 to new and existing businesses to help with starting up and expansion. From this we have levered over £10,063,000 of traditional funding.

Over a 20 year period we estimate that we have helped well over 12,000 local people to set up their own business, grow or expand their business, or become self-employed. An accurate count of the jobs created is anyone's guess, but we would consider it to be over 15,000.

Here at Sirius, we have seen over 12,000 people on a one to one basis over the course of those 20 years.

We have also held over 400 workshops since starting in 1999, offering basic

book keeping, marketing and customer service advice.

We continue to mentor and support many of the businesses that we have helped over the years, even some of the larger ones who have been trading for up to 20 years.

Sirius is proud to provide free business start-up support, advice, and planning with qualified advisors

We offer free business start-up support, advice, and planning, and can help with market research, strategy planning to grow your businesses, business loans, help to get your business investment ready, and finance procurement. We will help with marketing and planning campaigns, cash flow and debt recovery, networking, encouragement, and introductions to 'the right' people for more help; in fact, anything we can to help you to make your business a success.

For free business advice and support, contact 01482 890146, email info@sirius-hull.co.uk or visit our website at www.sirius-hull.co.uk ●



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Just three months ago, Hull's premier live entertainment venue underwent an exciting rebrand.

We take a look inside Connexin Live

Looking back at three months of live music, entertainment and success



With a bold new vision and image, the venue has been taken to new heights hosting shows from iconic acts including Sean Paul, Noel Gallagher, Jimmy Carr and Mrs Brown's Boys. In the first three months alone, the venue has welcomed over 31,000 guests, and within just one month, garnered over 1 million social media impressions.

Connexin Live kicked off with a show from one of dancehall and reggae's most prolific artists, Sean Paul. As he performed to a sell-out crowd, the screens around the venue proudly displayed 'Welcome to Connexin Live'. Not only did fans get to enjoy the electrifying performance, but venue partners were treated to a private meet-and-greet with the star, offering an unforgettable experience. The pre-show party welcomed over 120 guests with a DJ and face painting, as well as local gold medallist, and Connexin Ambassador, Luke Campbell, in attendance.

At the heart of Connexin Live's continued success, and its future vision, is its new General Manager, Sam Ryder. Sam previously worked at the venue as Head of Operations, before taking tenure at York Barbican, retaining world-class events like the UK Snooker Championships, positioning the venue as a major player in York.

Sam said, "The first three months of being Connexin Live has been a fantastic experience for all at the venue. The shows we get here put us firmly in place as the premier venue in Hull and East Yorkshire, and having Connexin along for that ride is fantastic for us and them. Of course, this is only the start, and with 2024 set to be our busiest year ever I can't wait to see what this partnership can deliver going forward."

Connexin Live is already setting records, with Oasis legend Noel Gallagher smashing the record for the most tickets ever sold at the venue. This milestone is indicative of the venue's ability to attract major acts and fans, cementing its reputation as a go-to, must-play for world class entertainment. This is already proven with 13 events announced since reopening; including multi award-winning popstar Paloma Faith, as well as James Arthur, Jason Manford and Two Door Cinema Club.

With record-breaking ticket sales, world-class acts and a continued commitment to enhancing and elevating the guest experience, the venue is well on its way to becoming a cultural landmark in Hull. As it continues to evolve, Sam and the rest of the team are working hard to create even more unforgettable moments for fans, solidifying the venue's place in the heart of the city's live entertainment scene. ●

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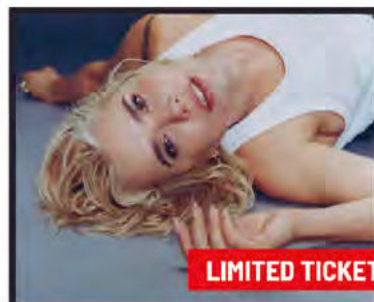
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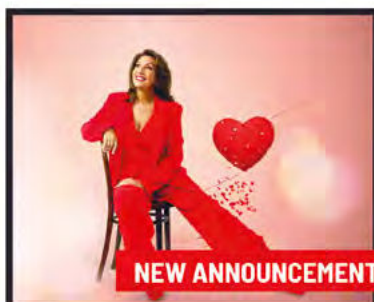
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RAISING THE BAR

Sam Hawcroft talks to Great Newsome director **Matthew Hodgson** about how the brewery is holding its own in Holderness...

The craft beer industry is having a tough time of it at the moment. Scores of small brewers have gone out of business in recent months, with Covid and Brexit being the biggest factors in ending the boom of the past couple of decades.

Great Newsome Brewery, though, in the heart of Holderness, is a working farm – and this, alongside the constant innovation of its beers, branding and spin-off products, has insulated the business against some of the most difficult trading conditions in recent times.

Indeed, the pandemic ended up bringing about a greater focus on online retail as pubs – the brewery's main wholesalers – were forced to close overnight. This was an even bigger concern, says director Matthew Hodgson, because in January 2020 the company had just made its biggest-ever

investment to double the capacity of the brewery.

"By March 31 of that year, we were thinking, what the hell have we done?" he says.

"Pre-pandemic, at least 80% of our business was cask beer into pubs, then it flipped completely on its head and was nearly all bottled beer for people to drink at home. We already had an e-commerce side to the business, but it was really quite small. Sometimes we got one order a fortnight, but during Covid we peaked at about 100 orders a day."

As a result, the team completely changed the way they worked, refining how orders were packaged and processed. "To some degree, we're still doing that," says Matthew. "We're still offering the same service. People are not ordering to the level

that they were, obviously, but it's still in excess of what we had pre-pandemic, so, if anything, we probably came out of it a bit stronger."

Timing is everything, and, while the Hodgson family had long harboured ideas of launching a brewery, they didn't do so until 2007. Matthew had wanted to go into the farming business straight after completing his A-levels, but his academic prowess led his parents to encourage him to go university instead.

"My other passion was engineering," he says, "so I went on to university and did a degree in airframe structures, because at the time British Aerospace was looking for graduates. Then about halfway through my degree, they stopped taking people on as the aircraft industry was on a bit of a downward spiral. I came away from ►

“*“We’ve done loads of work on making sure that we’re not wasting anything, and have obviously kept an eye on the prices of things, such as energy use, but there’s more work to be done on that. The guys are itching to make new products, too, but that’s something I sometimes have to rein them in on!”***”**

university and tried to apply for some jobs in the agricultural machinery sector. I didn’t really get anywhere, though, so I was drawn back to the farm.”

Matthew credits his father, Laurence, with allowing both him and his brother the freedom to come up with ideas and diversify, and in 1999 they did a feasibility study on setting up a brewery. “At that time there just wasn’t enough business for us to be able to make it profitable, so we knocked it on the head, but it was always there in the back of our minds. It wasn’t until about 2005-06 that we decided that it had actually got some legs.”

The family had always been interested in beer, despite the fact Laurence was “terrible” at home brewing, according to Matthew. “When we were kids, we always used to go on holiday in the UK, but the pubs were all pretty much the same – not like it is now. My mum and dad would look for different beers and write them down, and that’s where the idea came from, really. We thought there was room for it to work and we started from there.”

They wanted to keep it local and affordable, but hitting on the right

branding was tricky at first. Holderness is a bit light on instantly recognisable landmarks, apart from Withernsea’s Pier Towers and the lighthouse, and Great Newsome is in the middle of flat fields nowhere near the sea. But then they hit on an idea – thanks to the farm’s spaniel, Jem, with a little help from Matthew’s wife Donna.

“The dog used to greet visitors to the farm, and it also had a habit of staring into puddles, ponds, or anything that had water in it. So, my wife suggested, why not have the dog staring into a pint glass, like the HMV dog staring into the gramophone?”

This, as well as leveraging the heritage of the fourth-generation family farm (started by Ida Mary Hodgson in 1925), proved to be the “best thing we ever did”, says Matthew, for when Covid hit, the support of local people who were familiar with the beers, as well as local suppliers with whom they’d built up good relationships, proved crucial.

Matthew’s mother Doreen was Great Newsome’s first salesperson. She ran a small catering business at the time, and

would ring around potential customers in between making apple pies. She still keeps tabs on things but the team has now grown to 10, while Matthew’s son is head brewer.

Craft beer, perhaps more than most food and drink products, lives and dies on how good it is – its consumers by their very nature tend to be discerning, the sort of people who gasp in horror and spin on their heels if entering a bar that only offers mass-market bitters and gassy lagers. “We do an annual customer feedback survey,” adds Matthew, “and the number one reason people buy from us is the quality of the product. That is above anything else. So it’s key to me that any money we spend on getting our team as good as they can be, pays off in good-quality products.”

The core beers available year-round include the ever-popular Sleek Dust blonde and Pricky Back Otchan golden ale, Cold Snap lager, Jem’s Stout and Frothingham Best bitter, all of which have won numerous regional and national accolades, alongside changing seasonal tipples such as Winter Warmth. About a year ago they released the new Chrysalis range, eight beers ►





inspired by the variety of butterflies found on the farm, which have been “really well received,” Matthew says.

Great Newsome beers can now be found all over Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and occasionally further afield as the company deals with national wholesalers that take on the beers for promotional periods. And, it turns out, the Italians have a taste for British ales. “That’s our main export market,” says Matthew. “We’ve been delivering out there for about eight years now and that’s regular business. We go out to northern Italy at least once a year to meet the customers and the guys out there who distribute our beer.”

Matthew acknowledges the “pressure from all sides” in the wake of the pandemic and the current cost-of-living crisis, but emphasises that good customer service

must go hand-in-hand with great-quality products. The family keeps a close eye on the marketing, too, doing some of the more “personal” aspects such as the newsletter in-house, but working alongside Pace Communications on other essential PR needs. “It’s just getting that bit of extra help to be a bit more professional,” says Matthew. “Getting the product right is one thing, but you’ve also got to have the right sort of brand, the right image, which is what we’ve tried to do.”

To that end, they are looking at a design refresh for some of the core beers, but Matthew insists it will be evolution, rather than revolution. And as he looks to the future with the current team, efficiency is another major focus. “We’ve done loads of work on making sure that we’re not wasting anything, and have obviously kept

an eye on the prices of things, such as energy use, but there’s more work to be done on that. The guys are itching to make new products, too, but that’s something I sometimes have to rein them in on!”

They also want more people to visit them, and Matthew firmly believes that the “middle of nowhere” location is not a barrier, having visited a similar small brewery in an even more remote area in the West of Scotland that was a magnet for tourists. The Great Newsome Festivale has been running since 2018 and increased in popularity with every year, and plans are afoot to expand the shop and create a small bar with a covered area where people can enjoy beer and be entertained whatever the weather.

Matthew has naturally taken more of a back seat as the team has expanded, and now spends most of his time either in the office or meeting customers.

“When it comes to employing anybody for the business,” he adds, “it’s difficult to find qualified brewers around here, so it’s always been more about finding the right person who will fit in with the team. Someone who understands our ethos is more likely to get the job than somebody who comes overqualified. I’ve got four people who had never brewed beer before coming here.”

There are the family’s other businesses to keep across, too – such as Little Otchan Glamping, which was set up by Matthew’s brother Jonathan and his wife Catherine in 2008, and Holderness Logs, which the Hodgsons bought from neighbouring farmer Steve Biglin in 2018.

Does Matthew have a favourite beer? “That’s like asking who my favourite child is!” he says, but admits that Sleek Dust is his “go-to” tippale if he’s having a pub meal. “That said, some of the special butterfly ones have been really good. I give the guys in the brewery pretty much free reign to develop the recipes and keep out of the way of all that now.”

Next summer there’ll be a new lager joining the range. “We hoped to have it this summer,” says Matthew, “but we weren’t happy with the branding and the name. So that’s been postponed until next year, but the recipe is ready to go.”

To borrow an advertising slogan from a rather famous brand of stout, “Good things come to those who wait...” ●







01482 466045

www.hullchildrensuniversity.com

Hull and East Yorkshire (HEY) Children's University is a local charity that strives to give every child the opportunities they deserve, no matter what circumstances they were born into

Igniting dreams for the children of Hull and East Yorkshire



Many children around Hull and the East Riding do not have the same opportunities that other children have in the UK. Many have never been much further than the street in which they live and some children will never visit another city until they reach adulthood. Because of this, some children don't have any aspirations for the future.

HEY Children's University gives children from across the region the opportunities that they otherwise wouldn't have and gives them the chance to discover their interests and talents - the chance to create their own dreams. The charity aims to light up every path that a child could take and show them their options. Despite what the name implies, HEY Children's University is about ensuring that children know about all pathways into careers: be that an apprenticeship, starting their own business, working their way up in a company or attending college or University. Every child should understand what pathways exist and are available to them.

The charity works with primary school aged children who attend the schools that are in some of the highest areas of deprivation in the country. This includes 46 of the 71 primary schools in Hull and 12 schools in the East Riding which are situated in areas of rural deprivation.

HEY Children's University offers a diverse range of experiences that are designed to raise aspirations, confidence, and self-esteem. Some of these experiences include days at local businesses where the children learn about the industry, meet the staff, and take part in a range of activities. Others include visits to other cities such as London and Edinburgh, offering sleepovers in exciting venues such as the Natural History Museum and the HMS Belfast battleship.

Demand for the charity's services are at the highest they have ever been and during the last academic year they worked with 11,000 children by delivering over 300 of their Learning Experiences.

Rose James, CEO explains why the charity's work is so crucial: "The children we work to support shouldn't be missing out on opportunities and the chance to dream purely because of the postcode they live in, just one experience like this can completely transform a child's self-esteem and their view of the wider world. It really can change their future and put them on a path to achieve amazing things". ●

More information about the charity's work and how you as an individual or business can help ignite dreams for local children can be found on the charity's website www.hullchildrensuniversity.com



FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH:

CONSORTIUM RECRUITMENT AND HUMBER'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CREATE A SYMPHONY OF SUCCESS

Consortium Recruitment, a leading player in the recruitment industry, is celebrating remarkable growth as it concludes its second year of operations. The organisation has achieved an impressive 30% growth in turnover and an astounding 40% expansion in its client base, a testament to the abundant opportunities for businesses and job seekers in the Humber region.

Establishing itself as a frontrunner in strategic talent acquisition across diverse industries, Consortium Recruitment has forged partnerships with major brands in the area since its inception in 2021.

David Lipton, Founder and Managing Director of Consortium Recruitment, reflects on the remarkable growth and burgeoning business potential in the Humber, stating, "The Humber region is a dynamic hub of economic opportunity, and our success at Consortium Recruitment is a testament to the immense possibilities that businesses can harness here."

As we finish our second year of unprecedented growth, the thriving business environment in the Humber instils profound confidence in us and our fellow enterprises. The region's economic vibrancy fuels our commitment to connecting exceptional talent with forward-thinking companies.

The recent launch of Humber Freeports stands as a monumental milestone in the region's growth narrative, poised to catalyse millions of pounds in investments and generate an impressive 7,000 job opportunities.

The launch follows research from lender IWOCA, which has unveiled a remarkable surge in entrepreneurial activity, with 140 businesses being established daily in the dynamic landscape of Yorkshire and the Humber. This influx of new enterprises signals not only the region's economic resilience but also its appeal as a hub for innovation and business development, reaffirming the Humber's status as a key player in driving economic growth and job creation.

"The impact of initiatives like the Humber Freeports and the surge in entrepreneurial activity is tangible within our business. We're witnessing the results with an influx of new clients and an increased demand for roles from existing clients. This uptick is a clear indication of growing confidence in the current economic climate."

"As businesses recognise the potential and opportunities in the Humber, our role in connecting talent with these forward-thinking enterprises becomes even more pivotal. It's an exciting time for both our company and the region as a whole as we navigate this wave of growth and contribute to the unfolding success story of the Humber."

Consortium Recruitment plans to sustain its growth trajectory by doubling the team size within the next 12 months and has recently expanded its office at the Ergo Centre in Hessle.



CONSORTIUM
PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT

For more information on Consortium Recruitment
consortiumrecruitment.co.uk



'I'm always the only socialist in the room'

Novum Personnel's **Tom Simpson** tells *Sam Hawcroft* why he'd rather have happier staff than lots of money...

Tom Simpson describes himself as "probably more left-wing than Jeremy Corbyn" – which is a bit unusual for the business world, it's fair to say.

It's these "socialist" values that have informed his journey into business, where his company revolves around people whose development motivates him far more than the money ever will.

Considering himself "not very academic", nevertheless he went to university and studied commercial law. "I loved it because I love people," says Tom, "and I knew that where there's academia, there's people – but I didn't like the exams so much."

He began his career in retail, managing to get "some quite big gigs" setting up new stores and recruiting staff for major nationals such as Primark. "I'm quite good at lateral thinking. I

always think I've got ADHD, but completely undiagnosed – I am quite heavily focused, yet I can be quite flitty. I'll probably get a day's work done in about an hour-and-a-half, but the rest of the day I'm useless! I was in retail in my late 20s but I found myself thinking, I don't know if this will be here in 20 years."

Some of those he'd worked within retail had gone on to recruitment, which Tom acknowledges is never really top of the list of dream careers when you leave school, but he enjoyed many successful years in the sector. "It's just one of those things that you end up doing because it can be all right," he says, "because you can earn a lot of money in recruitment – but when I started I was on, say, 20% commission, and I thought, maybe I'd like to earn the 80% and give someone else the 20%!" ►

He set up his own business with some other people who were already established in the education sector – but, very early on, he knew he'd made a mistake. "I realised that we just didn't align. I'm always the only socialist in the room at networking meetings and people find it really strange that I've no desire to earn lots of money. My desire is to be able to have as much freedom as possible. Within days of setting up that business, I hated it. I just became really disengaged and it was a bad period in my life as I was splitting up with my wife."

For some years, family came first for Tom, as he moved back to Beverley to be closer to his mother, and he decided to train to be a teacher – which he admits was "strange" given his aversion to academia. But then a friend who had set up a recruitment firm in Teesside asked him to do some consultancy for him – and the short version is... Tom ended up joining the business, the pandemic hit, and he got back together with his wife.

At the point Tom came on board, the business – Novum Personnel – had only turned over £16,000 in six months. In the first year, they turned over £1.1 million, then £2 million, £2.5 million last year, and Tom hopes to hit £5 million this year.

How did he achieve that impressive growth?

Firstly, by keeping it simple. "People tend to overcomplicate things," he says. "Take Primark. There are only two aspects to its business – the stock for people to buy, and the facility for them to buy it. That's why they have about 200 tills! They need people to be able to buy quickly. Novum was originally a permanent recruitment business, but when Covid hit, there was no market for that. No one was going to take on someone who might be furloughed tomorrow."

So, while Tom was out walking the dog – doing his allotted one-hour's daily outdoor exercise – he started thinking. What was still working? There were the big supermarkets, but he figured that would be a non-starter. Construction, though – that remained largely unaffected by the restrictions. "I had a builder living one side of me and a kitchen fitter on the other, and both were still working, so I thought, why don't we get into construction and engineering recruitment?"

They followed that path until Tom began

to see an opening in education recruitment. "It's probably the socialist aspect again, but I'm really supportive of the idea of free childcare for parents so they can get to work. And I thought, with children not really starting school until they're six, people don't go back to work full time until then. I also wasn't sure there was the political will to close schools again, so started looking at education and grew from there."

Again, he kept things simple. He didn't have anyone in his team who was experienced in education – but that didn't matter. The same principles apply whatever the sector – the client wants to know what you can provide, when you can provide it, and how much you'll charge, and the candidate wants to know what they'll be paid, where they're working, and when.

Tom now has 20 people working across Novum's three offices in Hull, Middlesbrough and Newcastle – and it's their passions that excite him more than the business. "I'd rather my 20 people be really happy and me make less money," he says. "So I started looking at what fires up the people who work for me, and one of them had an idea for an app. This had

actually stopped him getting a job because nobody wanted to employ anybody who ideally wanted to follow their dreams and leave."

Tom invested in the Goald app, which was the brainchild of Matthew McKay and aims to create a global community where anyone can challenge anyone, any time, to do any activity, whether it be sport, fitness, dance, baking, you name it. "I brought in an eight-figure investor I knew through another business and it's gone really well," says Tom. "We've got staff in America, Finland and England, and we've attracted some of the world's biggest TikTokers on to it. I always remind Matt that even if we never make any money, he should be really proud that he had an idea. We put the teams together, we built it, and got it out there."

Among his team is the former Hull FC star Danny Washbrook, who came on board as director in September. Rugby league is close to Tom's heart – in 2021 Novum Personnel began a new partnership with Hull KR, and Tom has helped numerous other former stars forge their next steps after the end of their playing days. ►





"Sportsmen have got really good transferable skills," says Tom, "but it's a bit like coming out of the Army – they're 35, but they've spent the last 25 years being told where to go, what to wear, what to eat, when to be there, when to be off."

The concept of the CV – central to recruitment – is another thing that Tom wants to revolutionise. "No one says on a CV, 'I'm really hardworking, I'm really good in a team, but if you put me by myself I'll spend all day playing Football Manager.' So, I thought, why do we take people's words as gospel? People say they 'love socialising with friends and music'. Does that involve playing the cello in the London Philharmonic and having a picnic on Beverley Westwood? Or does it mean getting peeled off your face at God's Kitchen and DJing at Greenfields? Because both are socialising with friends and music."

So, Tom came up with StartingPoint, which is a "dynamic evidence-based" careers and guidance app that has just been launched after being three years in development and aims to connect school leavers with job opportunities. Instead of just writing on your CV that you're "hard-working" – you can demonstrate this by uploading media such as pictures, videos, audio clips and verified references. It's a "complex" system that homes in on a person's character and ensures a better match for both prospective employer and employee. "When we showed this to businesses, they all said, 'That's amazing! Why hasn't this been invented before?'"

If there is a benefit to Brexit (and Tom is, as you might expect, not a fan), then it's that it's a workers' market, he says. "Instead of you feeling like you're conforming to the expectations of your potential employer, what I've been seeing over the past two or three years is employers are having to conform to their staff. People now have more choice employment-wise, because we don't have enough people."

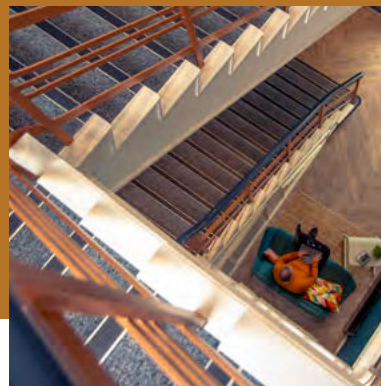
The culture in the workplace is also shifting, too – younger companies are allowing greater flexible working and treating their staff like humans, and not numbers. Tom's offices have dartboards, snooker tables, and even beer in the fridge, and as long as the job is getting done, then Tom isn't bothered if you fancy a cold one at 9am on a Monday. It's all about trust,



and if you treat people with respect and compassion, then they'll respond and repay that trust.

"To put into perspective how motivated they are," says Tom, "we're moving offices, the phones have gone in, and I've just shifted a car's worth of stuff. I rang them and said, right, I'm just on my way back to the office, does anyone have anything to bring in? They were all like – we're all at the new office, completely moved, mate! We did it all in our cars. They moved everything of their own volition."

He also supported one member of staff through illness before she went on maternity leave twice – Tom says that, in three years of employing her, she only worked in the office for a year. "People said she was taking the mick – but she wasn't. What she's done is she's put two kids and her family before us. As I would have expected her to. She's doing what's best for her. Yes, there was a moment where I sat there and said, am I the idiot? I know I sound like David Brent, but I'd absolutely love the idea of people looking back and thinking, do you know what, it was all right working for him."




Tom's "weird superpower" is being unable to be offended or embarrassed, and he admits his directness and penchant for swearing isn't for everyone, but this water-off-a-duck's-back resilience is enviable. And he's proud to have been blocked by Sir Alan Sugar on Twitter for calling him out on the hypocrisy of demanding people come back into offices when "he owns a load of offices" and he made his money in personal computers that facilitated home-working. "Then he said, 'Can you address me as Lord Sugar, please?' So I said, 'Anytime you want, Alan.' And he blocked me!"

He also tells of the time he went for a business meeting in London dressed in a hoodie and jeans. "The guy was a really wealthy, successful businessman, and he said, 'Why are you dressed like that, son?' I told him it didn't affect my work, and it blew his mind that I didn't need to impress him – my work would do that. We have since developed a really good business relationship."

With Tom, what you see is definitely what you get. ●



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ACA named winner of World Design Awards

The Beverley-based firm's innovative concept for a new £19.4m Scunthorpe health centre has won international recognition

Leading East Yorkshire-based architect Alessandro Caruso Architects (ACA) has been named Winner of the World Design Awards 2023.

ACA's design for a Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) in Scunthorpe – one of the first of its kind in the country – took the top prize in the competition run by The Architecture Community.

The brief for the Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust required a world-class, state-of-the-art landmark to enhance Scunthorpe town centre. It will be a one-stop-shop providing access to a range of diagnostic tests closer to home, reducing the need to come into hospital.

The "elevations" design was inspired by the wave silhouettes of ultrasound tissue harmonic imaging. Ultrasound waves are the simplest forms of diagnostic waves used in detecting the birth of a new life.

ACA pushed the boundaries using a hybrid modern method of construction system for its innovative design. The two-storey floor plates will be built using pre-manufactured three-dimensional units of steel frame and concrete floors, allowing the building envelope to achieve early completion to meet the tight funding deadline, and the internal fit-out to be carried out independently.

The façade will be completed using rainscreen cladding technology with standard modular sizes coordinated with the required openings. The layout of the building is characterised by a simple-plan form and a logical layout that makes navigation easier.

It is hoped the proposed £19.4m centre will boost footfall into the town centre, with the building blending purpose and functionality while embracing cultural and civic values that inspire and engage its visitors.

A simple palette of surface materials has also been used to establish a visual connection with the surrounding context and aid orientation with an inviting main entrance.

The extensive use of glazing for the main entrance will promote transparency for the services offered and easy access from the existing path network. The main entrance is emphasised by the overhanging first floor forming a canopy to shield the patient drop off point.

The naturally lit foyer provides a welcoming and comfortable reception and patients' waiting area, while the abundance of daylight within the building will improve the health and well-being of the patients.

ACA's design will meet BREEAM's excellent rating with materials selected to achieve net-zero carbon emissions. The sustainability strategy includes natural ventilation, an airtight and high-performing thermal envelope, triple-glazed openings and curtain walls with proportions calculated based on orientation and a green roof.

The ultimate challenge is to contribute to turning people's sadness or anxiety on entering the building into hope and positivity by the end of their visit.

Beverley-based ACA is an award-winning small team of innovative architects, operating nationally, specialising in healthcare.

In 1994, co-founder Alessandro Caruso had a serious motorbike crash, spending months in hospital. The environment was functional, but not conducive to mental health recovery. He promised himself, if he recovered, to emphasise wellbeing in his designs to help other people feel better. Therefore, ACA's mission is to craft unique, happier and healthier environments to improve people's lives. ●



We catch up with Richard Moore, Director at Hull Radio Station West Hull FM

What is West Hull FM?

We are the community radio station for Hull, covering the whole City, as well as the surrounding parts of East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire. We play the best music from the 1960's though to today, and we feature local news, sport and information from our community 24 hours a day. If you follow local football, then you will love Tiger Pop, our Saturday show live from Hull City's supporters arena.

Tell us about advertising with West Hull FM?

Radio reaches people at home, at work and on the move. We reach nearly 200,000 local households, and you can advertise with us from just £100 per month. Alternatively, you might prefer to sponsor one of our many shows.

How is West Hull FM Different to other stations?

We are run entirely by local volunteers, but to the same high professional standards that you would expect from any other station. We focus

on what is important to our listeners, and you can get involved too.

Can anyone get involved?

If you have something interesting to say or have an idea for a regular show, we'd love to talk to you. We can provide training in how to present, and if you can use a keyboard and mouse, you can probably operate our equipment! If you would like to simply come on the radio to talk about your event, gig or organisation, then get in touch. We also have a weekly local music programme, and if you would like your band featured, or even to play live on the radio, then get in touch.

We see that the BBC and other stations are reducing their staff in the area, what are your thoughts on this?

We have had a lot of feedback from new listeners who have been disappointed in some of the other radio stations in the area. Their loss is our gain - give us a try and see what you think.



How is the station funded?

As a non profit, we put any profits back into the community, and are funded by advertising, sponsorship and grants. We have also recently started providing media training, and have been working with young people in local schools, giving them a chance to be heard on the region's airwaves.

How can I listen?

You can tune in on 106.9FM in the Hull area, or online at westhullfm.co.uk and the TuneIn app, or try asking your smart speaker to "play West Hull FM" - WE will also be on DAB Digital Radio by next Spring.

MAKE THE SWITCH!

Hull & East Yorkshire's Brighter Mix



On 106.9 FM, Online, or
ask your smartspeaker to "play West Hull FM"

Digital disappointment

Has tech peaked?
asks *Mal Williamson*



I don't want to be that old folksy type always bemoaning the new fangles... but is this the end of progress? Is it all downhill now? Or worse?

My editing software demands a rental. I can never own it and the price is set anew each year. As I am always involved with a project or three it is not easy to extricate from the situation. Stop moaning? OK – but this same software has so many bugs!

The cycle of progress has become so fast it has broken, and the customers are doing the beta-testing with forums full of all the problems that the latest version has. We are part of their failed test and trace regime, as well as coming up with the ideas of what to do next.

And I cannot even use it anymore – it is so complicated. This tech is bust because I can never get to grips with the whole package. There are no experts I know in this geographical region. And so I go to international groups – who also struggle with all the new features and latest crazy idea that we will never use. Ah – that's not true. We will use it, of course – the client

loves it, this latest thing. But by the time we ever need to use this or that feature again, we will have forgotten how, won't we? Or it has been upgraded to something unfathomable again.

I think this happened because "professional" used to mean a company with a support structure. So dedicated engineers will specialise in your software and maintaining its delivery to you across networks and hardware changes. But the tech offered more than this and opened itself out to everyone – becoming cheaper and faster and cheaper and faster forever. This is the proverbial smartphone having more processing power than the Apollo moon landings. Great – love it! Loved it. Now it is over. Because this tech cannot be managed by the same people who are using it. These are different skillsets.

Worse than that – they are different interests. Different aptitudes and different motivations. Different personalities. Tech has reached the limit of its wetware – us. This is not the easy-to-use intuitive interface the sci-fi promised. Apparently the workstations on the deck of the Enterprise did something no matter what you pressed. "Remember," said set designer Michael Okuda to new actors, "What-ever button you choose... that's the right one." I long for a working day of that kind of fulfilled expectations. Instead I am lucky to get half a day without learning something new, wrestling with a pointless update, or even crawling about under my desk. And the antisocial media? I no longer get posts from my friends – just random *new friends* being recommended. I am not a 15-year-old wanting more invites to parties. Again – this once-brilliant tool has peaked and now going downhill. The crime is bigger and more blatant.

Simply do not order anything online – because you will be robbed.

And has anyone tried cancelling a subscription recently? Ignore all the latest streaming entertainments. They are shockingly clingy. Like a crocodile twisting you around underwater.

And now here comes AI – churning all the creative content and enthusiastic outpourings of the past couple of decades into an instant delivery of... your job. It may be theft of content, as court cases are trying to prove. And there are now algorithms to make your artwork toxic to AI scans – so you cannot be copied. Er, yeah right! The new war of hacker vs programmer is not even involving us – it is all bot-on-bot action now.

Which is all good for arts and crafts. Real stuff done by real people. A true value. Make your business the business of human truth.

Face-to-face. Letters with pens.

Handshakes. Being together somewhere.

Conversations.

Face-to-face makes us both real and valued.

Letters with pens or gifts and notes, only you can make your mark.

Handshakes are real – hug it out.

Being together somewhere is the business the tech can never touch.

Conversations will go anywhere, far beyond the up-selling chatbot.

Good luck. ●



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malwilliamson.com





LS | LIFESTYLE

ISSUE 22

DINING ■ MOTORING



GREEK LEGENDS

Hull's stars of Hellenic cuisine have settled in brilliantly at **Nostalgia Bistro** in Chanterlands Avenue – and it's unlike anything else in the region, writes *Phil Ascough*...

For Mata and Yiannis Makris, after closing one door, Covid opened another. Eventually.

It took two and a half years from shutting down Artemis Greek Taverna in March 2020 to unveiling Nostalgia Bistro in autumn 2022 but they've definitely traded up.

That's good news for them because they've got a bright little business that is unlike anything else in the region. It's also good for their landlord who, with confidence in the hospitality sector through the floor, was struggling to find an operator for a place which has always been good, and often outstanding.

It's also good news for the regional dining scene. Yiannis, Mata and their family spend a big chunk of the summer back in Greece, and you sense it wouldn't have taken much for them to head home for good.

Even this year they returned to Hull from their long break just hours before severe storms struck Greece. Later, from the safety of their house in Hull, they watched on TV as cars were swept along the streets by flood water in their home city. There was relief at having escaped just in time, but also anxiety until word came through that family and friends were all safe.

The story of how they got together is

more than remarkable. They both come from the same place in Greece, the town of Volos which is renowned for its food. But the first time they ever met was in Hull in 1995, having both travelled here to study two years earlier.

Mata graduated from the University of Hull in electronic engineering but her natural passion for food led her to set up her own business cooking Greek delights for dinner parties, weddings and other events.

They became part of the team at The Greek, which opened in Princes Avenue, Hull, to capacity crowds and rave reviews in May 2018. But in October that year they left, with Mata going back to cooking

for family and friends and taking private commissions while Yiannis worked in other food businesses.

For Artemis, they were head-hunted by customers who were so impressed by their visits to The Greek that they offered the couple free rein with a new venture. Forced out by the pandemic, they picked up the odd catering jobs as, in time, the sector opened up. Meanwhile the owner of the bistro in Chanterlands Avenue formerly known as Café Per Te and Amici was desperately trying to reopen.

Even way back in the days when it was Potters Tea Room it was a great little dining destination. I called in one lunchtime and, with sleet howling horizontally along the Avenue, was inspired to try the homemade soup. It was outstanding, but the egg and chips at the next table looked even better. Proper chunky, crispy, fluffy chips with three perfect fried eggs draped over the top.

I promised myself I would have that next time but it never happened. Potters closed soon after. Amici arrived with more of a bistro style and early evening opening. Per Te picked up on that, but then everything stopped.

I took a local restaurateur for a recce during 2021 and they liked it but lacked confidence and were unconvinced, even though the place is surrounded by chimney pots and with other restaurants which are complementary rather than competition. Other potential suitors didn't even take a look.

Their loss is Yiannis's and Mata's gain. They've been cautious with their opening hours, with evening opening largely limited to weekends. Lunch is usually bustling and some people drop by in the morning or between meals just to enjoy great coffee and baklava, lemon cake, walnut cake or whatever.

But they're also confident enough to try some one-off special events. Our supper clubs were close to capacity and there was also heavy demand for a series of events to raise awareness about vegan and vegetarian dining options.

The drinks selection with its array of Greek beers made it my watering hole of choice before and after Hull City matches towards the end of last season. The food is outstanding, with dishes to suit all dietary requirements.

The main menu is all about meze, with a few departures from the norm in mackerel, camembert and pitta smothered in feta, mozzarella, tomato, peppers, olives and oregano to create a small, house pizza. The salads start, obviously, with Greek. A Caesar salad is a nod towards the mainstream but my favourite is beetroot with leaves, fresh garlic and vinaigrette. A serving of that always prompts the question of why some people don't like beetroot.

The specials board brings together an array of the freshest produce available, typically with lamb and pork, sea bass and

salmon and assorted veggie options such as a quiche and the sourdough caprese.

Stand-out signature dishes on the regular menu start with a substantial club sandwich, Greek sausage and calamari in a sensational herby batter. The burger doesn't bring beef but a slab of grilled epiros cheese, and the meat-free options extend to falafel, grilled seasonal vegetables topped with goat's cheese and balsamic glaze, and the wonderful gigandes – massive beans served in a tomato sauce with celery and carrots. There are various versions of excellent fries that go very well with all of these.

If you're nice to everybody, Yiannis might select you to trial a nice small plate of something new that Mata is developing. Paprika potatoes packed a punch with the post-match beers after the last home game of the season. The star of a recent lunch was a casserole of sliced sausage, pepper and tomatoes. I'll be watching for both dishes appearing on the specials board.

Their approach to food is summed up by Mata's quote when they opened Artemis. She said: "All the women in Greece can cook. You learn to cook from a very early age and the knowledge and the secrets are passed down through the generations. I have the recipes and the ingredients locked away. Yiannis is front of house – he's not allowed to cook in my kitchen!" ●





Get further, *faster*

Mercedes-AMG has announced the launch of its new GLC hybrid SUV Coupé, which promises to blend performance and efficiency with luxury and individual flair

Just weeks after the presentation of the new Mercedes-AMG GLC SUV, the luxury car brand has presented the new GLC Coupé.

It completes the successful midsize series from Mercedes-AMG and combines dynamic elegance and characteristic AMG features.

The GLC 63 S E PERFORMANCE Coupé (pictured) is the brand's first performance hybrid SUV coupé (combined fuel consumption: 7.5 l/100 km, combined CO2 emissions: 170 g/km, combined power consumption:

12.7 kWh /100 km) with 500 kW (680 HP) system output at the start.

The brand has also launched an entry-level model, the GLC 43 4MATIC Coupé (combined fuel consumption: 10.2-9.8 l/100 km, combined CO2 emissions: 232-223 g/km) with 310 kW (421 hp) power and a short-term boost of 10 kW (14 hp) via the belt-driven starter generator (RSG).

The extensive standard equipment of both models feature rear-axle steering, all-wheel drive, AMG SPEEDSHIFT MCT 9G transmission with wet starting clutch and AMG RIDE CONTROL suspension with

adaptive damping supports the dynamic driving experience.

A FLOWING SILHOUETTE

A sporty transition to the rear is the main feature of the new Mercedes AMG GLC Coupé. The headlights connect to the top of the AMG-specific radiator trim, emphasising the width of the vehicle, while the AMG front apron in jet wing design has striking large air inlets and vertical fins. The two-part tail lights also help widen the rear view with a black, dark red connecting element.

SPORTY ELEGANT INTERIOR

In the interior, AMG seats in ARTICO man-made leather/MICROCUT AMG microfiber with unique graphics and covers provide a sporty touch. Optional upholstery made of leather and Nappa leather with an embossed AMG coat of arms in the front headrests is also available. The AMG performance seats are also available as options. There is also the standard AMG Performance steering wheel in Nappa leather (GLC 43) or Nappa leather/MICROCUT microfiber (GLC 63 S).

INFOTAINMENT

The MBUX infotainment system includes various AMG-specific displays and functions. These include the independent displays in the instrument cluster, in the portrait format multimedia central display in the centre console and in the optional head-up display. The AMG exclusive “Supersport” style offers the possibility of displaying various content via a vertical structure. This includes a set-up menu that shows the current chassis or transmission settings. The driver can also have a navigation map or consumption data displayed in “Supersport” style.

A2.0-LITRE FOUR-CYLINDER ENGINE WITH ELECTRIC EXHAUST TURBOCHARGER

The heart of the new Mercedes-AMG GLC Coupé models is the AMG 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine, which combines innovative technologies and high performance with exemplary efficiency. The engine is so far the only series engine in the world that is charged with an electric exhaust gas turbocharger via the additional 48-volt on-board electrical system, which also includes the belt-driven starter generator (RSG).

E PERFORMANCE HYBRID

In the GLC 63 S E PERFORMANCE Coupé, the M139I produces 350 kW (476 hp) at 6,725 rpm. This makes it the most powerful series-produced four-cylinder in the world. The maximum combustion engine torque of 545 Nm is at 5,250-5,500 rpm. In the performance hybrid, the 2.0-litre engine is combined with a permanently excited synchronous electric motor, a high-performance battery developed in Affalterbach and the fully variable AMG Performance 4MATIC+ all-wheel drive. ▶





AMG HIGH PERFORMANCE BATTERY – INSPIRED BY FORMULA 1

The development of the lithium-ion energy storage is inspired by technologies proven in the Formula 1™ hybrid racing cars of the Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 Team. The AMG High Performance battery combines high, often consecutively available power with low weight to increase the overall performance of the vehicle. Added to this is the rapid energy consumption and high power density.

80 KW CONTINUOUS POWER AND 150 KW AT PEAK

The high-performance battery in the GLC 63 S E PERFORMANCE Coupé offers a capacity of 6.1 kWh, 80 kW continuous power and 150 kW peak power for ten seconds. Charging takes place via recuperation or the installed 3.7 kW on-board charger with alternating current at a charging station, wall box or household socket. The battery is designed for fast power delivery and absorption and not for the longest possible range. Nevertheless, the electric range of 12 kilometres enables a practical operating radius, for example for low-noise, fully electric travel from residential areas to the outskirts of the city or to the motorway.

EDITION 1 AT MARKET LAUNCH

The GLC 63 S E PERFORMANCE Coupé can be ordered as an exclusive Edition 1 in the exterior colours graphite gray magno or high-tech silver magno for one year from market launch. A foil in magno charcoal visually stretches the vehicle's sides.

The 21-inch AMG forged wheels in cross-spoke design are painted matt black. The high-sheen rim flanges provide an attractive contrast. This also applies to the yellow-painted brake calipers of the AMG high-performance composite brake system.

To protect their valuable vehicle, every customer receives a tailor-made AMG Indoor Car Cover with the "Edition1" logo. With its breathable outer skin made of tear-resistant synthetic fibre fabric and the anti-static inner fabric made of flannel, it protects the vehicle in the garage from dust and scratches. ●

Further information about Mercedes-AMG is available at www.mercedes-amg.com



Sometimes you just have to be there...

Technology has transformed journalism beyond all recognition – but perhaps we’ve lost something in the process, writes *Phil Ascough*

Working from home?

I’m doing it now.

Remote working?

Most recently that’d be the corporate fitness session with Olympians Colin Jackson and Jamie Baulch as part of RSM UK’s fundraiser for the Sailors’ Children’s Society.

While willing volunteers – who’d paid £100 a head for the “privilege” – completed an exercise regime designed for gold medal athletes, I sat in the bar. No, not with a pint, but tapping away at a laptop to make sure the charity had some instant coverage to push out on social media ahead of its phenomenally successful annual lunch at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel.

Yes, of course, it’s absolutely the sort of lunch where nobody who attended will remember anything they read on TwitterX, but that’s not the point. It helped a fantastic charity raise its profile, and it reminded me I’m still on top of the sort of live, remote reporting I first did 45 years ago.

I was reminded at the recent All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Modernising Employment that the “how” has changed a fair bit over the years.

In the modern age, reporters have laptops and other devices and are writing to publish within seconds. In the 1970s, and for many years after, we used phones – the landline variety – and rang copytakers in a newspaper office, reading from our notebooks so they could type our words on to slips of paper which would then be passed through various pairs of hands and past several pairs of eyes on their way into print.

Publication would depend on the priority of the story. Usually the pressure was at its most intense in the press box of a football ground on a Saturday afternoon. You would phone over the match report in a series of takes, the last of which would be the intro on the final whistle.



ADAPTING: The APPG meeting in Hull chaired by MP Emma Hardy (centre)

Any late on-field drama would throw the entire press corps into total panic, except the late Gilbert Johnson, a reporter for the national press who would routinely turn up with three intros already crafted poetically in his notebook – one each for win, lose or draw.

The most dramatic scenario was at the Lockington train crash. I was in the Hull office of the Yorkshire Post one Saturday morning in July 1986 when I took a call telling me there’d been the most dreadful rail accident in our patch.

The scale of the horror became increasingly apparent as I drove north along the A1079 and saw so many ambulances heading in the other direction. I was the first reporter at the scene and wrote down the basics of what had happened so I could send the first story for the YP’s sister paper, the Evening Post.

The only way to get it to them was by phone so I headed back to the box I’d passed on the way in, halfway down Station Road back towards the A164. I filed the story but didn’t return immediately to the crash scene. Instead I took a drive around and located another three or four phone boxes, reckoning that the first one would soon be under siege from journalists struggling to hit Sunday paper deadlines.

Even the office in Hull had limited communications infrastructure. It was about that time that we started to use computers instead of hammering out our work on those wonderful, Hull-made Imperial

typewriters, putting the paper and the photographer’s film into a big envelope and handing it to the guard on the 4.30 train to Leeds.

Most of the time it arrived safely at the office, but there were occasions when it would go astray. We took copies of our stories home with us so we could phone the words through if necessary.

So remote working has always been a big part of journalism because you can’t wait for the news to come to you – you have to go out and get it. Part of the focus of the APPG, as its chairman Emma Hardy assembled a business group in C4DI, was about how to adapt various work roles to give employers and their staff greater flexibility.

The consensus was that it shouldn’t be that difficult with a bit of creative thinking. Police, the fire service, funeral directors all have admin tasks that shouldn’t necessitate a visit to the workplace. But obviously most of their time has to be spent where the work is happening, and the ability to interact instantly with colleagues can be vital.

That’s a key area where journalism has changed. Technology means you no longer have to attend the scene of everything you’re writing about. You can see and hear it from pretty much anywhere.

But you can’t smell it, touch it or taste it. And nor can you truly sense the thrill of that late goal at the match, or the despair of the horror at Lockington. Sometimes you have to be there. ●

Forward plan with our helpful

EVENTS DIARY



DECEMBER

- 15** Water and Coasts Network Event, the University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull
- 15** Diversity Virtual Jobs Fair, book online via Eventbrite
- 16** Sound Bath, Humber Street Gallery, Hull
- 21** Technology Virtual Jobs Fair, book online via Eventbrite

JANUARY

- 10** Be Your Own Boss Workshop, by E-Factor, the Enterprise Village, Grimsby
- 11** Year 10/12 open events, Ron Dearing University Technical College, Hull
- 13** The Hull Record Fair, Hull Minster
- 18** Open evening, HETA, Dansom Lane, Hull
- 18** Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce New Year Speed Networking, Hampton by Hilton Hotel, Humberside Airport
- 20** Open event, Wyke Sixth Form College, Hull
- 23** Open event, North Lindsey College, Scunthorpe
- 23** FEO: Unleashing the Entrepreneur, The One Point, Hessle
- 24** Exploring Progressions, by Humber Learning Consortium, Sewell Group Craven Park
- 25** FEO NxGen Masterclass Day, Hull College
- 25** An Evening with Jeff Stelling, Hull City Hall

FEBRUARY

- 1** British Neurovascular Group Meeting 2024, DoubleTree by Hilton, Hull
- 8** Negotiating and influencing (having powerful conversations), Future Humber
- 9** Leadership Networks: Business over Breakfast for Headteachers and Senior Leaders, Mercure Hotel, Willerby
- 20** FEO: Unleashing the Entrepreneur, The One Point, Hessle
- 20** Professor Brian Cox: Horizons - A 21st Century Space Odyssey, Hull City Hall
- 24** Open evening, HETA, Dansom Lane, Hull

To have your event listed here, please email sam@bw-magazine.co.uk.

Please note, while we make every effort to ensure these listings are correct, we cannot be held responsible for changes or cancellations – always contact the venue beforehand to check.

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