

east midlands
chamber

Derbyshire | Leicestershire | Nottinghamshire

Annual Report 2022/2023

To enhance East Midlands
businesses and communities

President and Chief Executive's Welcome

The past year provided many challenges to the UK economy and to organisations across the East Midlands. Continued progress towards whatever a new “normal” looks like post-Covid, a war in Europe, monetary policy seeking to find another new “normal” after nearly 15 years of unusually low interest rates, the impact of climate change and tentative progress towards net zero, the further unwinding of established relationships due to Brexit – including those for business support. All these, and more, contributed to a time of uncertainty and change. Throughout this, the Chamber has continued to do what it has done so well for so many years: to be a source of sound advice, of training, of lobbying and of support for those who need it.

A source of stability and reliability

I am sometimes asked why I choose to be involved on the Chamber's board of directors and my answer is always the same. Whatever support or advice a business or other organisation might want, I am confident that if they are guided towards the Chamber, they will receive a good, professional and constructive response. At times of change, stability and reliability of this sort is vital and I truly believe the Chamber is an asset to our region.

This year's highlights are outlined elsewhere in this Annual Report. I will merely note the continued financial strength of the Chamber as a business in its own right, and the literally thousands of organisations and individuals who have been helped by its services. It is a track-record to be proud of.

Something else I am proud of is the opportunity to be president this year. It is a role that provides many opportunities – to visit places one might not otherwise visit, to have a platform to say some things one might not otherwise say, and to write some things one might not otherwise have written. It is a wonderful opportunity and I am grateful to have it.

Supporting our communities and generation next-but-one

Those of you who have heard from me during the year will know I have prioritised two themes. The first of these is to urge all organisations to properly consider how they

can support the communities of which they are part. Without strong communities, it is all too easy for people to feel left behind and disenfranchised. That, in turn, leads to instability – and business hates instability.

The second theme is to give proper support to “generation next-but-one”, those who will in due course inherit the consequences – good and bad – of the decisions we all take now. This includes the impact of climate change, and one thing that has really struck me throughout the year at the many forums and roundtables I have chaired as president is the strong call from the East Midlands for certainty and stability about climate change policies, and a conviction that we in the East Midlands can play an important role in the progress to net zero.

Supporting our communities

The other honour given to the president is to choose a charity of the year for each of our three counties. I have chosen the three community foundations that cover our patch – Foundation Derbyshire, Leicestershire & Rutland Community Foundation, and Nottinghamshire Community Foundation.

My main purpose was to increase awareness of the vital role community foundations play in ensuring funds are channelled to truly effective, truly local groups. If others, too, can learn about the foundations, can find their model as compelling as I do and act on that, then

I will be very pleased to have given the foundations this publicity and endorsement.

This Annual Report contains examples of the many diverse ways in which the Chamber plays its role. The East Midlands is a curious place – a “region” that by and large does not often think of itself as a region. And yet we have a resilience, a strength and many, many opportunities.

East Midlands Chamber provides a focus and a voice for the three counties and three cities; a voice that is often wider than just a voice for “business” – although of course it is that too. The Chamber truly embraces its mission of enhancing East Midlands business and communities.

Long may that continue.

Stuart Dawkins, President



2022/23 was another year of transition and diversification for the Chamber's services, primarily as long-delivered business support projects funded through the European Regional Development Fund were scheduled to conclude in June 2023, with training projects funded by the European Social Fund scheduled to end in December 2023. Following the expiration of EU-funded programmes, the Chamber competitively secured £8.9m in public funding to expand the D2N2 Growth Hub, as well as Innovate UK EDGE services.

We remain at the forefront of a new generation of business support. We led a partnership that delivered the £5.27m East Midlands Accelerator programme, a package of business improvement and sustainability support via the Government's UK Community Renewal Fund that benefited more than 2,000 organisations located in targeted areas of the region.

Since ending in December 2022, we launched the second phase of Accelerator, now funded through the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This signals a new era of place-based support to help local businesses achieve key objectives, such as driving efficiencies and productivity through innovation and digital technology, reducing energy costs through decarbonisation, and growing through a robust business plan, assisted by our team of 40 advisers.

Digital transformation for the Chamber

Our own digital transformation programme continued, launching a new Chamber website. We have focused on improving the user experience and customer journey by

integrating our CRM and finance systems with the website. This work continues into 2023/24, with further investment planned to provide bespoke ways of engaging to suit individual member needs.

How and when we engage with our members and customers develops as your support needs change. During 2022/23, we saw a greater demand for environmental, social and governance (ESG) services – assisting members' aspirations to support communities, advance net zero journeys and adopt green technologies.

International trade

Exporting activity among SMEs has been permanently reset following the UK's exit from the EU and the pandemic. It remains subdued due to this and global economic instability. The Chamber responded to deliver new services to assist members with their international trade ambitions and in meeting HMRC compliance.

Supporting skills and employment

Reflecting our vision ‘to enhance East Midlands businesses and communities’, we continue to support individuals to attain employment, thereby meeting the current and future workforce needs of our members. We know accessing skills is essential to supporting sustainable growth.

While much work has gone into this area of activity, a significant amount remains to be done to ensure skills for the future are compatible with the needs of employers. We continue to lead the Local Skills Improvement Plan in Leicester and Leicestershire, which is shaping future curriculum and supporting further education institutions to engage with employers.

Our three networks – Generation Next, Enterprising Women and the East Midlands Manufacturing Network – are all designed to support skills development and talent

retention in our three counties, and these continue to grow at pace.

Levelling up and East Midlands devolution

We are working with key influencers and decision-makers locally, regionally and nationally, demonstrating the three counties' potential for economic growth and need for investment from the centre to achieve this.

The Chamber has supported the progress of the East Midlands Devolution Deal for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and we continue to work with decision-makers in Leicester and Leicestershire to determine how these areas can maximise Government investment.

Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire will likely have a mayor in May 2024. This new political structure, led by a single elected voice, has the potential to attract significant additional funding from the centre for local deployment. The Chamber has long been critical that the East Midlands, despite its output being among the greatest in the country, suffers from a lack of public investment when compared to other regions. This is the opportunity to redress this, and we continue to work with all political leaders across the three counties and three cities to ensure investment in all areas is maximised.

We also support other macro-economic regeneration projects, such as the East Midlands Freeport and East Midlands Development Corporation. Both will have a transformative effect on the region over the coming years.

The Chamber remains focused and dedicated to delivering accessible, relevant and intensive support to enable East Midlands businesses to become more resilient and sustainable – to grow, prosper and to support the communities they serve.

Scott Knowles DL, Chief Executive

This year in Facts and figures

14,212

Export documents completed

2,786

Customs declarations completed

1,790

People supported into work

44

Strategic partners and patrons

£3.8_m

Chamber investment

30,000+

Business support interactions

9,049

Event registrations

8,347

Businesses supported

32,695

Social media followers

281

Jobs created or safeguarded

£9.6_m

ERDF projects delivered

4,100+

Members

£4.5_m

Grants awarded

27th

Best Companies to Work For in the
business services sector national
ranking

469

Business Awards applications

39

Employment specialists

£19.3_m

Turnover

27

Business advisers and specialists
in technology and innovation

Accelerating the East Midlands economy

Concluding EU-funded project delivery

The way business support projects are funded and delivered is evolving, with those supported by European structural funds coming to an end this year.

The £3m Digital Upscaler project, part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund, was one of the Chamber's showcase projects. Between April 2020 and June 2023, it provided 1,068 ambitious businesses with the specialist knowledge, investment and capacity to scale up through embracing new technologies.

A total of £1.6m grant funding was awarded to support businesses to introduce and grow through advanced technologies.

The Chamber has been a key delivery partner in the D2N2 Growth Hub and LLEP Business Gateway Growth Hub, which between them provide a single point of access to business support in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire.

The D2N2 Growth Hub provided 13,083 hours of intensive business support to 4,177 companies between April 2019 and June 2023, while 1,370 events engaged 16,400 delegates.

This resulted in £3m worth of private sector investment and has been instrumental in helping SMEs to take the next steps in staffing, technology and finance to facilitate growth.

During the same period, the LLEP Business Gateway supported more than 4,000 SMEs and helped to create 212 jobs. It issued more than £2m in grants, leveraging a further £3.6m in private sector investment.

Local enterprise partnerships have received funding to continue delivering the Growth Hub services until March 2024, with the Chamber investing in the D2N2 Growth Hub to continue its delivery until March 2025. Businesses from across the East Midlands are able to access its comprehensive programme of webinars on digital and growth-related topics.

Accelerator: A new generation of business support

As expired EU funds are replaced, the Chamber has played a central role in designing how business support will be delivered in future.

This began with the £5.27m East Midlands Accelerator project, backed by the Government's UK Community Renewal Fund and delivered by a collaborative partnership including the region's universities and business support agencies.

Between November 2021 and December 2022, it supported 2,153 companies located in areas identified as priorities for the Government's levelling up ambitions with sustainability and business improvement activities. The project awarded £2.9m in grant funding and brokered 415 specialist consultancy projects, resulting in more than 1,000 jobs created and safeguarded, 231 decarbonisation plans developed and 98 businesses established.

Since then, we have launched the second phase of our Accelerator project, which provides businesses with one seamless point of entry for relevant business support.

It comprises key activities under the strands of net zero, innovation, digital and finance, with the aim of helping businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate.

Accelerator brings together £8.9m of publicly-funded contracts secured by the Chamber until March 2025. These include the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, a key part of the Government's levelling up agenda to enhance communities, businesses and skills; Innovate UK EDGE, which helps innovative SMEs to grow and achieve scale; and Made Smarter East Midlands, which assists manufacturers in switching to advanced and automated technologies.

Tackling economic inactivity and supporting the region's workforce

The Chamber's employment services team plays a vital role in finding work for a range of unemployed people via several Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Shared Prosperity Fund-backed schemes. In the past 12 months to October 2023, we supported 1,496 people across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, with 849 of those finding work as a result of our team's support and guidance.

During the same period, the Way2Work and Back2Work schemes, delivered with Nottingham City Council, supported 194 unemployed or inactive people facing multiple barriers via a variety of support measures, including coaching, mentoring and work experience, placing 147 into jobs. The Nottingham Works 4 You programme assisted 95 individuals aged under 25, placing 45 into work.

Better Working Futures, commissioned by DWP and run in conjunction with Reed, has supported 843 people and found jobs for 593 by linking jobseekers, support services and employers. The team has delivered advice and guidance via the National Careers Service to 364 participants, progressing 156 into employment and/or training.

Moving forward, the Chamber has secured the Working Well – East Midlands programme, part of DWP's Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care Initiative, launched in October 2023. It helps employees to access health services in order to stay in employment, as well as out-of-work people with long-term physical or mental health disabilities to move into sustainable employment.

Net Zero Accelerator EMEA Recruitment



The Nottingham-based recruitment agency was among 400 businesses that received free access to the Zellar sustainability platform as part of the Net Zero Accelerator. This was one of five strands in the Chamber-led East Midlands Accelerator programme, backed by the UK Community Renewal Fund.

Zellar helps businesses measure, plan, activate, report and share their sustainability journey, including tracking carbon emissions. EMEA used this to track and showcase its sustainability journey both internally and externally. It used a green energy switching service, energy checklist, green marketplace and online community. A transparent scoring system helped it to quantify and display sustainability actions and be held accountable.

"We want to demonstrate what we're doing via the platform to our clients, candidates and potential employees. We're proud of what we've achieved and the platform really motivates us to do and share even more."

- Claire Stone, Head of Finance

D2N2 Growth Hub Images Costumes



Its costumes have taken centre stage at The BRIT Awards and Michael Flatley shows, but after Covid-19 hit Images Costumes' business, D2N2 Growth Hub support has helped it to build a digital strategy and identify new routes to market.

The family-run business, based in Chesterfield, supplies custom-made dancewear, uniforms and active wear to dance schools, individual performers, theatres and production companies across the UK and beyond. After losing many key customers during the pandemic, its team attended workshops on website development, WordPress and social media, while the company received 12 hours of consultancy support to implement website functionality improvements.

"Technology really is ever-changing and, no matter how we try, we are never up to date. So the triage of support we've received – D2N2 business adviser support, workshops and digital consultancy – has been hugely important to our business."

- Michelle Webb, Owner and Managing Director

Rushcliffe Digital High Street The Fruit Basket



The family-run business, which sells a range of fresh produce, dairy, eggs, bakery and dry store goods from its shop in West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, wanted to ramp up its social media activity to retain new customers attracted during the pandemic, when it began an online delivery service.

It was one of 50-plus businesses supported by the Rushcliffe Digital High Street programme, funded by Rushcliffe Borough Council and delivered by Chamber business advisers. As well as attending a social media workshop, the team worked with digital consultant Paul Ince on a social media audit and business adviser Steve Phillips to deploy digital tools, including an online menu.

"Having an expert on hand to audit our social media in such a systematic way gives us greater confidence in knowing what we should be doing and where we can create best impact."

- Rachel Hyman, Co-owner

Digital Upscaler MJ Products



Material handling equipment manufacturer MJ Products expects to enhance productivity by between 60% and 120% after receiving support from the Chamber's Digital Upscaler project.

The company, based in Desford, Leicestershire, received a £23,000 technology grant and one-to-one digital technology assistance from adviser Prashant Gandabhai to integrate robotics into its fabrication process. Increased production capacity has allowed it to meet a significant increase demand in sectors like retail and utilities for its portable lifting solution for van and delivery drivers – with Openreach placing a £640,000 order – using the same factory footprint.

"Without the funding support and advice we received, we almost certainly wouldn't be looking to achieve the meteoric growth we're forecasting."

- Mark Jackson, Founder and Managing Director

East Midlands: A centre of trading excellence

Business Manifesto for Growth

The Chamber has continued to develop the lobbying work that formed its blueprint for regional economic growth, titled *A Centre of Trading Excellence: A Business Manifesto for Growth in the East Midlands and Beyond*, which was launched with members at Westminster in November 2022.

The key messages – including asking the Government to focus on the ‘four Is’ of investment, innovation, infrastructure and international trade to kickstart economic growth – have been repeated in our representations to MPs and policymakers, as well as in our media engagement.

This work continues to evolve ahead of the next General Election. In our Quarterly Economic Survey, we asked members for their policy priorities from Government; key issues cited included long-term strategies for energy and industry, speeding up the rollout of full-fibre broadband and 5G connectivity, greater investment in road and rail infrastructure projects, and better incentives for upskilling and reskilling people.

This feedback, along with other engagement work via member forums, will help us to present the key policy objectives for East Midlands businesses to prospective parliamentary candidates across the three counties before Britain heads to the polls.

Leading and influencing change in the East Midlands

Local politics is also set for major change, with a devolution deal for Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire set to create a new East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority in May 2024.

The Chamber has been a key stakeholder during the preliminary stages and we want to ensure the voice of our region’s businesses is heard loud and clear as this agenda evolves. At the same time, we will continue to lobby for the interests of

Leicester and Leicestershire businesses to be adequately represented within existing political structures.

Meanwhile, having championed the establishment of the East Midlands Freeport, which provides a series of tax and customs incentives across three sites with the aim of attracting inward investment to our region, we are now working closely with the operational team as it curates messaging to ‘sell’ our region to overseas investors.

The freeport team delivered key updates at our Midlands Energy Summit, held at the University of Nottingham in November, where delegates also heard from speakers at organisations including Toyota and National Grid.

This was one of 79 conferences, forums and policy representation events held in the year to October 2023, attracting 2,263 attendees. Others included the Manufacturing and Trade Conference, Sustainability Summit, CSR Summit, People and Skills Summit, and an inaugural Annual State of the Economy Review, as we sought to educate members about industry trends, emerging challenges and future opportunities.

Members also had regular opportunities to engage with MPs and the Bank of England.

People and skills priorities

The People and Skills Summit, in June, was an important milestone in the Chamber’s strategy to support firms with one of the key challenges they have faced in recent times – access to skilled talent – by gathering intelligence from employers and facilitating the sharing of best practices.

We are also taking a proactive approach to addressing skills gaps in our work leading the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), a Government-backed trailblazer project that

aligns local education with the needs of local employers.

The LSIP has outlined priority areas for focus and recommendations for actions to local partners, as well as a roadmap and governance structure to achieve these objectives. The evidence underpinning this work has been collated as part of the Collective Skills Intelligence Observatory – a website that automates, collates and curates data relating to the people supply and demand needs of the local area.

Government has provided £3m funding to further develop this work and we continue to engage members to help shape future skills, knowledge and behaviours.

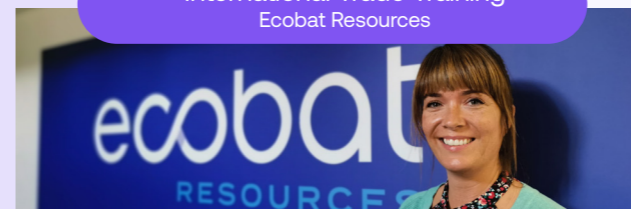
From the East Midlands to the world

The Chamber’s international trade team helps our region’s exporters and importers to safely deliver goods across borders by handling customs documentation, providing expert consultancy and delivering training programmes.

In the year to October, 535 businesses accessed the international documentation service. Our team processed 14,212 documents and completed 2,786 customs declarations. One of the documents we support businesses with is ATA carnets, which are used to temporarily move goods into other countries without paying import duties and taxes. These act as a guarantee to foreign countries that all goods will be exported within a certain time frame.

Our international trade training team also delivered 59 training days and 417 training hours across 17 topics to 324 delegates. These included export documentation, import procedures, rules of origin and new topics covering changes to international trade procedures, such as The Windsor Framework.

International Trade Training Ecobat Resources



Ecobat Resources, based in Darley Dale, Derbyshire, manages shipments of inbound used batteries and scrap lead, which is recycled into lead ingot and lead bullion that is supplied back into the battery market and other industries, with Europe the biggest export market.

Its team has attended the Chamber’s international trade training courses for several years, with customer service manager Charlie Hool enrolling on the international trade operations and procedures (ITOPS) course. Accredited by the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), the eight-day programme brings delegates up to date with import and export regulations while ensuring they avoid costly mistakes when handling customs documentation.

“Having the right knowledge can potentially save businesses money, as we found out on the ITOPS course. The awareness and skills I’ve learned has enabled me to set up robust end-to-end processes within my department.”

– Charlie Hool, Customer Service Manager

East Midlands Manufacturing Network Specialised Canvas



Paul Noble, managing director of Chesterfield-based manufacturer Specialised Canvas, is a member of the Chamber’s East Midlands Manufacturing Network (EMMN), which brings together local industry leaders to share knowledge, skills and best practice within a supportive peer environment.

He is a founding member of the Derbyshire Dales and Peak Manufacturing Network, one of five sub-networks within EMMN. Attending meetings has kept him informed at two levels – understanding the macroeconomic picture via Make UK presentations and drilling down to more local issues via internal debate. Lessons he took from an expert speaker led to him implementing energy-saving measures that have made the firm 15% energy cost savings.

“Being in the same room as others experiencing the same issues is a real help. The network has sparked ideas, offered solutions and is helping to grow our business.”

– Paul Noble, Managing Director

The Global Player Copley Scientific



The vast majority of inhalers used to treat asthma around the world are assessed using kit made by Copley Scientific, a Nottingham-based manufacturer of pharmaceutical testing equipment with a customer base spanning almost 100 countries.

Founded in 1946, the family-owned business is an international market leader in orally-inhaled and nasal drug product testing, with some of the world’s biggest pharma companies using its equipment to also develop tablets, capsules, skin creams, suppositories and nasal sprays.

The company was recognised as the Chamber’s Nottinghamshire Business of the Year for 2022 and was a finalist in The Global Player category of the BCC’s Chamber Business Awards 2023.

“We have a fantastic culture with brilliant people doing something highly valuable across the world and it was great to showcase this at a local level at the Nottinghamshire Business Awards.”

– Mark Copley, CEO

Annual State of the Economy Review University of Leicester School of Business



For the first time, the Chamber hosted an Annual State of the Economy Review in December 2022, an event held in partnership with the University of Leicester, emh group and Geldards. The event featured input from expert economists, politicians and business leaders, helping members to learn more about the global and local factors influencing operating conditions, and share ideas on how future business growth can be best supported.

The conference formed part of a strategic partnership between the Chamber and University of Leicester School of Business that focuses on developing economic thought leadership in the region via research, skills data visualisation and business support.

“I am proud to see the School of Business increasing our involvement with the local area and business community to make a positive impact.”

– Professor Dan Ladley, Dean of the University of Leicester School of Business

Supporting East Midlands communities and responsible business

Taking a lead on ESG

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) is quickly becoming one of the most important agendas for businesses to consider as everyone from potential employees and customers to contractors and regulators place greater emphasis on an organisation's purpose beyond profit.

The Chamber continues to support our members on their ESG journey and being a responsible business. We connected 100 business leaders with more than 20 charities at our East Midlands CSR Summit in July. It featured a shorter speaking agenda to encourage conversations that can lead to relationships between commerce and community.

Our Sustainability Summit in September highlighted the importance of businesses adopting net zero strategies with examples of companies benefiting from cost savings, winning new customers and engaging employees.

Underpinning these activities is unique research conducted in partnership with our strategic partner, the University of Derby.

Our CSR study shows six in 10 East Midlands businesses run community-based activities but gaps remain in engagement due to reasons such as a lack of resource or it not being deemed a strategic priority. Our *Green Growth Trends in the East Midlands 2023* report showed green growth activity in the region fell over the past year amid the cost-of-doing-business

crisis, but has still more than doubled since 2015, when we began the research.

The Chamber's Sustainable East Midlands initiative continues to signpost members to where they can receive support for adopting sustainable business practices, and our Net Zero Accelerator offers grants and one-to-one advice in this area.

Our internal ESG working group has achieved wins for the Chamber's own sustainability journey. These include creating a carbon reduction action plan, installing solar panels on some buildings and gaining ISO 14001 environmental management certification in July 2023.

Creating an inclusive workforce

Other key research has been carried out into equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), in partnership with emh group, as the Chamber supports businesses in creating inclusive workplaces that will ultimately help them to broaden their talent pool when attempting to recruit.

The study showed that 54% of organisations – up from 48% a year earlier – have an EDI-related policy, with respondents citing benefits such as diversity of thought in decision-making, improved staff recruitment and retention, and better representing customers and clients.

The research also highlighted barriers to adoption, which the Chamber and emh group are now exploring ways to address following a roundtable discussion with members.

Taking a lead in this area, we sit on prison employment advisory boards that identify job opportunities for inmates to help their reintegration into society, and were one of the first signatories of the Fair Chance Business Alliance, which aims to create a tiered quality standard for inclusive recruitment practices that help ex-offenders into employment.

This year also marked the conclusion of D2N2 Building Better Opportunities, an innovative programme supported by the Chamber that connected local authorities, businesses and other key agencies with the aim of tackling long-term unemployment. Funded by the European Social Fund and National Lottery Community Fund, it helped 8,908 economically inactive people across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire via three distinctive projects promoting social inclusion.

Celebration of Culture and Communities

One of the most popular events in the Chamber calendar is Celebration of Culture and Communities, which was attended by 250 people at Athena in Leicester.

Held in partnership with emh group and De Montfort University, it featured music, dance and food from across the world, delivered by East Midlands-based performers and caterers. The Chamber presented a special award to Dr Nik Kotecha OBE, founder of The Randal Charitable Foundation, for Outstanding Contribution to East Midlands Communities.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Guilford Fabric Textiles



Europe's biggest automotive textile manufacturer, part of Lear Corporation, has embraced EDI by creating multiple resource groups and campaigns to support staff, as well as "communities" within the business advocating for women empowerment, African ancestry, the LGBTQ+ community, Indian origin professionals, young professionals and military veterans.

It champions EDI strategically, with senior leadership teams filtering down initiatives through the corporate structure to all its sites, including Guilford Fabric Textiles' plant in Alfreton, Derbyshire.

An inclusive working culture has enabled the business to maintain employee turnover rates of below 1% and low absence rates, which rarely go above 2% across a team of 257 people.

"With diversity, you get so much talent because people have different views, different perspectives, different life experiences – all the things that, when combined, make an organisation far greater than the sum of its parts."

- Chris Biddulph, Operations Director

Generation Next Theo Beauchamp



Theo, who has worked her way up Nottingham-based Express Recruitment from recruitment consultant to director of people, won the headline Future Leader Award, sponsored by the University of Derby, at the Generation Next Awards 2023 in July.

After being promoted to operations director last year, Theo created a new position to provide HR support to contribute to strategic plans for development, training, incentives and high-performance working. Theo has also incorporated her own organisation TK Consulting into the business, using her expertise to help clients with people strategies. She is an ambassador for mentoring within the Generation Next network, which helps young professionals in the region to build their skills and networks.

"It felt surreal to win this award. I'm incredibly passionate about empowering young people in our region to be brave, bold and do what they want to do. My message to them is the world is your oyster so go for it and you'll surprise yourself."

- Theo Beauchamp, Director of People at Express Recruitment

Employment Services Nottingham Venues



The event space operator has provided employment for Ukrainian refugees, filling vacancies while offering individuals a helping hand in integrating into their new surroundings after fleeing war. One of these is Anastasiia Markeliuk, who was recruited as a food and beverage assistant at the company, which oversees a collection of venues set in the University of Nottingham's grounds.

Her placement followed support from the Chamber's employment services team, which has helped more than 150 refugees from Ukraine and Syria with personalised training courses, CV and job application writing, interview preparation, housing and financial assistance, introductions to employers and English language lessons.

"There are skills shortages in many sectors in the UK and businesses should not be discouraged from employing refugees to fill those roles. There is support available from the Chamber and other organisations that can help companies looking to employ refugees."

- Suzie Adams, HR Director

King's Awards for Enterprise TDP



Based in Wirksworth, Derbyshire, TDP makes outdoor furniture and accessories – including benches, picnic tables, garden dining sets and bird feeders – made from recycled plastic.

The company embraces the circular economy, which aims to reduce waste and minimise the environmental impact of manufactured products, recycling more than 4,300 tonnes of plastic waste to create its products over the past decade. It has grown its product portfolio by introducing new machinery, with the support of Chamber-led projects including the D2N2 Growth Hub, Digital Upscaler and East Midlands Accelerator project.

TDP's commitment to sustainable innovation landed it a King's Award for Enterprise in sustainable development earlier this year.

"The benefits of using a circular model includes growth but also the perception of our business. Over the next 15 years, sustainability is going to be a bigger part of customer acceptance and service."

- Rob Barlow, Founder and Managing Director

Annual Accounts 2022/2023

Consolidated Profit and Loss Account // Year ended March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Turnover	19,357,842	14,792,236
Operating costs	(18,906,773)	(14,765,337)
Other operating income	21,420	92,959
Surplus on revaluation of investment properties	-	238,944
Operating profit	472,489	358,802
Share of profit of associates	-	182,391
Share of associates exceptional profit on disposal of subsidiaries	-	2,516,232
Total operating profit	472,489	3,057,425
Interest receivable and similar income	51,991	6,311
Interest payable and similar expenses	(15,578)	(20,162)
Profit before taxation	508,902	3,043,574
Tax on profit	37,350	(3,304)
Profit for the year	546,252	3,040,270
Total comprehensive income for the year	546,252	3,040,270
Profit for the year attributable to:		
Non-controlling interests	157,495	31,216
Owners of the parent company	388,757	3,009,054
	546,252	3,040,270

Consolidated Balance Sheet // Year ended March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets		
Intangible Assets	2,306,411	1,017,194
Tangible Assets	2,356,857	2,402,264
Investments	420,248	420,248
Investment Property	2,677,559	2,677,559
	7,151,075	6,517,265
Current assets		
Debtors	3,367,039	3,834,366
Cash at Banks and in hand	12,261,990	13,910,420
	15,629,029	17,744,786
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(7,030,258)	(8,407,777)
Net current assets	8,598,771	9,337,009
Total assets less current liabilities	15,749,846	15,854,274
Creditors: Amount falling due after more than one year	(334,242)	(914,929)
Net assets	15,415,604	14,939,345
Capital and reserves		
Profit and loss account	13,953,935	13,565,178
No-controlling Interests	1,461,669	1,374,167
	15,415,604	14,939,345

Kevin Harris, Director: 

Our networks

Generation Next



The Chamber's network for young professionals and future business leaders aged under 35, Generation Next has grown quickly since its inception in 2020.

It now has more than 300 members, who attend practical workshops to develop professional skills, peer-to-peer networking events to boost confidence, and other social meet-ups where guest speakers can help to improve motivation, innovation and creativity.

New initiatives added since it was established have included mentoring opportunities with experienced business leaders and an evolving resource library that supports with areas of learning and development.

The third annual Generation Next Awards were held in July at Bustler Market in Derby, with 11 honours handed out to rising stars in the East Midlands business community.

These included Theo Beauchamp, director of people at Express Recruitment, who won the Future Leader Award, sponsored by headline partner, the University of Derby.

Shaping the network is a board of "champions" and ambassador network. The champions are a group of 11 forward-thinking and talented young professionals from across the region that take an active role in the development of Generation Next activity and profile. There are 20 individuals in the ambassador network, which was set up in April 2023 to act as a conduit between Generation Next champions and members by providing feedback on key developments and ideas.



East Midlands Manufacturing Network



Established in 2021 and with more than 300 members, the East Midlands Manufacturing Network provides a dedicated, supportive peer network to bring together key knowledge and skills in order to secure the future of the region's manufacturing industry.

Joining the business-led support network enables members to:

- Champion – increase awareness and create a positive perception of manufacturing to attract investment to the region
- Learn – hear from industry experts who can provide an insight into addressing challenges faced by manufacturing businesses

- Grow – stay informed about the financial support on offer for the industry, and tap into specialist advice to grow
- Lead change – get involved in lobbying activity to make sure their voice is heard regionally and nationally.

The network forums, typically held every eight weeks, take place at university venues across Derby, Derbyshire Dales and High Peak, Leicester, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire.

Alongside the usual opportunities for members to share best practice and talk through common challenges and opportunities, expert speakers have covered topics including recruiting ex-offenders, upskilling existing staff throughout degree apprenticeships and energy-saving measures.

We have also welcomed the Manufacturing Technology Centre as a strategic partner of the network and the Chamber. It offers manufacturers the opportunity to try out new technologies, assess impact and determine whether to invest.

Enterprising Women

After celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022, Enterprising Women has enjoyed another strong year that has included a rebranding.

The network, which is led by co-chairs Jean Mountain and Eileen Perry MBE DL, supports female professionals and business owners to connect, grow and succeed throughout their careers. It helps members to develop valuable relationships through networking events, improve personal and professional skills at interactive workshops, and be inspired and motivated by guest speakers.

The success of female talent across the region is also celebrated at the annual Enterprising Women Awards.

There were 10 winners at this year's gala dinner, held in partnership with Michael Smith Switchgear and attended by 350 guests at Winstanley House in Leicester.

Sue Tilley, head of business and innovation at the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP), received the Lifetime Achievement Award, while Jaz Kaur, co-founder and CEO of Fraser Stretton Property Group, won the Business Woman of the Year title.

Another special award was presented by the Enterprising Women co-chairs to Mary Storrie, CEO of the Rosie May Foundation.



Who we are

Senior leadership team



Scott Knowles DL
Chief Executive



Diane Beresford
Deputy Chief Executive



Chris Hobson
Director of Policy and Insight



Rashmi Overthrow
Director of Sales and Marketing



David Pearson
Director of Partnerships



Lucy Robinson
Director of Resources

Board of Directors as of 13 December 2023



Kevin Harris
Chair of the Board
RSM UK



Stuart Dawkins
President



Craig Brothers
Vice-President
Six Degrees Associates



Emma Baumbach
Future Life Wealth
Management



Mark Deakin
Turner & Townsend



Dr Cham Kang
Qinesis



Eileen Perry MBE DL
ER Recruitment



John Robinson
Institute of Export &
International Trade



Dawn Whitmore
SMB College Group



David Williams MBE DL
Geldards LLP



Lindsey Williams
Immediate Past President
Futures Housing Group

New members of the Board of Directors

Co-opted during 2023

Martin Barnett
TTK Confectionery

George Oliver
1284

Maz Patel
Scope Group

Amit Sonpal
Barclays Corporate
Banking

Anju Trevedi MBE
De Montfort University
and Twycross Zoo

Sandra Wiggins
Authentically Balanced

Strategic Partners



Patrons



Our offices

Chesterfield

Commerce House, Millennium Way, Dunston Road, Chesterfield, S41 8ND

Derby

Enterprise Centre, Bridge Street, Derby, DE1 3LD

Glossop

Unit 4, The Old Co-op Building, Railway Street, Glossop, SK13 7AG

Mansfield

C/O Mansfield Citizens Advice, 16 Regent Street, Mansfield, NG18 1SS

Nottingham

8 Experian Way, ng2 Business Park, Nottingham, NG2 1EP

Leicester

Friars Mill, Bath Lane, Leicester, LE3 5BJ

Leicester Food Park

High View Close, Lewisher Road, Leicester, LE4 9LJ

The Brian Clough Centre

200-222 Cotton Lane, Derby, DE24 8GJ

east midlands
chamber

Derbyshire | Leicestershire | Nottinghamshire

East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire)

0333 320 0333 info@emc-dnl.co.uk www.emc-dnl.co.uk