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Volume 1 Edition 4

# SWITCH ON TO BUSINESS

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# SWITCH ON TO BUSINESS

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# EDITORIAL

## Welcome back!

What a few months it has been! All kinds of changes have been happening here at Switch on to Business since November 2015, which has made us all incredibly excited about what this year has to offer. This past quarter has really endorsed our belief that everything truly does happen for a reason, whether you are able to see it at the time or not, which I think is an incredibly important lesson to learn in business. Managing change and adapting to that change sometimes takes you and your business in a different direction, but modifying your plans is a test in business as resilience and determination come into play.

Hindsight is a funny thing, which is why I would bet extremely highly on the fact that every business operating nowadays has had to adapt and cope with change that may have seemed devastating at the time, but which without it, would not have opened up opportunities such as x, y and z. To successfully manage this, the business in question needs to focus on the positive sides, act professionally and wait for the silver linings to appear. They will. To read about my own personal battle with this, turn to page 54.

As it's a new year, we decided to make some changes to the magazine itself, to ensure that the messages we intend to deliver to our readers are accurately conveyed. If you flick to page 49, you will notice that what we used to refer to as our Education section is now renamed as 'Future Talent'. We realised that the former title did not express what we aim to showcase, which is what our young people have to offer and their successes and achievements; whether they are students and graduates or have already left the world of education we to need to inspire them to put their talents to work in this area – they are our future, after all!

Speaking of becoming inspired, this edition showcases the launch of a new feature. 'Inspirational Liverpool' (p.66) recognises individuals that have achieved the impossible, the amazing and the downright outstanding. This does not have to be directly business related, as the point of the feature is to inspire others to achieve their own dreams. Our first 'Inspirational Liverpool' centres on the incredible achievement of Ken Mullen – an absolute must-read, and a potential tear-jerker. Hankies at the ready!

I truly hope that this year awards the businesses we work with prosperity and success, and if any changes occur that they turn out to be positive. If there are any small businesses reading this that are struggling, remember you are always welcome to turn to the New Business Development Club ([www.newbusinessdevelopmentclub.co.uk](http://www.newbusinessdevelopmentclub.co.uk)), where advice will always be given no matter how small or large the problem may seem.

Enjoy Edition 4, and if you have any queries please do not hesitate to email us at: [info@switchontobusiness.co.uk](mailto:info@switchontobusiness.co.uk). We love hearing from our readers, almost as much as we love the magazine itself.

*Thank you,*

Bethany Atkin  
**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

*Switch on to*  
**BUSINESS**



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[www.switchontobusiness.co.uk](http://www.switchontobusiness.co.uk)

SWITCH ON TO  
**BUSINESS**



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Let's Talk Brand*

**WORDS:** Lin Boyd, Director, New Business Development Club

**T**his is something we hear many times in conversation within business, 'The Brand', whether this is through your trademark, patent or copyright, design, logo, or packaging etc.

Larger organisations invest heavily in developing their brand which includes the luxury of being able to hire brand managers, marketing and legal teams, but this is not the case for many small businesses out there that are just starting out.

Despite the fact that new and aspiring business owners do not necessarily have the funds to invest to that level, there still needs to be a huge consideration of the brand in its entirety.

The brand is the identity of the product or service that you are offering; although the legal aspects of protection are key to the ongoing success of an organisation, there are also other elements that form part of the development and ongoing success of your product or service.

When we decide to start out in business, we spend so much time talking about our brand identity - what is it that we are going to do and how are we going to do it? How are we going to stand out from our competitors? What is going to make us different and how do we incorporate those decisions into a 'brand'? What is our product or service and how do we relay that message to our customer to engage them?

Once we have identified these components, we then start to build the 'brand' and the business starts to move forward and develop.

Let's think about some of the key components that we may under-estimate:

### **The 'Brand Promise'**

In essence, this is our promise to our customers: what will the customer experience? It is more than just the product or service - it is also the feelings and experiences that the customer has by using the offer.

Bringing your brand to life through careful planning, consideration and research etc. is key and should have the time allocated to it that does justice to what, at the end of the day, is your future as a successful business. We are keen to demonstrate worth to our potential customers and are keen to demonstrate this through our products themselves, the service that we provide and keeping the customer at the heart of everything we do.

However, it is so easy for a new business to take their eye off the ball as they are spinning so many plates, not having the luxury of specific teams to manage their brand, customer experience or marketing. We need to find a way to limit any damage that we may come up against, in some cases this can be outside of our control, but more likely than not it is within our control.

How many times have we visited a store of a reputable company with an expectation based on our understanding of 'the brand' and its 'promise', to then be so disappointed at what we then experience?

### **The Perception of Your Brand is in the Absolute Control of Your Customer**

Therefore, you should invest as much time and effort that you can in terms of developing

your brand – is the message clear and believable? Do not over-promise and under-deliver. Are we listening to our customer and therefore enabling our own development using their feedback?

Take time to get to know your brand; this will not happen in a split second or at one meeting with a marketing specialist - you as the owner need to know it, understand its personality and direct it in the right way following research and customer feedback to ensure that you are on the right track. This means that you can operate in a timely manner, offering the right brand to the right audience at the right time.

Keep in touch with your brand regularly, as you would with a good friend, and ensure that it has sufficient investment to be successful. Your brand needs time to grow, but laying the right foundations plays a massive part in how you then develop.

You really need to know your brand – in turn you will then always have the confidence that your consumer is experiencing what they expect and you are even exceeding that expectation. Customers will then talk about these experiences in a positive way which is one of the most powerful marketing tools!

Remember that your competitors are doing the same and you need to ensure that you are ahead of the game and do not take your eye off the ball. If your products, services and your customer's perception are exceptional then you too will be exceptional and your brand will grow, and will develop strength and power to lead.

# THE NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CLUB



Starting a new business is all about learning new skills, building successful lasting relationships, understanding how you need to grow and develop, and subsequently how to grow and develop your vision.

## **The New Business Development Club**

was launched in 2013, offering a brand new informal approach to business support and guidance. We offer various interventions, including one to one support to guide and develop you and your business for as long as required.

## **What's on offer?**

- A suite of workshops dedicated to the business professional.
- Events to pitch and showcase products and services
- Key business experts to give you advice from finance, marketing, HR, business planning and personal and professional development.
- One to One support and guidance from a qualified business consultant
- Tailored training packages to suit skill gaps and development
- Exclusive opportunities available to our members
- Advertising opportunities through Switch on to Business magazine
- Free networking events, building relationships with like-minded individuals and potential customers



## BUSINESS IN PROFILE



### WEDDING PLANNERS GUILD UK YVONNE BENNETT



*As the first wedding business to become an IOEE Academy for the prestigious Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs, the Wedding Planners Guild UK is a training programme for wedding planners that aims to bring new standards to the industry to ensure professionalism and regulation.*

The industry has seen rapid growth in recent years and I've certainly witnessed an increased demand for qualified wedding planners. Wedding planning can be such a rewarding and fulfilling career, allowing planners to use their creativity and organisational skills to help couples ensure that their 'happiest day' is entirely stress free. There are plenty of benefits to the job role, as 25% of wedding planners report flexible working hours with some bringing home earnings of up to £40,500. It is important as a wedding planner to obtain professional skills and training that is backed by relevant qualifications – and this is where Wedding Planners Guild UK steps in.

Aside from the three-day classroom-based training, students wanting to embark on a career in the wedding industry will complete a compulsory portfolio documenting their practical wedding planning abilities for assessment. This ensures that they can take what they have learnt and apply it to real wedding scenarios which is certainly something that couples looking for a wedding planner will take note of. When one student successfully completes their training, they can also become an official member of the Wedding Planners Guild UK, allowing them to take advantage of a range of benefits including online forums, industry meetings and the opportunity to connect with a number of relevant industry outlets – another benefit for brides and grooms planning their big day. Wedding Planners Guild UK takes pride in educating the future generation of wedding planners and seeing its students progress and grow into experts in their field.

I previously ran my own small company in Rotterdam called 'The Planner: Event & Wedding Planning' and was regional manager of the Rotterdam area for Wedding Planners

International, before moving back to the UK to start up Wedding Planners Guild UK. The best thing about my job is having the ability to teach; it's a role I've always dreamed of filling and to be able to do so within an industry I'm so passionate about is really rewarding. I'd definitely say I was a people person - it makes me feel fulfilled to see a happy student or a happy couple following a perfect wedding, and I love that my career allows me to meet new people almost every day. I relish in the research aspect of my role, as I spend most of my days searching for and uncovering new information within my trade. Regularly revisiting and re-writing my training will be an ongoing project, as the wedding industry changes so often, so the Wedding Planners Guild UK will need to adapt with it. It's important to keep updated and I do so through various social media platforms and publications.

There are many skills that are required to do my job, of course, but it's also important that I'm a strong motivator and highly creative. I definitely think that being able to listen, be patient, have a sense of humour and show empathy for others also goes a long way. My biggest achievement so far is becoming a Partner with National Careers Week in March 2016, and I look forward to seeing what my company will achieve in the future.

*For more information about Wedding Planners Guild UK, please visit:  
[www.weddingplannersguilduk.com](http://www.weddingplannersguilduk.com).*

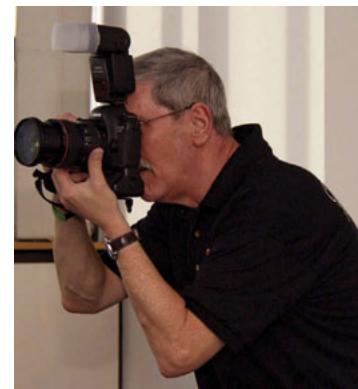
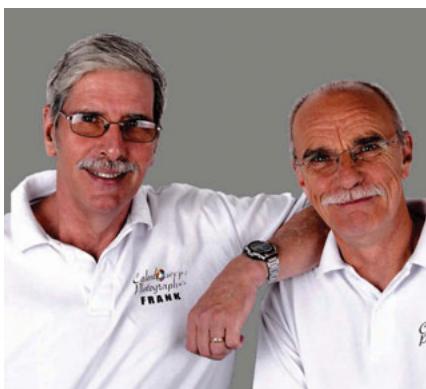
*If you would like to contact Yvonne, you can email her at:  
[info@weddingplannersguilduk.com](mailto:info@weddingplannersguilduk.com).*



## BUSINESS IN PROFILE

# Caleidoscope Photographers

### CALEIDOSCOPE PHOTOGRAPHERS



*Caleidoscope Photographers is a photography service with a difference. Their approach is informal and relaxed, and they aim to take the seriousness out of photography. Frank Leatherbarrow and Stan Blundell founded the business in 2013 and both form a part of the first cohort of membership in the New Business Development Club. You may also recognise their work which has been used in every edition of Switch on to Business thus far, so let's meet the men behind the camera!*

**Frank:** Many years ago, before we set up the business, we both worked for Dixons Group. We met there, became friends, and found out that we both had a background in photography.

**Stan:** When we had more time on our hands we decided to pursue our passion, as people always asked us why we didn't photograph for a living anyway.

**Frank:** It's not easy setting up a photography business, especially these days. Doing it solo would be a lot more difficult than working with a partner, as if one of us can't make it at least the other will be able to attend.

**Stan:** We both believe that we work with our customers rather than for them, as we want to build a relationship with each client. We also want our customers to enjoy the experience we provide, and as we both have different viewpoints we are able to fully serve the end user, as they have a choice of two different perspectives.

**Frank:** Sometimes if you put a camera in someone's face they don't know what to do, and they freeze. We want them to unfreeze. Most photographers will photograph their clients in unnatural poses, yet we like people to be themselves and relax when we are working as we know many of us do not like to be photographed.

**Stan:** When we finished our New Enterprise Allowance which helped us start the business we were left in a bit of a void.

**Frank:** The Chamber of Commerce referred us to

the New Business Development Club, so we decided to join. We felt comfortable from the very first meeting we attended and the other members were welcoming and genuinely interested in what we wanted to do. Lin and Jackie gave us direction – I don't know how things would have turned out had we not joined the NBDC.

**Stan:** We were all in very similar positions; the members had either just started the business or had been going a while, but lacked direction. They had no advice on how they should be steering the business path that they wanted to tread.

**Frank:** The NBDC has been incredibly informative – and eye-opening at times. I think we may have stopped the business a year or two back if it weren't for the Club as it's given us business confidence. Business is difficult, but if you want to remove the difficulty join the NBDC.

**Stan:** We have also been involved with the magazine since its very beginning, and have had our work published in it from Edition 1. Through this, we have worked with high profile businesses and individuals across Liverpool, and people who need exposure.

**Frank:** Working with the magazine has been both challenging and fun, as we travel all over the city with Beth, the Editor, to take pictures of the businesses and individuals that are featured in each edition.

*To find out more about Caleidoscope Photographers, you can visit their website at: [www.caleidoscope.photography](http://www.caleidoscope.photography)*

# THE NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CLUB

## NEW MEMBERS 2016

The NBDC is growing in membership numbers month on month. Meeting businesses with vision and drive is really refreshing and infectious - our city is overflowing with skill and talent and new businesses are a fundamental part of the success of our region. Here, we have selected some of our new members to introduce; if you would like to contact them, you will find their full details in the Business Directory on page 93.

*We wish our new businesses the very best for their future success.*



### Cigam Productions

Cigam Productions specialises in cabaret and circus entertainment. Cigam is the reflection of magic, let us add the magic to your special event.



### Brilliant Liverpool Tours

Brilliant Liverpool Tours are a local Destination Management Company selling inbound packages and supplying Blue Badge Tour Guides to promote the region as an essential overnight destination from which to explore N.W England & North Wales.



### HST Training

At HST Training Ltd, we provide professional health & safety, construction, training and consultancy across the UK to all business. These include, Engineering, Construction, Hotel & Leisure and many more.



### Three Graces Liverpool

Three Graces Legal are a new and innovative law firm based at the heart of the Commercial District in Liverpool City Centre. We recognise that the provision of legal services is changing like never before and we provide a partnership with businesses specialising in Employment Law, HR Support, Health & Safety, Cyber Security and more.



### OCM Print

OCM Print sells a wide range of products and services, such as everyday essential print and graphic design solutions at affordable prices, retaining high quality results.



### Miss Lady Lox

The finest quality hair extensions on the market. My New Hair – MNH – is a collection of premium, 100% natural Slavic hair extensions and exclusive new hair care products, created especially for use on extensions. Easily removed and cared for, MNH extensions are the perfect short or long term solution for flowing, full, glossy locks.



*If you would like to find out more about the NBDC, please visit our website at: [www.newbusinessdevelopmentclub.co.uk](http://www.newbusinessdevelopmentclub.co.uk). Or, if you are a new business and would like to be featured in Switch on to Business, please drop us a line at: [info@switchontobusiness.co.uk](mailto:info@switchontobusiness.co.uk)*

# Paying too much in accountancy fees? Paying too much tax? Require more pro-active advice?

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# *How do you know if you have got there, if you don't know where you're going?*

**WORDS:** Jackie Lee, Director, New Business Development Club

**S**o, you have what you believe is a brilliant business idea; an innovative product or a fabulous service. You are so excited and passionate about your ideas for your business and your future success – so what next?

Whether you are considering setting up a new business, are in the early years of your business, or an established business already, the importance of having a current, well-thumbed Business Plan is key.

I am always impressed when business owners tell me they have a Business Plan, and I am even more impressed when they tell me that they understand the importance of a plan and that they refer to it on a regular basis.

**A Business Plan should be a working document referred to regularly which forms part of your planning and decision making. It isn't a lining for your desk drawer!**

Putting together a Business Plan may seem daunting at first, but it doesn't need to be 'war and peace'; it just needs to be a clear, SMART, (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound) easy to understand document that assists in creating the foundations upon which to build your business.

You may feel that your idea has a place in the market, but until you research, plan, assess and complete all the relevant data required, you may be setting yourself up to fail! Having a Business Plan will keep you focused, and can be used when applying for credit or funding for your business, when hiring employees, for risk

assessment or just as a route map to outline how you are going to achieve your goals.

The complexity of your Business Plan will depend on the scope of your business, your future plans and whether you need to apply for credit or funding to support your business growth. It can be invaluable in persuading investors and lenders to provide capital for your business.

## **Reasons to Create a Business Plan**

*It will help you to consider the following:*

- Has my business idea a chance to succeed?
- Has my business a chance of making a good profit?
- What is a realistic estimate of my start-up costs, and how much will I need to invest or finance?
- What will convince investors and lenders to fund my business?
- What will be an estimate of my revenue and who is my target market?
- What will an effective marketing strategy look like?
- How will I compete in the marketplace and what is my unique selling point (USP)?
- How can I anticipate potential problems so that I can solve them before they become disasters?

There are many ways to put together your plan, and here is a simple, easy to use format that is suitable for start-up and early stage businesses. You can also find numerous templates on-line or in business publications to start you on your way. The important thing

is that you actually produce a plan, continually develop it and use it as a working document; one which changes as your business and business goals change – as they invariably will!

## Executive Summary

- Ownership and Management structure
- Goals and Objectives of business
- Product or service of business
- Target Market/Pricing Strategy/Competitors

## Product or Service

- Brief summary of your business idea.
- Description of the range of products or services your business will sell or provide.
- Where you will work from.
- Time commitment - working full time or part time?
- Who will be your suppliers?
- Any business partners, shareholders or employees, or will it just be you running the business?

## Proprietors

- Outline levels of knowledge, skills and abilities of proprietors and how they relate to your business idea.
- Produce a personal development plan to address any areas that need development.

## Aims and Objectives

- What do you want to gain from running your own business?
- What do you expect your business to achieve in the short, medium and long term?

## Marketing

- Customer & Stakeholder Research
- Customer research findings
- Stakeholder research findings
- Competitor Research (understand strengths and weaknesses of your business compared with your competitors and identify any opportunities and threats to your business.)
- Pricing and costing - how you compare with competitors and how you have arrived at your selling price.

- Advertising and promotion – detail different advertising strategies and mediums.
- Draw up an Advertising Plan for promoting and selling your product or service.
- Describe your planned customer care and after-sales service and methods of evaluation.

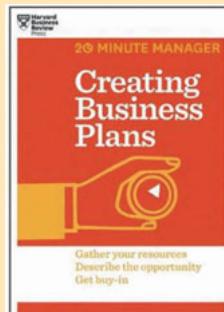
## Organisation

- Setting up and running an enterprise legally.
- Consider and identify the legal trading status most appropriate for you and your business.
- Detail the legal and regulatory requirements.
- Documentation, systems and customer information required for setting up and running your business.
- Identify a minimum of two sources of support and advice for trading legally and safely within legal, regulatory and health and safety requirements.
- Outline the health, safety and environmental requirements relevant to your business.

## Finance

- List the costs involved in starting and running your business.
- Show pre-start costs of setting up your business.
- Identify sources of business start-up funding and the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Estimate how much it will cost you to run your business each month.
- Identify what it will cost to generate sales and realistically estimate how many sales likely to be made.
- Detail the financial records that need to be retained and the reasons for retaining them.
- Explain how your financial records will be used to monitor enterprise growth.
- Produce a projected Profit & Loss account for your first year's trading, including a break-even calculation and attach it to your plan.
- Produce a simple cash flow forecast for the business for its first year's trading and calculate the break-even point.
- Detail a budget to ensure the sustainability of your business.

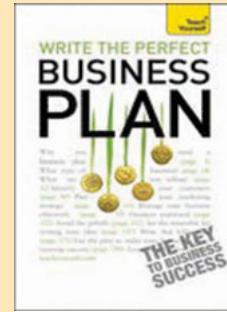
Here is some reading material that you may find useful when compiling your Business Plan



Creating Business Plans  
Harvard Business Review  
£7.99 Paperback



Successful Business Plans  
Jane Kuehne & Michael Anderson  
£9.99 Paperback



Write the Perfect Business Plan  
Polly Bird  
£10.99 Paperback

If you require any help or information - go to the New Business Development Club website ([www.newbusinessdevelopmentclub.co.uk](http://www.newbusinessdevelopmentclub.co.uk)) home page, select the 'Get in Touch' icon and either telephone or email us. A member of the team will contact you to discuss your individual needs.

# Launch22: SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME



PICTURES: Caleidoscope Photography

**I**n November, Switch on to Business was invited to the introduction of Launch22's 'Scholarship' programme. Not only were we wined, dined and given the opportunity to connect with likeminded businesses, we were also able to find out more about this fantastic programme and what it proposed to offer Liverpool's business community.

Launch22 is a UK charity helping to accelerate next generation entrepreneurs and their start-up businesses. Combining low-cost co-working office space with mentoring, it is an organisation operating on commercial principles, alongside corporate sponsors. Born in mid-2014, based in Shoreditch and now in Liverpool, they have helped businesses grow and founders develop the skills they need for success.



Matthew Kennedy, Office Manager of Launch22, hosts the evening



Councillor Gary Millar talking to the attendees about the benefits of Launch22



Guests mingling afterwards and enjoying the pizza supplied by American Pizza Slice.

**The guys at Launch22 identified three problems when it comes to setting up a new business:**

### 1. Isolation

Working from home, cafes or libraries can be lonely and isolating. There isn't a physical location where entrepreneurs can spend their time with peers, share experiences and lean on each other for support.

### 2. Lack of hands-on advice and guidance

"Fear of failure" is cited as the second most important reason for young people choosing not to set up their own business. Mentoring is typically on an irregular, distanced basis.

### 3. Inability to access finance

Early stage finance (£5,000-£25,000) is available, but there is no appetite for banks, private or social investors to provide capital to early stage start-ups in amounts ranging from £25,000 to £150,000. Banks have no appetite and private investors are rarely interested in such small ticket sizes.



Gary Millar



Vicky Hardman and Bethany Atkin discuss the event over pizza

**They managed to come up with a solution to each of these problems, which is where the Scholarship Programme comes into play. The programme will offer:**

### 1. Workspace

Provision of free and affordable workspace and meeting rooms in prime business locations, and the ability to be a part of the friendly community created through mentor and peer connections. Launch22 have collaborated with Mersey Travel, therefore members of the scholarship programme will be able to enjoy huge discounts commuting around Liverpool.

### 2. Mentoring

On and off-site mentoring delivered by entrepreneurs and suitable professionals, and the use of bespoke mentor training based on 'Lean Start-up' principles.

### 3. Finance

Signposting to – and delivery of – seed finance, and exclusive access to the investment fund created by Launch22.

The Scholarship Programme at Launch22 offers socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs a chance to start their business by providing this space to use as their own for three months. At the end of the three months, the progress of the business and the individual will be reviewed and decisions will be made with regards to the next steps that are to be taken. Launch22 aims to house 70% paying members, and 30% scholars, as they believe that we should all be encouraged to follow our business aspirations.

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME CRITERIA

- In receipt of at least one benefit or tax credit:

Provide benefit or tax credit award notice and proof that the person is still getting benefits or tax credits. Example of benefits considered: Income Support, Job Seeker Allowance

- Unemployed

Provide P45 or a letter from the last employer confirming that the person is not employed in the company anymore.

- Supported by another charity/organisation

Get in touch with us through the charity/organisation's social workers, to arrange a meeting. If the person has exited the programme already, provide a reference from the charity/organisation's social worker (the one who has been supervising him or her) and details on the program itself.

Please note that entrepreneurs seeking funding and current full-time students are exempt from the scholarship programme.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

**Step One:** The applicant will fill in an application form, and provide any other relevant materials they feel necessary (*this could include a draft business plan, for example*).

**Step Two:** Launch22 staff and external sources/mentors, will review the applicant based on their application/additional provided material.

**Step Three:** Successful candidates will be invited to Launch22 for an informal interview; the interview panel may include possible external supporters of the programme, mentors and Launch22 staff.

**Step Four:** Candidates will be selected and assigned a designated mentor whom they will have regular meetings with; these meetings must be documented.

**\*The Launch22 scholarship scheme works on a 3-month rolling contract and the position of the scholar is re-assessed at the end of each period**

**For more information about the Scholarship programme, and of Launch22, please visit: [www.launch22.co.uk](http://www.launch22.co.uk), or follow them on Twitter @Launch22Liv.**



# The Elevator Edition 3 Winners

## STRASSER CRÉATIONS

### ELIANE STRASSER, STRASSER CRÉATIONS

Strasser Creations - a place to turn creative ideas into works of beautiful jewellery. Eliane Strasser, the designer, is inspired by people's stories and loves creating these personal pieces which are all handmade by herself in Liverpool. As well as individual commissions, Eliane also sells unique commercial pieces on her website.

Eliane won the Switch on to Business Elevator competition in November 2015. Her business was awarded a £500 prize and since then we caught up with Eliane to see how she got on, and most importantly how this cash injection has helped her so far:

*"The jewellery industry is a very competitive market and as a small business you need to focus on your own style - being creative, professional, friendly and approachable with your customers. Details are essential and I want to provide to my customers the best service as a jewellery designer."*

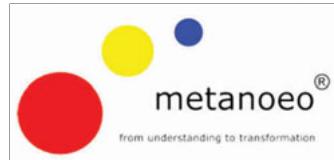
*I have booked an intensive course in London for late January called "Technical Drawings for Jewellery Making" which I believe will help to improve the presentation of my commission pieces and future collections to private clients and potential retailers.*

*The remainder of the money will be spent on materials and tools towards the development of my 2016 Spring/Summer collection. I would like to say that this money has given me a boost in terms of personal development and financial support, all beneficial to the business and for the customers.*

*It was a very pleasant surprise when I found out I had won the Elevator competition, so many thanks to Switch on to Business magazine, for the help that this money will provide."*



# The Elevator Edition 3 Winners



### DAVE WOOD GRADUATE AND STUDENT WINNER METANOE

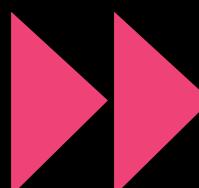
Metanoeo offers specialist life coaching, which provides individuals with the opportunity to build a positive fulfilling life based on the belief that everyone is unique. The life coaching sessions are delivered over a period of about six to eight weeks on a one-to-one basis, and are free to the individual that requires them.

Dave Wood is the Managing Director of Metanoeo, and won the Switch on to Business Student Elevator competition back in November which awarded his business with £300. We caught up with Dave to see how Metanoeo was progressing, and what he decided to spend his winnings on:

*"I work with people who are troubled – whether that be from addiction, depression, and general health issues that cause individuals to feel down. All of us are troubled and troublesome in some way, so it isn't limited to*

*those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or have had behavioural issues caused by a past event. All of us are one big tangled mess, and sitting down and talking about it works wonders. Metanoeo does just that, and is all about ensuring social justice, allowing everyone the opportunity to live a happy and successful life. I also work with people who offer help to the troubled individual, which is where my award money comes in."*

*I wanted to grow my business, but avoid developing myself into a managerial role as I believe they are the most detached from the core part of the business – the people. So the money will be spent on making a virtual, community based Guild of life coaches, and I will start by training three beginning members and see where the project goes from there. My long-term dream is to have a Community Well-being centre, with the Guild being a part of that. So the Elevator money has allowed me to start expanding, and to allow students to gain experience in my field of work."*



## THE AWESOME FOUNDATION

WORDS: Bethany Atkin

PICTURES: Caleidoscope Photography

**Y**ou never know who you are going to end up meeting when you attend any kind of networking event, which is why for new and start-up businesses it is absolutely crucial to attend as many as you can.

When I attended the "Baltic Shmooze" in November, little did I know that I would discover an organisation that is unique, fun-filled and mind-bogglingly generous. With a need to find out more, I interviewed Zarino Zappia and Francis Irving, the 'Deans' of The Awesome Foundation, so that they could showcase what it is they do each month for Liverpool. Read on to find out more, and make sure you are aptly prepared for the awesomeness:

### What is The Awesome Foundation?

**Francis:** It spreads awesomeness in the world! It started over in Boston, and the guys behind it realised that there were many small projects that were unable to get going for want of a small amount of money. For larger projects there are ways of getting initial cash, for example through arts grants and investments, but for small projects there was not enough of what is now known as 'microgranting' to be able to give them the initial cash flow they required. So they got together and came up with The Awesome Foundation, where its members give £50 a month (making a pool of £500) which is given to the most awesome project that someone wants to create. This can be for all sorts of things, for example we have funded shoes that play music when you dance, and an experimental new form of art therapy to use for a particular mental illness.

**Zarino:** We also funded the Ukulele Club Liverpool – a summer school for kids playing ukuleles, and an artist who wanted the money to help her make a plasticine model of a blue whale's heart (which is around the size of a MINI). She is currently working on creating an exhibition displaying the hearts of every single mammal in the world, of which there are around 50,000. She already

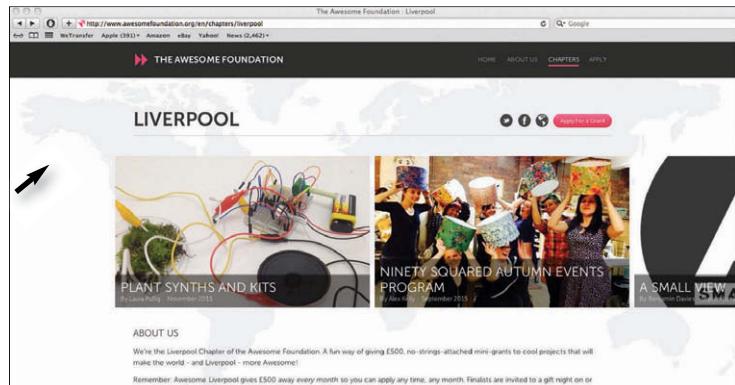
has a couple of thousand made, and she has promised they will come to Liverpool.

**Francis:** One of the best parts of what we do is that there are no strings attached to the grants at all.

### What did you each do prior to setting up The Awesome Foundation in Liverpool?

**Francis:** Well this isn't a full-time job, so we are both still working! The whole idea of The Awesome Foundation is that it should be very simple to run, so you don't have to invest a lot of time into keeping it going - there's no reason why there shouldn't be more in the UK. Liverpool is the first city outside of London to have an Awesome Foundation, and it's one of the most active ones in Europe.

**Zarino:** I think the biggest saving for us was the decision to make everyone pay by standing order. It was so difficult getting the trustees together to collect the money each month as everyone is so busy with their own careers and businesses. I have a background in Social Science, Programming and Design, and studied at the Oxford Internet Institute where I looked at how the internet is changing society, the economy and politics. I found out about a tech start-up in the North



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FROM THE GRASSROOTS  
NEW AMAZING THINGS,  
WHICH THE AWESOME  
FOUNDATION HELPS TO  
OCCUR EVERY MONTH.



*Francis Irving and Zarino Zappia speak to Bethany Atkin about The Awesome Foundation*

called 'ScrapervWiki' that was building a community out of programmers, which is how I met Francis as I interviewed him for my Masters thesis.

**Francis:** He doesn't work for me anymore!

**Zarino:** At the start of Awesome I was still working with Francis, but since then I have moved to another company called 'mySociety', which makes websites that empower people to engage with governments all over the world.

**Francis:** I'm the CEO of a Data Science company in Liverpool, so we work with the government and financial services to help them extract and organise data where applicable. The type of data we work with varies a lot; for example we did a project with the United Nations which involved

humanitarian data, where we looked at how many refugees there were in certain places.

**Would you describe yourselves as activists? Your jobs and roles within The Awesome Foundation certainly seem to imply this – not many people give £50 a month out of their own pocket!**

**Francis:** But being involved with The Awesome Foundation is fun, so we're being selfish really...

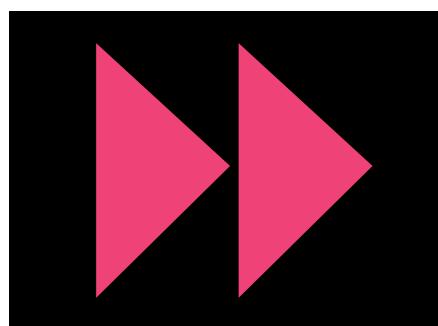
**Zarino:** It is great to meet up with the twelve trustees and hearing these interesting ideas once a month. You are guaranteed to meet three new people every month, and you are also doing something really cool in your city.

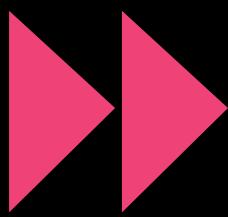
**What requirements are you looking for with the candidates that apply?**

**Zarino:** We have four criteria; you don't have to hit them all but if you do it's a good sign. The first one being that it solves a problem, the second is that the project has a budget – but as we are primarily no-strings attached we don't want a detailed budget

forecast, we just want a brief outline as it suggests the individual has thought the project through. The third is that it should be local, meaning that the idea should benefit the local community. Lastly, the fourth criteria (which is probably the most important, but is the hardest to pin down) is that it should bring joy.

**Francis:** It has to have 'pizazz'. For instance, the winner of this month hits all of these criteria; Laura Pullig won with her Plants Synth and Kicks idea, which allows people to make their own electronic instruments using plants. She wants to provide workshops in Wavertree, which solves a





problem as it enables children to make good use of their time outside of school. Secondly, she had a very good budget, both particular and specific; she figured out that she can make 45 kits from the £500, and she plans to give them away in three workshops with fifteen children in each. Thirdly, it's a local project in Liverpool with youth groups, and finally it brings joy! You attach a bit of leaf with electrodes and it makes music, which you absolutely do not expect!

#### **Individually, what has been your favourite winner?**

**Francis:** Mine has been the Liverpool 'MakeFest', as it was such a fantastic event. It was in the Central Library, and was completely community based with fifty people exhibiting within it, all doing crazy and amazing stuff. It took up the entire library for the day – we went and it was brilliant. Our £500 gave the exhibitors lunch, provided power extension leads – the boring but necessary equipment required to run the event.

**Zarino:** Ukele Club Liverpool literally changed my life! They wanted to spend the £500 buying ten ukuleles at £50 each, and they brought two of them when they were

doing the pitch. We asked if they would play them, as they didn't think we would want to hear as I believe they thought it was going to be a much more formal occasion. They played 'You are my sunshine' and we were all singing, which was an example of an idea bringing joy. While everybody was singing along, I noticed that we were all smiling like little children! I spoke to them after they won, and they told me they had an adult group which I joined, and learnt how to play.

#### **What does The Awesome Foundation offer Liverpool?**

**Francis:** The world changes constantly, and in Liverpool we don't have as many strong industries anymore so we need to create from the grassroots new amazing things, which The Awesome Foundation helps to occur every month.

**Zarino:** To me, what it also does is build a community of interesting people. We have Christmas parties, and get together every now and then where there is usually some kind of networking without the formality of networking. The Awesome Foundation allows interesting people to come together; usually during every gift night some interesting connection is made. The whole

point of the organisation is that £500 is given away to an awesome idea, but the best part is that you become a member of this amazing network of trustees and applicants, and I think lots of people benefit from that.

#### **What are your plans for the future?**

**Francis:** We are going to do a kids gift night in March, which is where you have to be under 18 to apply. They often write better applications than the adults - £500 is a lot of money to a young person so they really think about their budget plans!

**Zarino:** On a general note, we always have a turnover of trustees so it's nice to have different individuals working with us. We always keep an eye out for people who want to become a trustee, as it's not too much work.

**Francis:** I don't think we are spread deeply enough across the networks of Liverpool, so we are quite digital/tech-centric with most of us working in the Baltic Triangle. It will be good to have more people involved who work in a different geographic location in Liverpool.

### **To apply for a microgrant of £500 awarded by The Awesome Foundation, check to see if you meet the following criteria:**

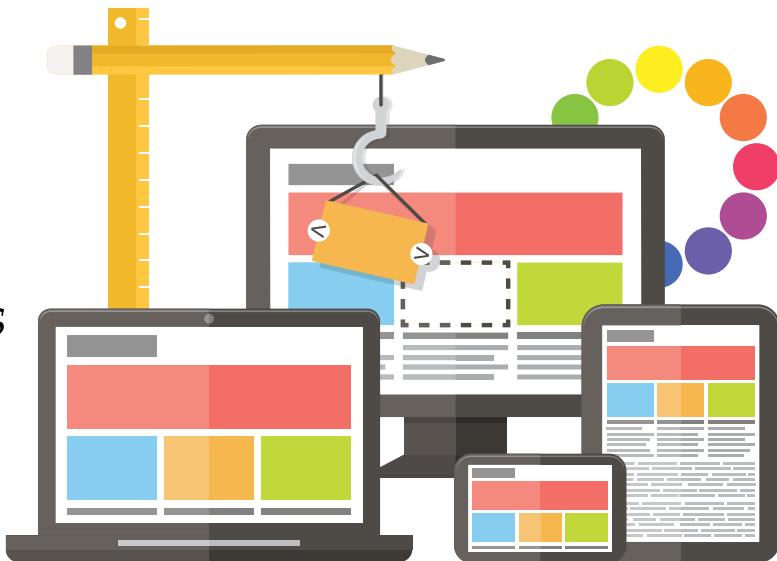
1. Does your idea solve a problem?
2. Do you have a budget?
3. Is it a project local to Liverpool?
4. Does it bring joy?

If yes, please visit: <http://www.awesomefoundation.org/en/chapters/liverpool> for details on how to apply.



**THE AWESOME FOUNDATION**

# Why an Outdated Website is Costing Your Business



WORDS: Jack Dotchin, Digital Strategist

*When it comes to painting a positive picture of your business, it's safe to say that first impressions count.*

We get our logo and business cards designed with aesthetics in mind, we dress to impress for those important meetings and we certainly make sure our shops and offices are professional, well thought out and display a strong reflection of our brands.

More and more of your customers will have their first contact or engagement with your business through digital channels, specifically via your website. So when it comes to your business, the important question is: are you investing more time and effort into your digital activity to capitalise on this?

The UK online shopping market has seen a 10% compound annual growth rate since 2012, and total online sales for 2015 are currently being broken down at around the £50 billion mark.

Therefore if your answer to the above question is 'no', then you really should be! It is paramount to really make sure you focus on the key areas which will make an impact to your balance sheets over time.

## Design your site well. First impressions count!

Effective web-design has to remain one of the most important aspects of your website. Content is fundamental in terms of how you communicate with your audience, but in reality you need to get them hooked from the very second they land on your site, otherwise potential customers won't stick around to read it.

A recent study looking at example healthcare websites suggested that as many as 96% of respondents stated that design-based factors were responsible for communicating mistrust, compared to just 4% picking out issues with text or video copy.

Images on your website are one of the most critical aspects to focus on here and the impact they have on your overall site design means they

need to be well considered. Your website should be focused on building credibility and trust as this is what results in sales and enquiries down the line. Using stock images does not build trust, and using pictures from ten years ago does not build trust.

One of the best investments you can make for 2016 is a good quality camera so you can document your work and showcase it on your website. This builds trust as it shows your potential customers you mean business and will deliver a great end product too!

## Embrace the mobile world.

There are now over 2 billion smartphone users out there and this is expected to rise to one third of the entire planet by 2018.

Smartphones are now also the most common way to search for something online, so whether you're selling a product or promoting your services they simply cannot be ignored.

Any good web designer (and even most of the self-service web builder platforms available) will suggest this and should be encouraging you to think about how your website is going to look on a mobile screen.

It is no longer enough to have a 'responsive version' of your website which automatically works on mobile devices by scaling down to the screen. You need to optimise this to ensure it complies with what Google is looking for in mobile sites and provides a unique experience to your audience, unique to a mobile device.

It's possible to write another article on this topic specifically as there is so much detail to go into, however if you do one thing, to get your mobile site working well you should definitely try to compress all your images and files to keep page load speeds down.

## Think about your site outcomes.

As with all of your marketing activity there should be a clear metric which can be measured to justify success and attribute a return on investment to the efforts you've made.

To do this with your site it's important to identify the behaviours in your site which suggest you're working towards success. If you own an eCommerce shop then this is usually measured through sales. If you're a solicitor or a professional service, then you will be measuring the enquiries you have collected through your site.

These outcomes need to be considered and should be at the epicentre of any changes you decide to make to your site and the wider strategy of the business.

For example if you are trying to procure leads through your site then sometimes your potential customers can be put off by terms which suggest obligation. Instead, if you were to trial a call to action response, such as 'request an info pack' for example, then this usually carries a higher completion rate as there is no obligation associated with it.

The completion of these key elements can be fully measured through your Google analytics. If this is something you don't use then you should start as soon as possible!

## Try it now. You should be already!

As you can see your website (and associated digital marketing activity to promote it) is becoming more and more essential as part of your wider marketing/communication strategy.

In the last 4 years digital marketing has risen from 25% to 75% of total marketing spend for SMEs and over a third will invest in a new digital marketing member of staff this year (fixed term or permanent).

All this development has to be positive for businesses willing to capitalise on these opportunities.

Surely in the era of self-driving cars, smartwatches and bionic limbs, digital marketing and marketing must be becoming the same thing...

Food for thought when reviewing your marketing strategy this year.

# MARK ARMSTRONG

## *Freelance Proofreader*



*Mark Armstrong, 27, is a freelance proofreader, writer and social media manager. Having known Mark for a little while, the team at Switch on to Business decided we could use his expertise to help create Edition 4. We soon discovered his eye for error, therefore we asked him to proofread nearly every feature of this edition. We are very proud to work with Mark, therefore we wanted our readers to know about him and what he does for the magazine. Read on to find out more:*

### **Tell us about what you do.**

I work as a freelance writer and help with social media management, as well as proofreading for some organisations, so that the level of work I do depends on the requirements of the company I am working with. For instance, I can help companies who require monthly social media management on the hour every hour, or one post a week, or if they require long blog posts or a small paragraph for their website. Basically, I am able to help with any copywriting, social media management or proofreading.

### **Why have you decided to take up this line of work?**

It's always been an interest! In my previous role at the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, I learnt about how to effectively manage social media channels for businesses. With proofreading, that came about as I was writing for the Chamber's corporate magazine, and helped to make sure everything flowed within the text. Therefore, proofreading has come up as a side-skill through my writing for companies. I really enjoy it, as it allows me the freedom to be able to help different businesses, and it's incredibly versatile in terms of having more than one project on the go. For example, with one company I may be managing Twitter and Facebook, with another I may be writing an article which allows me to show and develop more than one skill.

### **Tell us more about the social media aspect of your job.**

I manage different social media channels based on the requirements of the company, so it depends upon what channels the company uses and what they are looking to develop. The main part of this for me is posting updates, which range from upcoming events to news about the company, but as well as that I also look after the social media channels. This varies from organising the way the page looks to replying to messages from followers, but if a company is not posting

their updates on social media nobody will know how the company is progressing, so that is my main role.

### **What made you become a freelance worker?**

A year or so ago my past employer went under a restructure, but I had wanted to work freelance for a long time as helping different companies appealed to me. Towards the end of last year I was able to start making it happen, and I really enjoy it. It's all about managing my own time and workload, and it's good to be able to look at specific projects and develop them in my own way.

### **Where do you see yourself in the next two years?**

To have more clients, to be able to improve my own work, and being in a better position than I am now. Working freelance is a constant process of development; I am constantly looking for more clients, and working on how to improve my own work.

### **Why were you interested in working with Switch on to Business?**

I'd known Lin Boyd for a couple of years through the New Business Development Club when I was employed at the Chamber, so I helped her with a couple of projects when asked. When I went freelance, one of the people I thought to contact who I had made a good working relationship with was Lin. I then attended the launch event for Edition 3 of the magazine, and an opportunity arose to work with them when I mentioned what I do for a living. It's great to look at their wide range of stories, and to find out about what businesses do across Liverpool. It feels good to be able to promote the magazine by suggesting edits that will help the publication to grow.

*If you would like to work with Mark, drop him an email at: [markarmstrong.liverpool@gmail.com](mailto:markarmstrong.liverpool@gmail.com).*



# ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

WORDS: Henry Whelan

**W**hat is it that makes a company valuable? Thirty or forty years ago, that question might have been far easier to answer than today: the product, the people, the facilities and the factories, perhaps. However, today there's a trend towards the intangibles, where information is a source of energy and value, a driver of business, and ultimately a key asset that must be protected.

Economic intelligence is an area of business that has taken on more importance alongside the increase in the importance of information. Economic intelligence, or EI as it is otherwise known, is a very broad term, but it essentially encompasses the use of information to either protect or gain an advantage over competitors. It might also be information within a company that isn't being used to its full potential. Economic intelligence is a wide-ranging term, with the biggest companies now starting to implement specific "EIUs" or Economic Intelligence Units.

But what does it mean to you and me? A key aspect of economic intelligence is smart information management in order to protect the information that gives value to your business. It might sound like something that only concerns the big players, but it is essential

for any business that uses its own information to its advantage (which yes, means every single one), and therefore, you.

Allow me to tell you a short story. A giant corporation, whose name I am not allowed to print, has its historic corporate headquarters in the centre of France. This corporation also has a large base, like almost every French company, in Paris. Hence, daily flights from their historic base to Paris and back were filled with their executives, until it was noticed that every day, and almost every flight, there were a number of faces that they didn't recognise, but were a constant presence. These faces were in the pay of their major competitors – this corporation's executives had been conversing with one another and offering up their precious competitive information without a second thought, straight into the hands of their competitors.

This is an example of how economic intelligence, and specifically information management, is vital to the competitiveness of a company; absentmindedly giving up information that is key to your competitive advantage is asking for trouble. And don't just take my word for it, Jean-François Bianchi, Professor at the School of Economic Warfare in Paris, says "*the management of information is now a vital component of competitiveness*".

So, how do you protect your key information, and more importantly, your competitive advantage?

When referring to economic intelligence, and particularly the information management aspect - which is most relevant to those that aren't a huge multinational - there are three different levels of operation: strategic, managerial, and operational. This is very similar to most operations carried out within a business, and often in smaller businesses these three levels will be carried out by a number of the same people, which is the double-edged sword that gives you greater control over your information, but also the possibility of more important pieces of information being mishandled.

At the strategic level is where the direction and the information that needs to be protected are identified and the decision is taken to take control of this information. In a large company this process would take days, maybe even weeks, with the need for agreement of a number of parties on the direction of information management, however in an SME, this process can be done quickly and efficiently, to move onto the practice of actually protecting your vital information.

The first step is to realise you can't protect all the information about your company and the information that you possess; but identifying what you must protect is vitally important.

A simple Google search will reveal a lot of information about a company - the directors, the most recent accounts, and most of the financial information about the company. It's not worth losing any sleep over this, you can't hide this information, and besides, your competitors won't gain much of an advantage, apart from a reasonable grasp on the size of your wallet. It is far more important to identify what could compromise you and at the same time give your competitors an edge: the amount you pay your suppliers, perhaps? The size of your profit margin? Your room for manoeuvre on pricing? All of these things can give competitors and your clients an edge before you've even begun, the information you need to protect is wholly personal, and therefore must be identified before moving forward.

Identifying these kinds of weaknesses in your own information management is very important; you might consider your business too small to take information management seriously, but it is a process that is relatively easy to begin, and more importantly at this level, doesn't cost much. It's a win-win.

Once it has been decided to start taking serious control of your precious information, then comes the trickiest part - the actual implementation and commitment to information management. When it comes to business, and the world in general, I firmly believe that there is no such thing as human error, only human error within a system. Effective systems (and processes) can prevent human error. Obviously human error will occur, but changes to the system within which it occurred can prevent it

***Operationally, information management should not be a hindrance or change day-to-day working significantly, which is the beauty of it; small changes can reduce your exposure to giving away your key information.***

happening again. It is with this mantra in mind that developing a system for your information management is likely to be a continuous process, with constant refinement and development as it progresses.

Again, this system implementation is a personal process, and will change from situation to situation and business to business; a huge pharmaceutical company won't have anything like the same EI processes as your local estate agent, for example. However, it is possible to start off with a base of processes to be refined, such as committing to only discuss business matters in a business environment away from prying ears and eyes, or adopting a "clear desk" policy at the end of the day, to ensure no valuable information is left for anybody to see. Another classic example of information mismanagement is the forwarding or copying in of emails. Countless times information has been carelessly been given away by absentmindedly copying somebody into an

email thread where somewhere along the line sensitive information has been shared. A simple system of creating a new email thread when copying a new person in or forwarding easily avoids this potential pitfall.

Another mantra of mine is that systems are only successful if they are used, and used correctly. Implementing policies and systems is an entirely futile process if they aren't adhered to, which brings us neatly on to the operational side of EI and information management.

Operationally, information management should not be a hindrance or change day-to-day working significantly, which is the beauty of it; small changes can reduce your exposure to giving away your key information. The active participation of all those concerned means that the systems you implement work to reduce the human error involved in information mismanagement, whilst not encountering significant opposition from those that don't want to unduly increase their workload (which, let's face it, is pretty much all of us).

A key aspect of the systems deployed is that they must be usable and useful for all users; it's no use having a system where all key documents must be kept at the office or locked away if people want to work from home. Therefore there must be a degree of flexibility - this is where the importance of the identification of key information comes in. Being prepared to lose a few battles to ensure the full use of the systems, whilst ensuring the protection of the information that you know keeps you competitive, will be beneficial in the long run.

Overall, EI and information management are far-reaching terms that can be applied to almost any situation, but the processes that you implement mean that you don't need to worry about a customer or competitor squeezing your profit margin because they know how much you can afford, or a competitor poaching your new key client, because they know what terms you offered them. Adapting your processes as they progress to further refine them will ensure you keep your competitive advantage, and you never know, along the way you might pick up a few valuable bits of information from your competitors who aren't so aware of the new-found importance of that key word: information.



*At Switch on to Business, you never really know who you might end up meeting, which is why we will never create the same magazine twice. Each and every one is different, and filled with stories concerning the most exciting of individuals, and right here is another contender. Just before Christmas, I met with Anders Borg, Director of Northern Vision, a leading sport event management, marketing and player management company in the UK and Europe. Since 2002, Northern Vision has delivered first-class tennis events in the UK and Europe, and in 2016, the company and its inaugural event, The Liverpool Hope University International Tennis Tournament, will celebrate its 15th anniversary. I wanted to learn more about both the event and the man behind it, so read on to discover more about the brilliant Northern Vision, and what it does for the city of Liverpool:*

**WORDS:** Bethany Atkin

#### **Tell me about Northern Vision.**

Northern Vision is a sports management outlet that was founded back in 2002. Back then, the main philosophy of the company was to bring sports to the people. We have always been very interested in tennis, and we wanted the sport to be brought out of its elitist environment and become more accessible. Most tennis events are down in London and are held in very upmarket and expensive places; we thought this was wrong as tennis is a fantastic sport to watch, and it is a sport for life. We looked for public spaces where we could organise a warm-up event to Wimbledon, and we found Calderstones Park, right in the heart of Liverpool, to be the perfect venue.

#### **What is your background?**

I studied Business Administration for three years at The American University of Paris which was amazing - I don't think I found the library until the last couple of months. The university only had around 1,000 students of over 100 different nations, and from this I was surrounded by many different cultures and became more open to multi-cultural societies,

which are upon us now all over Europe. To learn French and to study in Paris, which I think is the best city in Europe – and possibly the world – was a great experience. I started working in Paris in Credit Lyonnais as a derivatives trader; the derivative industry, as of late, was impacted by the financial collapse back in 2008, but the outright derivatives that I traded was more structured as insurance policy (hedge) against adverse movements in Foreign Exchange.

They then transferred me to London, which I was incredibly depressed about at the time as the city (back then – I will not say when as I don't want to appear too old!) wasn't that great. London then took off like a rocket and became the financial centre of the universe, and I started enjoying it very quickly. I stayed there until 2010 – but in 2002 I set up the company as I wanted to do something more fulfilling than just writing endnotes; when you trade in foreign exchange you do not create anything, as it's all about making money for the bank. I needed to do something more satisfying, and when people tell me they enjoyed their day at the tennis I feel this is

what makes my life worthwhile. It's a lot of hard work – I work all year for something that lasts five days and then it's over! I need to ensure I receive positive feedback from the general public, the sponsors, the media, the players and the council, but I enjoy what I do.

**Why did you decide to set up Northern Vision, and why did you choose Liverpool specifically?**

I have always been a sports-freak and the sport I played mostly growing up was badminton, so I have always been a racquet fan, and tennis is apparently the healthiest sport you can play. I wanted to set up a sports agency and run tennis academies for children.

Liverpool is a city that I really like, the location is fantastic, it has the most listed buildings outside of London and the new and old architecture is brilliant. It's also incredibly compact as you can walk from one end of the city centre to the other; you don't necessarily need a car here. It's also a west-facing city, which I suppose is not that rare in England, but it is much better when compared to Manchester. I do not understand why more businesses are not relocating to Liverpool as it's got so much on offer and is still reasonably priced. Why live in Manchester when you can live here?

Tennis is a great networking opportunity, so the event in Liverpool is fantastic for businesses who want to meet other organisations and advertise at the event through tailor-made marketing and promotional campaigns. The sport is played around the world, every week of the year, for many different occasions, and is one of the most popular sports for companies to be associated with. It's not as costly as football, and if you take your client to a football match you only spend around two hours with them. If you take them to a tennis day out, you are looking at spending around eight hours with your client. In addition, you meet other clients at the same event, so it is one big opportunity to network amongst local businesses.

**What has been your biggest challenge since you started Northern Vision?**

It has definitely been finding and convincing sponsors to support Northern Vision in an area that is predominantly known for football and boxing. It was hard in the beginning to establish tennis as a sport in the city, but thankfully we have developed some great sponsorship relationships over the years, such as with our title sponsors, Liverpool Hope University, and the Hilton, Merseyrail, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, BMW Williams, Mazars, The Commercial Bid Company, Liverpool Vision, Crabbies, Medicash, E Blueprint, Wildthang, Radio City and Trinity Group, to mention a few. Another big challenge in today's world of the media is knowing which outlet will work the best for your business. There are so many media outlets to choose from: The Echo, TV, Radio, through social media, on billboards etc., and obviously the event only has a limited amount of money for advertising to start up with, so it is hard to know what outlet is the most efficient and economical.

**What would you consider to be one of your best memories**



**during the fifteen years of The International?**

At one of our events we had John McEnroe playing, which was massive for Northern Vision, and worked out incredibly well. In terms of myself, I think still being here after fifteen years is something to celebrate as back in 2002 everyone in London told me I was crazy for two reasons. Firstly, for wanting to start up a tennis event, and secondly to do so in Liverpool. If you mention Liverpool to someone in London they will probably give you a negative opinion, and they could not be more wrong.



**What are your future plans?**

I want to keep developing The International, to become even bigger and better in addition to adding more junior events to our programme in the region. Internationally we run events and academies in Marbella and Oslo, and we also have some ambitious plans within legends soccer that we hopefully can make an announcement about later this year.

*We think Anders and Northern Vision are fabulous, and we can't wait to work with him more in the near future.*

*If you would like to find out more about the Liverpool Hope International Tennis Tournament, you can visit their website at: [www.liverpooltennis.co.uk](http://www.liverpooltennis.co.uk) or [www.northern-vision.co.uk](http://www.northern-vision.co.uk). If you would like to contact Anders, you can email him at: [admin@northern-vision.co.uk](mailto:admin@northern-vision.co.uk).*



## AMANDA HOLDEN SIGNS FOR EVERTON IN THE COMMUNITY

TV favourite Amanda Holden has been appointed an honorary patron of her football team's charity, *Everton in the Community*.

The Britain's Got Talent judge has accepted an ambassadorial role for the official charity of Everton Football Club, which is recognised as one of the UK's leading sporting charities and regularly acknowledged on both a national and international stage for addressing a range of issues, including dementia – a topic very close to Amanda's heart.

During a recent visit to Liverpool for Britain's Got Talent auditions, Amanda took time out of her busy filming schedule to visit Goodison and find out more about the charity's pioneering 'Pass on the Memories' programme which supports people living with dementia and their carers.

Amanda's maternal grandfather, whom she credits for her love of music, sadly lost his battle with dementia in 2007 and since then she has publicly campaigned to boost volunteering, education and support for the growing number of people with the condition.

During her time at the home of the Blues, Amanda took part in a series of memory quizzes alongside some of the people who attend the programme and put her general knowledge on the 50s and 60s to the test before meeting delivery staff and finding out more about 'Pass on the Memories' and the people it supports. Rounding off her visit, Amanda spent some time looking through the reminiscent memorabilia on display at the session and viewed a large scale knitted goal net which has been produced by the programme's participants.

Delivered in partnership with Mersey Care NHS Trust, 'Pass on the Memories' uses a range of interventions, including sporting reminiscence workshops and custom-made life story memory books, to help people share important memories and create new ones.

Evertonian Holden said: *"I'm so proud to take on a role as patron for Everton in the Community which is such a special charity, changing and saving the lives of people all across Merseyside every day. It's an incredible charity. Everton is my club and there's an 'Everton way' and Everton in the Community embodies the values of Evertonians."*

*"The 'Pass on the Memories' programme is so personal to me because my own grandfather had dementia and we had to watch him slowly turn into a different person and then sadly slip away. By 2020, one million of us will be living with dementia and it is something we need to recognise, embrace and help which is exactly what this programme does. Dementia is the cruellest of illnesses and if you can come to something like this it provides a little ray of sunshine in quite a dark place. This programme gives people something to look forward to and also supports loved ones who stay strong by their side and help them live day to day."*

*"You are never alone when you are a part of Everton in the Community, it very much feels like a family and you are always made to feel welcome,"* added Amanda.

The popular actress and presenter has taken up her role at Everton in the Community with immediate effect and will use her profile to promote all of the good work the charity undertakes to tackle a host of social issues including health, employability, crime, education, poverty, youth justice and disability.



Denise Barrett-Baxendale, Everton in the Community CEO, added: *"We are delighted that Amanda has joined us on the board at Everton in the Community and we look forward to working closely together to raise the profile of our fantastic charity nationally as well as enhancing the work that is done by the charity each and every day."*

Established in 1988, Everton in the Community is an award-winning charity which delivers over 60 programmes to support the most vulnerable and underprivileged people in Merseyside.

In recent years, the charity has helped more than 600 local unemployed people become 'job ready' through its 'Everton 4 Employment' scheme, developed a number of programmes with Mersey Care NHS Trust to tackle mental health issues among different groups within the local community and runs the biggest football programme for people with disabilities of any club in the world with 14 teams for all ages and abilities.

Everton in the Community has also achieved a 78 percent non re-offending rate with its 'Safe Hands' programme which helps integrate young offenders back into society, and the charity even made history when it became the first associated to a Premier League football club to open a Free School, 'Everton Free School' in 2012.





## LOCAL COMPANY CREDITS EVERTON MATCHDAY SPONSORSHIP FOR GROWTH



A local training provider says its commercial association with Everton has helped the organisation to grow significantly in the last three years.

NAC Group, based on the Wirral, has been buying matchday sponsorship since 2012 and has used the benefits the packages include to grow the business in the region by up to 60 per cent year on year for the past three years.

Peter Traynor, National Head of Business Development, regularly purchases a variety of matchday sponsorship packages for the NAC group including Main Match, Man of the Match and Programme and believes it is essential to the organisation's growth strategy.

NAC Group is a specialist apprenticeship, educational and work-based learning provider, which works with a host of local and national organisations, including Job Centre Plus, NHS, automotive, manufacturing and logistics employers, to help young and long-term unemployed

people learn and develop new skills to gain meaningful employment.

The group's connection to the Blues started in 2011 when NAC hired several of the hospitality lounges during the close season to recruit and train young people for the local employment market.

During this time Peter met with Carl Bradshaw of Everton's Corporate Sales team to discuss how partnering with Everton would be beneficial for NAC, including the opportunity to become a matchday sponsor.

Peter decided to purchase the Main Match Sponsorship package for Everton's last game of the 2011/12 season against Newcastle United, which saw the Blues win 3-1 and the start of a lucrative partnership for NAC and Everton.

An Everton matchday sponsorship package comprises of a host of benefits including; a champagne reception in the Players' Lounge and pre-match dressing room tour with an Everton Legend; all-inclusive award-winning hospitality; Directors' Box seats in the Main



***"The personal service Everton offer is brilliant too. Some clients and partners have enjoyed hospitality more than once and staff remember their names, which is really important when you are developing and maintaining long-lasting relationships."***

Stand plus a quarter page advert or acknowledgement in the matchday programme and branding across the stadium matchday media channels.

Peter said: "The Everton sponsorship packages provide fantastic opportunities for us to network and build profitable relationships in a relaxed, informal setting, lightening the mood of business.

"With Everton in particular it is a club which reaches out to most people – providing us with a common interest before we even start to talk business.

"We have used other sporting events, golf and horse racing for example, but if we were to generalise across our network, most people have an affinity to football. And because we work nationally the sponsorship packages give us the flexibility to entertain clients and partners in relation to the team which Everton are playing that week."

A matchday sponsorship package also provides guests with award-winning hospitality. Peter continued: "The history and

traditions of Everton F.C. coupled with the quality of the offer delivered here at Goodison is absolutely first class.

*"I have never had a customer or partner who hasn't been impressed by the day and what it entails. From being met at the entrance by an Everton legend, to the award-winning food to the behind the scenes access – it's just fantastic. An experience you would never expect to experience! Many of the business people I work with say this is the best hospitality they have ever had – regardless of their football allegiance."*

*"The personal service Everton offer is brilliant too. Some clients and partners have enjoyed hospitality more than once and staff remember their names, which is really important when you are developing and maintaining long-lasting relationships."*

For any business the return on investment is essential and NAC Group has reaped the rewards of Everton matchday sponsorships.

*"The return on investment is absolutely amazing for us," said Peter. "We are talking about returns of hundreds and hundreds that of the*

*original investment to invest in the futures of young people across Merseyside.*

*"In the Merseyside area we have seen the NAC Group grow by up to 60 per cent year on year for the past three years. This has been achieved by using the Everton matchday sponsorship packages to support this development and maintain relationships with partners."*

Peter added: "I would recommend Everton matchday sponsorships to any business which relies on collaborative working as the networking opportunities are just endless.

*"Carl Bradshaw and the Corporate Sales Team go above and beyond to ensure the sponsorship works and meet the needs of the client – you can't fault anything."*

*For more information or to purchase a matchday sponsorship package for a forthcoming fixture this season, call the Corporate Sales Team on 0151 530 5300 or email: [hospitality@evertonfc.com](mailto:hospitality@evertonfc.com).*





## LIVERPOOL JOHN LENNON AIRPORT ANDREW CORNISH

*It's hard to imagine that Liverpool Airport was once a small terminal, utilised during World War II as a base for the RAF, and known as RAF Speke. Sitting on the banks of the estuary of the River Mersey, the airport is more recently known as Liverpool John Lennon Airport (LJLA) named after the famous Beatle, and it has seen a huge expansion between 1997 and 2007 in preparation for the Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008.*

*In recent years, LJLA has kept its momentum going with constant development and change through its incorporation of additional flights, increased passenger numbers and a competitive customer offer, whilst also developing and driving their brand to encompass its 'Faster, Easier, Friendlier' strapline to make its mark on the map.*

*We recently went along to meet CEO, Andrew Cornish, to discover more about his role and the journey that LJLA has taken over the past few years.*



### **What inspired you to come to Liverpool?**

I worked as the CEO of Manchester Airport for five years and during my time there we were able to achieve so much; we managed to develop a strong relationship with Emirates, moved up the scale in customer satisfaction scores to the upper quartile from the bottom end, and developed all three terminals through an £80 million redevelopment scheme. An opportunity came along that interested me, and after five years at Manchester I felt that moving on was the right thing to do. Peel Holdings had

bought back Liverpool John Lennon Airport, had some issues to address, and I was more than up for the challenge.

### **What kind of challenges did you face during your first few months as CEO?**

We needed to finance the business, increase passenger numbers and increase the overall customer experience. We needed to bring in new airlines, ensure that safety and security are well managed and to make sure our queue times were short and efficient. My job is similar to running a little town really, and I am surrounded everyday by my fantastic colleagues which is great.

### **What have you done during your time here as CEO to combat these challenges?**

Firstly, we needed to start fixing the basics, which were the aspects that our customers told us that they wanted. This involved ensuring a clean environment, clean toilets, good seating and efficient signage. These are all incredibly important, and you should only worry about the other aspects of running an airport until these are all fixed. To parallel with this, I needed to find a vision and identity for LJLA to create an airport that the region loves. We are not there yet – we want to be *the* airport!

On top of this, we want to ensure that we are loved rather than liked, and that Liverpool would be our customer's choice of airport. We want our customers to go to other airports with a heavy heart if we were unable to fly to their destination. We are on this journey now, so we have managed to improve the car-parking, we are in the process of refurbishing all the toilets on-site and we are promoting our VIP Lounge, Aspire. We have also removed the '08 carpets that were fitted in the airport from the Capital of Culture and we are auctioning them off for different charity events, and we have put in new flight information screens. Also, we have employed a local handyman to patch up the airport three days a week and we have employed South Liverpool Housing to do all of our landscaping.

### **What are the fundamental differences between Manchester and Liverpool, from both a city and business point of view?**

Liverpool is a great city; it's fantastic, vibrant, has a great culture and history, but my job is to sort out aspects that need improving. For instance, the airport had a lack of connection to the city and had not found its own identity. What we have managed to do is engage with the city and we now know exactly what we are about. We are the Liverpool Airport, we are the airport that the whole region will love, and we are faster, easier and friendlier than others will be! We are also quirky – you (points to Jackie Lee) have just commented on our funky toilets which are a little bit cheeky, but they're fun which is what Liverpool is all about.

### **In terms of the environment, how do you connect with the local residents?**

We have a number of forums to do that, and we ensure continuous consultations on anything that changes. There have been some changes made with regards to how aircrafts are able to land via the implementation of continuous decent, which reduces the noise levels. The past year we have increased our flight numbers by one hundred, but the aircrafts – especially the modern ones – have gotten a lot quieter and are more fuel efficient.

### **What has been the biggest challenge you have faced during your time as CEO?**

Creating a vision has been difficult as it took weeks to fine-tune it. To make a vision work, you have to be able to tell your mates about it down at the pub, a group of board members – and everyone in between! Now we have our

vision I believe that it works on so many levels, as it encompasses exactly what we are about. It's quirky, memorable, and actually showcases what we are doing as an airport.



Andrew Cornish (mid-left) meets (from left) Lin Boyd, Bethany Atkin and Jackie Lee from *Switch on to Business*

We want to create an environment where people in the entire region see LJLA as their airport – not mine, not Peel's – theirs.

Recently we have managed to climb the ranks in our quarterly ASQ survey (an independent survey); we began at twelfth, and have since climbed to ninth in less than a year with the intention and capability of climbing even higher. The interviews are completely random, so it is based on real and honest information which is positively surprising.

### **Tell us more about your background.**

I studied for a degree in Economics, and began my career at Eastman Kodak which used to be the fourth biggest brand in the world (which has all changed since the introduction of digital technology). For this job I spent most of my time overseas, and I then moved on to work for Unipart where I ran seven businesses which employed 5,000 people all over the world. I then received a phone call where I was asked to come and run Manchester Airport; I have always travelled and was fascinated to know how it worked. I ran Manchester for five years, and afterwards I decided to run Europe's largest Marina business for just over a year. It was an incredibly fragmented market as there are only twenty-three marinas in Europe, so it was definitely a challenge.

Fortunately, Aer Lingus offered me the role of Chief Customer and Brand Officer, second to the CEO, so I was responsible for everything customer-facing, from the crew to the catering. It was a really cool job, and I managed to restructure these aspects so they worked efficiently. When the opportunity to come to Liverpool arose, I decided to take it,

as you get to a time in your career where you only decide to do the things you really want to, and I wanted this.

### **You seem to have developed a good connection with all the employees at LJLA; how important is it to connect with those who work for the company?**

It's critical! As a whole the operation employs over 2,500 staff, of which only 10% of this are employed directly by the airport. Any decent CEO should have a relationship with their own team, but I think it's critical that I should know the remaining 2,250 staff members as they are providing the customer experience. For example, if the team at Starbucks are rude to a customer, that reflects upon LJLA. We are only as good as our weakest team member! At LJLA I have no excuse, as every single staff member is on site at one point during the week – it's not as if I am managing a team in China which I did

in my previous role in Unipart where I was unable to oversee how my staff operated 100% of the time. Here, my office is fifty metres away! I try to chat to everyone who works here, which firstly I believe is a privilege, but secondly it is absolutely part of the job.

### **Looking back on all of your experience, what has been your biggest learning to date in terms of running a business?**

Embracing diversity, and I learnt this when I spent a lot of years in the Nordic countries. My American colleagues classified this region underneath the same culture, but I explained to them that the cultural difference between a Fin and a Swede is more so than that of Britain and France. I then started to think about diversity as a whole, and learnt that if you are able to harness and bring together everyone despite race and gender, you will create an amazingly powerful machine. If you do not embrace diversity, you will struggle. For example, most of my team are female, and we have celebrated many pregnancies during my time here as CEO, which is both fantastic and exciting! We are able to move people around to cover different roles when staff members are on maternity leave, and the great thing is that they all want to return to us after their leave is up.

### **What are the future plans for LJLA?**

To have more airlines, more routes, more passengers, and to continue to improve the overall customer experience. Currently we have ten airlines on board, which is double than what we had previously, and we are looking to expand this even more.



# BUTCHER, BAKER OR SELFIE STICK MAKER? EMPLOY AT LEAST ONE PERSON? *Then don't ignore your legal duty to provide a pension.*

WORDS: Les Clare, LWC Business Consulting Limited

**H**ave you recently started your own business, or are you an existing employer? Whether you're a butcher, baker or selfie-stick maker, if you employ just one person, then you are an employer and have 'duties' under the pension's law.

Automatic enrolment means that you must put certain staff into a pension scheme and pay into it. So it's important that you recognise what you need to do – and by when – in order to comply with the specific duties you have as an employer.

The Pensions Regulator is the body that enforces the law on workplace pensions. It has the power to impose sanctions, including fines for non-compliance with the legislation.

The duties you have will depend on your own circumstances as an employer and those of your staff. Here's what you need to know:

## Know Your Staging Date

Your staging date is key as it's when the duties start to apply to you, so you'll need to be ready by then. Your ongoing automatic enrolment duties become business as usual from your staging date, just like real-time PAYE. You can work back from this date to plan what preparations need to be made and when. The Pensions Regulator recommends that you prepare up to 12 months before your staging date.

## Provide a point of contact

You will need to nominate the business owner or most senior person, who will be responsible to make sure your legal duties are met. You can appoint someone to act on your behalf. This person will be sent letters to keep them up to date with the tasks they need to complete and by when.

## Assessing your workforce

Staff will fall into one of two categories:

Gross Earnings	Age 16-21	Age 22-SPA*	Age SPA-74*
<b>Over £833 a month</b> (£192 a week or less)	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2
<b>Less than £833 a month</b> (£192 a week or less)	Type 2	Type 2	Type 2

\*State Pension Age.

**Type 1** – Staff who must be put into a pension scheme which you both have to pay into

Any staff who are...

- aged between 22 up to State Pension Age
- and earn over £10,000 per year, or £833 per month or, £192 per week
- must be put into a pension scheme and you must both pay into it.

**Type 2** – Staff who don't need to be put into a pension scheme

If any of your staff fall outside of the above age and earning criteria then you only need to put them into a pension scheme if they ask. However, you will still have to contribute if they earn in excess of £5,824 per year.

If you've worked out that you don't have staff to put into a pension scheme you still have other tasks to carry out in order to meet your legal duties, and you will still have to write to them to tell them how automatic enrolment applies to them.

## Select a pension scheme

If you've already got a scheme in place for your staff, you'll need to ask the pension provider if it can be used for automatic enrolment. If it can't – or you don't currently have a scheme – then you'll need to choose one.

There are a lot of pension providers and it may feel a bit daunting to make a choice. There is help on choosing a scheme on 'The Pensions Regulator' website ([www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk)) which also includes a list of providers who can offer pensions to employers. There's also the National Employment Savings Trust – known as NEST – which was set up by government and has to accept all employers who want to use it for automatic enrolment.

Not all schemes offer the same level of services, and some will charge more than others. You may also need to consider if your payroll service can handle files in the required format for your chosen scheme.

## Prepare Data

It is essential that you ensure your staff records – including their dates of birth, salaries, National Insurance numbers and contact details – are correct and up to date. You'll need to keep track of your staff details, as well as the amounts paid into the scheme each pay period, once you've automatically enrolled them. You should consider using payroll software if you don't already and make sure any payroll software fully supports automatic enrolment.

## Advise Employees

You must write to each staff member after your staging date to tell them how automatic enrolment applies to them and explain their rights. You must let them know that contributions will be deducted from their pay and that they have a right to opt out of your pension scheme if they wish to do so. You can choose to postpone automatic enrolment for up to 3 months for some or all of your staff, and you must write to your staff to tell them that you are postponing automatic enrolment for them. You can postpone automatic enrolment from your staging date.

## Enrol workers

Having worked out what you need to do for each person you employ, you must put those that you need to into a pension scheme. You will need to give your pension scheme provider all the information that they need to initially set up your staff in the pension scheme. Each time you pay your staff you will need to work out how much you both need to pay in and arrange for this to happen.

## Making contributions

Each time you pay your staff you will need to make contributions to their pension scheme. You must work out how much you both need to pay in and arrange for this to happen. You need to send the details of staff who are being put into a pension scheme to your pension provider promptly and start paying contributions into your pension scheme. The minimum employer contribution rate commences at 1% and will rise to 3% by April 2019. Please see table below:

Date	Total minimum contribution	Employer minimum contribution
Before 05/04/2018	2% (inc. 1% staff contribution)	1%
06/04/2018- 05/04/2019	5% (inc. 3% staff contribution)	2%
06/04/2019 onwards	8% (inc. 5% staff contribution)	3%



## Manage opt-out requests

If any of your staff choose to opt out within one month of being enrolled, you need to stop deductions of contributions and arrange a full refund of what has been paid to date. This must happen within one month of their request.

## Complete your declaration of compliance

It is your legal duty to make sure that the declaration is completed on time and the information entered is correct. This is an online form for you to tell The Pensions Regulator how you have met your legal duties. You must do this within five months after your staging date.

## Ongoing Administration

You must monitor the ages and earnings of your staff (including new starters) to see if anyone who wasn't eligible for automatic enrolment at your staging date has since become eligible. You must enrol and write to them within six weeks from the day they become eligible.

### You must also:

- Keep records of your automatic enrolment activities for six years and opt-out notices for four years.
- Monitor the ages and earnings of staff and check their automatic enrolment eligibility every month (software will help you do this).
- Enrol staff and write to them to let them know how automatic enrolment applies to them as they become eligible.
- Pay the contributions to the pension scheme before the statutory deadline your provider gives you.

Every three years you'll need to re-enrol eligible staff into your pension scheme. This is known as automatic re-enrolment.

## Create a Plan and Stick to it!

Don't leave making your plans until the last minute. If you do, it could be more costly and complex to prepare for automatic enrolment.

Use The Pensions Regulator action planner to help create a plan. It shows you what you need to do in the coming months.

You may want to consider using an external service provider – such as an accountant or payroll bureau – to carry out some or all of your tasks on your behalf. Some can complete various steps for you, while others offer a 'one-stop-shop' solution. If you decide to use a provider, remember that complying with the legal duties of automatic enrolment is still your responsibility. So make sure you understand who will be responsible for which tasks. If you fail to complete your automatic enrolment duties, you could be fined.

*This article has been written by Les Clare of LWC Business Consulting Limited, guiding you through the maze of Auto Enrolment.*

*Tables and graphics obtained from The Pensions Regulator*



Duncan Parker, CEO of Fredericks Foundation

# FREDERICKS FOUNDATION

*The Fredericks Foundation is a CDFI (Community Development Finance Institution) and charity that provides loans to people who want to set up a new business or expand an existing business. We caught up with Duncan Parker, CEO, and Patrick Gatenby, Liverpool's Client Manager from Fredericks, to understand more about what they do and how it benefits the city.*

## What is the Fredericks Foundation?

**Duncan:** Fredericks exists to provide start-up business loans to people who are unable to access finance elsewhere, particularly through banks and other start-up loan companies. We are often the last resort as we lend to the perceived 'unlendable'.

**Patrick:** Our ethos is very much to lend where individuals can't find funding elsewhere, but this still means that their business needs to be viable. We wouldn't lend to someone if we felt that the loan would put them in a worse position than they are already in, or if our panel didn't believe in the business plan. We are supported in Liverpool by the Mothership Group as a key part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programme and I share an office with them in the Baltic Creative.

## Tell us about your roles within Fredericks?

**Duncan:** I am the CEO of Fredericks, and my role is to be an ambassador for its amazing work and provide a vision for the future for what Fredericks can be. We face two constant challenges; the first is getting us known by people who want to borrow the money, and secondly to fundraise so we can lend to those who need it.

**Patrick:** My Client Manager role is very much a local responsibility, and we work within the Liverpool City Region. Firstly, it involves managing the loan process and secondly, by encouraging people to come to us which I achieve by networking with businesses, banks, agencies and charities.

**Promotion is often the hardest part for any start-up business – you can have a great product but it takes time to establish the brand and its reputation. Saying this, how long is it that Fredericks has been going?**

**Patrick:** It has been in Liverpool for less than a year! I would still say that it is new in the city as there are still many doors for us to open and many people that we need to talk to.

**Duncan:** Overall, we have been going for fifteen years. It was set up as a charity by Paul Barry Walsh, the founder of Fredericks. Paul is an entrepreneur himself who has set up and sold a number of successful tech companies. He wanted to do something that gave back and felt that enabling individuals to start their own businesses who were unable to do so, for want of the initial start-up capital required, was the right step to take. For many years Fredericks acted as a small, family-led



Paul Gannon, owner of Nan's Kitchen in St Helens, a café that the Fredericks Foundation supported through a start up loan this year.'

response to the problem, but as both the climate for this idea grew and their expertise developed it expanded significantly. They started hiring and built a functioning organisation, predominantly in the south and south west regions for the first few years, and slowly creeping north. Liverpool is our most northerly spot so far, but over the next few months this will change quite dramatically as our goal is to become nation-wide. The only thing stopping us from achieving this at the moment is finance, so if someone gets behind the idea in a city or county, then we will go there.

**The way you're set up seems quite different to other loan companies, in that you ensure there is individual representation for every base where Fredericks is active. Do you think this is what sets you apart from other loan companies?**

**Duncan:** Yes, as banks and loan companies tend to avoid what they consider to be 'high risk areas or people' without having seen the person or area itself. One of the policies we have adopted that we think makes such a

huge difference is having a) individuals such as Patrick in place, and b) bringing in volunteers who decide whether the loan application has been successful and who provide ongoing mentoring. Without any shadow of a doubt, the reason for our success is because of the mentoring system that we place beside each client. Everyone who works or volunteers in Fredericks wants our clients to succeed! We also want successful companies in each region to get behind fledgling businesses, either by using their services or helping them think about their business strategies.

**Patrick:** The Fredericks role is to provide the loan – to establish whether there is a viable business there and to back the business financially. The subsidiary part of our role is to create this network of volunteers, and if there are any individuals out there who would like to work with us as a volunteer please do!

**Duncan:** Our mentoring and support enables the success of our clients. For every one pound we lend, we receive 82p back, which is fabulous for people in our sector. We also have EU funding which guarantees some

losses that we make, so every pound that is donated to Fredericks circulates over and over again, helping more and more people. It's almost counter-intuitive as charities always ask for more money. We act more as a social enterprise helping make a difference to people who are often on social benefits, but who have a different vision for their own life – we exist to enable them to fulfil their own potential.

**Then by doing so, Fredericks is also giving back to the economy by enabling these businesses to be successful by allowing these individuals a chance where they have previously been turned away, which is what it's all about, isn't it?**

**Duncan:** Absolutely. Recently the Centre for Economics and Social Inclusion (CESI) did some research about Fredericks, and they found that for every 100 businesses we fund, we save the government £2 million in welfare and benefits. It doesn't cost us £2 million to do so, as our average loan size is £5,000, so we believe we bring a huge civil society benefit which is sustainable as the money always comes back.



Oliver Graham from local Liverpool Marketing Agency "Graham Fifteen" who is a mentor for Steve Fallows from "Developmental Hell", who were supported with start-up finance by Patrick Gatenby from "Fredericks Foundation"

*Recently the Centre for Economics and Social Inclusion (CESI) did some research on Fredericks, and they found that for every 100 businesses we fund, we save the government £2 million in welfare and benefits.*

## Fredericks foundation

### KEY FACTS

- 1,200 businesses started over 15 years
- Saving the government £2,000,000 for every 100 businesses started
- Jobs created approx. 2,000 since 2001
- Cost per job creation <£2,000 (a fraction of other schemes)
- Aim to start at least 200 new businesses this year
- Average loan: £5,000 (over 3 years, cost £6,588)
- Of every loan made, we recover 82% of capital, interest and fees
- Loan book approx. £ 1,500,000
- Active volunteers, 300 employees

#### How has Fredericks been received in Liverpool?

**Patrick:** Very favourably, as I think the city is hugely welcoming to outsiders, entrepreneurial support and philanthropy. The Chamber, the Social Enterprise network and Councillor Gary Millar are all examples of people and organisations who have shown such great support for Fredericks, alongside The Women's Organisation and yourselves to name a few! It feels we are pushing against an open door, which is great; however we could do with more support from potential volunteers, from business people who are looking to give something back. We want to make sure that everyone is aware of the alternatives for finding funding, because a lot of people still do not know about us.

**Duncan:** If people in Liverpool want to help us invest in people's business ideas, they can do this either financially or by sending potential clients our way. For instance, if a bank turned someone's loan application down but then pointed the individual in our direction, this would be the ideal scenario for us. Anyone turned down by a bank is our perfect client as all the forms are filled in, and they fulfil our initial criteria just by being

referred. We also need volunteer panel members (budding Dragons!) and mentors for our clients.

#### What are the future plans for the Fredericks Foundation?

**Duncan:** My vision is to make it a sustainable place to go if you can't get finance elsewhere. At the minute, people don't know where to go if they have an idea nobody will back, and I want people to come to us. I want philanthropists to think of us, so that we can have a loan fund that is self-sufficient where we don't have to ask anyone for money ever again. I want to see a trail of businesses we have funded that have been successful, and that doesn't feel that hard to do.

**Patrick:** For me it is exactly the same – we want to encourage business in what is already a very entrepreneurial city and we need help to do so.

*If you would like to help Fredericks or find out more, please visit their website at: [www.fredericksfoundation.org](http://www.fredericksfoundation.org).*

*Switch on to*  
**LIFESTYLE**



IMAGE: Zak Tyler

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[www.switchontobusiness.co.uk](http://www.switchontobusiness.co.uk)

SWITCH ON TO  
**BUSINESS**



# CLARINS BEAUTYBAR

## JOHN LEWIS LIVERPOOL

WORDS: Amy Wilson

*Amy is a third year student at Liverpool Hope University studying Business Management. As part of our Future Talent team, we decided to treat her to a relaxing Clarins facial treatment at John Lewis Liverpool so she could experience an example of some great customer service. Read on to find out more:*

The Clarins BeautyBAR in John Lewis Liverpool offers its customers affordable, beauty-boosting treatments in just 30 minutes – ideal for busy shoppers looking for a quick escape and refresh. The opening of the BeautyBAR back in November was the third BeautyBAR to open in the UK and was part of a wider transformation of the fashion and beauty floor at John Lewis Liverpool, which is now complete and looking amazing. I was very excited to get the chance to visit the Clarins BeautyBAR this week, and experience one of eight enticing treatments – the perfect way to relax and unwind after a busy week at university.

Upon approaching the BeautyBAR, I was greeted by so many smiling faces and quickly got checked in for my treatment. I was sat down by one of the consultants who talked me through the treatments and recommended the perfect treatment based on my skin type and beauty need. I chose the 'Get Glowing Facial' which promised to 'rev up radiance in minutes' and leave my skin looking 'holiday fresh' – this sounded like the perfect treat!

The products felt so fresh and revitalising on my skin and within minutes I was completely relaxed. With ingredients such as rice starch to smooth the skin, kiwi to boost radiance and aloe vera to moisturise, I was in heaven! Although you can hear the noise from the store in the background, you feel

so far away from the chaos of the shoppers with the relaxing environment and soothing music that you drift off into your own little world – it was the perfect way to de-stress.

At the end of the treatment I was given the opportunity to purchase the products used throughout the treatment, which I will be definitely be taking advantage of because my skin feels amazing. My overall experience at the Clarins BeautyBAR was faultless and the customer service I received was second to none. I could hear the Clarins consultants approaching customers, greeting people as they passed and offering their expertise which is always appreciated by people like me who do not have a structured skin care regime.

For just £25 per treatment, this is the perfect treat for you and your girlfriends (or even your guy mates as they offer 'A Little He Time' treatment). Why not pop in on your lunch break in work or university if you can't fit time into your busy schedule? You can even fit your visit to Clarins into your shopping spree inside the new fashion and beauty departments of the John Lewis branch, with other brands like Charlotte Tilbury and the new fashion concept, loved&found being impressive draws. I would recommend the Clarins BeautyBAR experience to anyone, male or female, and I am hoping to arrange my next visit with a friend very soon.

# Brighten up those WINTER DAYS

WORDS: Jemma Brown, Style Consultant

**S**o, it's a new year – what better time to refresh your image and your wardrobe? At this time of year, when the weather is getting colder and the days are less sunny, we naturally dress in darker colours. That's fine, but all too often black becomes our default colour, partly because so many of us are unsure what colours suit us and black seems like the easy option – it's not! Black doesn't reflect the light, so it's actually very ageing; when we wear black, our complexion can appear drained of colour, the colour is dense so we look heavier and it hides our shape, often (contrary to popular belief) making us look bigger.

So, instead of black, choose navy or charcoal grey – these are much softer alternatives and easily complemented by other colours, tones or shades, creating a much more sophisticated look. Colours such as plum purples, deep coral, burnt orange, olive greens, mustard yellows, oatmeal and ivory can create a perfect winter wardrobe. Also consider different textures this season, such as wool and tweed – slightly thicker, softer fabrics will create a warmer appearance.

Try to be creative with your work-wear. Ladies, even within a very corporate business environment where formal attire is expected, style can still play a key role. Blazers and fitted cardigans can look equally as smart as a blazer, and a colourful top can lift a dark suit. Gents, opt for a slightly quirky tie and get creative with coloured shirt/tie combinations – as long as you pair them with a well fitted suit and polished shoes, you will look stylish yet professional.

And don't forget to accessorise! Carefully selected jewellery for ladies and cufflinks or watches for men can really make an outfit. Ladies, liven up a simple top with a statement necklace or a formal suit with statement shoes to add a splash of colour.

Embrace the fashion at your fingertips – it can literally brighten up your day, making you feel more positive and motivated. Here are some of my favourite new pieces on the high street to inspire your winter work wardrobe. Go on, try on something different – you never know what 2016 may have in store.



# Brighten up those WINTER DAYS



Sleek Street, Slim fit wool mix three piece suit, in mid blue (available at Slaters) £199



Polo Ralph Lauren, Double faced scarf **Was £57, Now £39**



Baulmer, Luxury wool two piece grey suit £275



Aquascutum, Ryan stripe silk tie £75



Boss, Rectangle cufflinks £65



John Lewis, Melange puppytooth tailored blazer, in Oatmeal £175



John Lewis, Gelato silk tie £35



Paul Costelloe, Luxury royal blue tailored fit suit (available at Slaters) £199



Ted Baker, Ossain Herringbone Wool Peacoat in Dark Green £299



M&S, Easy iron oxford check shirt in navy £19.50



Reiss, Millar mottled weave blazer £245



Gant, Button down gingham shirt £90



Ted Baker, Brixxby leather shoes £110



Kin by John Lewis, Dot chambray shirt £35



Dune, Lace up brogues in Navy £99



Warehouse,  
Graphic square neck cami £29



Viyella,  
Double faced zip cardigan £90



Ted Baker,  
Colourblock dress £169.99



Next,  
Navy blazer £50



Winser London,  
Ava skirt £99



French Connection,  
Tux wrap dress £45



Oasis,  
Midnight blossom blouse £38



Phase Eight,  
Alessia top £55



Warehouse,  
Asymmetric dress £49



Karen Millen, Tweed jacket  
Was £199, Now £95



Warehouse,  
Button front tweed skirt £45



Oasis,  
Compact cotton trousers £35



Dune,  
Amanda reptile shoes £75



White Stuff,  
Ashley trousers £55



Accessorise, Katie butterfly  
statement necklace £22



Peter Kaiser,  
Arla block heeled pumps £129

# HOMEWARE for HER

Selected by Amy Wilson



Marta Wiley, Living The Dream 2  
Frameless, £50.00 - £200.00



Libra Male Nude Arms  
Oustretched Sculpture, £80.00



Scion Spike Cushion, Kiwi,  
£30.00



Peony Rose and Lily Candle  
Centre Floral Arrangement, £75.00



Newgate Knightsbridge  
Wall Clock, £57.00



John Lewis Simple Check Throw,  
£40.00



John Lewis Cut Out Metal Work Box,  
White, £25.00



Waterford Marquis Treviso  
Candle Holders, £50.00



John Lewis Lavinia Glass Ball Table  
Lamp, Clear, £55.00

# HOMEWARE

## *for HIM*



Dartington Crystal Round Clock,  
Dia. 15cm, Black, £99.00



Frith Large Stag Sculpture,  
Bronze, £150.00



House by John Lewis Artificial  
Mini Cactus, H11cm, £8.00



John Lewis Bamboo Rim  
Storage Basket, £15.00-£25.00



John Lewis Croft Collection  
Recycled Glass Vase, Blue,  
Height 26cm, £35.00



John Lewis Stag Table Lamp,  
£90.00



Wild and Wolf 1950s  
Diner Phone, Black, £69.95



David Purdie - Wales Rock  
Framed Print, 47 x 87cm £90.00



John Lewis Globe, Silver, 10 inch,  
£60.00

# TAYAMIKA



**Model:** Demi Joseph

**Hair and Makeup:** Rebecca Ashworth

**Designs:** Petronella Mahachi



**WORDS:** Rebecca Ashworth

**PICTURES:** Zak Tyler

**T**he women of Liverpool seem to have earned a reputation for their personal appearance. Self-identity and the celebration of 'making the most of what you have' is a trend that the women of Liverpool have become accustomed to achieving, and the visitors of Liverpool have become accustomed to seeing.

Whilst Liverpool stays up to date with the latest trends and fashion must-haves, we are also open to other cultures, embracing and adapting style to create alternative looks. The running theme amongst the versatility of the 'Liverpool look' seems to be that the ladies would rather stand out of the crowd than blend into it.

Big hair, big lips, big shoes, big attitude...and proud of it!

Liverpool Fashion Week and other Liverpool based events celebrating fashion have grown predominantly over the past few years. These events create a buzz about the city and help promote the wide range of talent we have created.

In order to give the readers of *Switch on to Business* some insight as to what the talent of Liverpool female fashion looks like lately, I caught up with one of the designers from Liverpool Fashion Week who I believe really stood out. Petronella Mahachi is the designer of Tayamika, a clothes brand that is not only bold, but individual, cultural and sassy.





Fashion Designer Petronella Mahachi



#### Tell us about yourself:

My name is Petronella Mahachi and my brand is Tayamika, which is also my middle name, but I go by the name of Taya. I was born to a Malawian father and Zimbabwean mother and I am currently based in Merseyside.

#### When did you first realise you were interested in fashion?

I have always had a passion for both art and sewing from a very young age; I owned my first sewing machine at the age of five. My hobby was creating things on my sewing machine, however, looking back I probably spent more time trying to thread the sewing machine than actually sewing!

#### What/who is your inspiration?

I am inspired by art, Vintage Haute Couture, and the world around me. I also draw inspiration from my cultural heritage.

#### This is clearly reflected in your garments! Taking the leap of faith to go for it as an independent designer is incredibly brave - where did this courage come from?

Being an independent designer takes courage, but that's only the first step. Believing in myself and my ability provides me with the drive to keep going. I always visualise the outcome and somehow everything else falls into place, with a lot of hard work and determination, of course.

#### I am sure the readers of Switch on to Business can relate to that. It is always a pleasure to see hard work paying off for anyone, however I am sure there have been hurdles along the way. What has been your biggest obstacle?

I decided to create a "Made in Britain" brand which has been challenging, especially when trying to find local manufacturers that will allow me to price my pieces affordably. I think the price of the garment is important as that determines whether a client buys from a new independent designer or from a big commercial company.

#### Have you had any regrets since pursuing your venture?

My biggest regret is not pursuing fashion from the start of my career. I came from an

accounting background, and I then started my first business as a Beauty Consultant and Makeup Artist before realising my dream as a Fashion Designer. The good thing is that everything I have done in the past has equipped me with both business related and creative skills.

#### What is your proudest moment?

Being a part of Liverpool Fashion Week in 2015 has to be one of my highlights so far. My collection received so many good reviews and was well received. So many doors have opened as a result of Liverpool Fashion Week, and I am looking forward to a great 2016 and the future of my brand. What is your vision/goal for the future? I am currently working on securing stockists for my designs and would like to keep manufacturing in the UK. Once I have enough stockists, I can see my designs featuring at London Fashion Week.

*If you would like to find more about Tayamika, take a look at her website: [www.tayamika.com](http://www.tayamika.com).*

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[info@switchontobusiness.co.uk](mailto:info@switchontobusiness.co.uk)  
[www.switchontobusiness.co.uk](http://www.switchontobusiness.co.uk)

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# NETWORKING FOR THE NOVICE



WORDS: Miles Dove

*Miles Dove is a third year Business Management student from Liverpool Hope University - you may have recognised him from past editions of Switch on to Business where he has written about his internship with Everton FC, co-written a piece about the rising prices of student accommodation and interviewed two students from Liverpool John Moores University. Read on to find out what he has learnt over the past year from attending his first few networking events as an undergraduate student in Liverpool:*

The whole notion of networking may be a scary thought to some, especially when you are standing in the middle of a room whilst everyone else seems to be conversing around you. The fact is, the benefits of networking are indispensable; you may not create long-lasting relationships or connect with everyone you talk to, but the experience of communicating with other people on a professional level is one of the most transferable assets you can own. I know first-hand the rewards that can be gained from successful networking - doors consistently open and you are faced with an infinite amount of opportunities.

The best advice you will find comes from those that lose track of how many networking events they've attended, people that can easily walk into a room full of strangers and find it similar to having lunch with friends. Often, you will find they all share the same outlook; instead of concentrating on the daunting task ahead, an attitude of 'what can I offer?' is processing inside their mind. They listen to each individual, all the while assessing what they can give to each other. Josephine Fairley of the Daily Telegraph once wrote "it feels good to give, give, give, rather than be a 'needy networker'".

Taking all the advice given to me, here are seven of what I found to be the most useful tips:

## Have your contact details readily available:

You will most definitely need them, so be

happy to pass them out. However, make sure you're not using an email address that was created five years ago, which ends in a long number followed by xoxo's, or includes profanity on any level.

## The importance of a handshake is underestimated:

The use of a refined, limp and half-hearted handshake will immediately set a negative tone for any situation involving someone new. Make sure the handshake is strong and firm, by doing so it will communicate your interest and eagerness.

## Listen and listen well, you'll need to be able to respond:

I have only recently learned of what is known as perceptive listening; this involves engaging with another individual by asking about them, instead of relaying the conversation back to yourself and your own experiences. Be completely committed to the conversation, and in doing so your actions will be noticed, which again sets a good first impression.

## Know why you are there and what you are able to offer:

Value yourself! When the time is right, introduce yourself in more detail, and find ways in which you believe you can help each other. Remember that you are a valuable individual, and that business people may want to work with you just as much as you want to work with them.

## If you 'know someone who has a friend', ask them for an introduction:

A very commonly misused benefit of knowing people; an introduction from a friend or colleague will cost nothing yet will lead to a possible contact that could be the start of a beneficial business relationship.

## Store your contacts, follow them up the next day and build a strong foundation:

A mistake that many people make is not contacting everyone met whilst networking. You have gained a new contact, now is the time to form a foundation and act on the conversation from the day before.

## Most importantly, have confidence in your abilities, as everyone is sharing the same situation:

There will not be a single person in business that has not been a novice in networking; beginners cannot be experts without practice and as we all know, practice makes perfect. Fundamentally, the greatest way to network is to be yourself and let your personality shine.

\*

I myself can in no way be considered as an expert networker, however, from taking all of the advice I've received this past year my abilities and confidence have grown. Do not expect to become a networking expert overnight, as these conversational situations take time to develop into a comfortable rhythm. Try and attend as many events as possible and be grateful for any opportunities to network, and you'll soon realise the endless potential that small conversations can produce.

# STUDENT ABROAD

HENRY WHELAN  
**KEDGE Business School, Bordeaux**



Henry and his mentor, Tiphaine Bichot, at the Bordeaux Alumni launch evening

*Henry Whelan, 22, is studying for a Masters in Management at KEDGE Business School in Bordeaux, a Triple Accredited institution ranked amongst the top thirty business schools in the world. This year of study forms part of his education at The University of Sheffield, where students reading a language spend a year abroad, either in industry or academia. We caught up with Henry to discover what makes a year abroad such a valuable experience for employers and employees alike.*

## **How did you feel about moving away from your friends and family to a different country for an academic year?**

I was both excited and apprehensive at the same time – it's the fear of the unknown initially, and not knowing what to expect. However, I knew it was going to be a really valuable experience, and the institution that I was going to attend would challenge and reward me. Once I arrived, I felt I landed on my feet, which was a great feeling. Also, I was in an environment where hard work and excellence are rewarded and encouraged, which is something I feel has really helped me settle in and work hard.

## **How is studying in France different to studying in the UK?**

KEDGE is a Grande Ecole – the most prestigious level of university education in France – so it does differ on an academic level to the education that I have experienced in the UK. However, there is a well-known phrase in France; you pop the champagne when you get into a Grande Ecole, and not when you leave. In other words, the hardest work is done before arriving at the school, which to me seems to produce a sense of complacency amongst the native French students. However, the international students I have met have all been very committed to working hard and getting the most from the experience.

## **Why do you believe studying abroad is a valuable option?**

It has definitely forced me to be independent. It's important to find your feet quickly, not only to make the most of the experience but also to help reduce the transition period of being at home, and then thrust into a new and foreign environment. It's also a huge test for your skills and capabilities, and you soon find out if you're up to the task. Studying and living abroad also gives you the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life, and going to a high level institution is such an advantage as you are able

to meet high-powered individuals; for instance, during my courses, I attended lectures given by a director of Deloitte, and the Director of a Venture Capital company. I am also part of the Bordeaux Alumni Association, which is a selective mentorship scheme for international students from the elite level institutions in Bordeaux, to promote Bordeaux internationally and attract investors to Bordeaux. It presents a great opportunity to network, and to meet like-minded people from all over the globe. Studying abroad means that opportunities like these are presented to you, however it is up to the individual to go and take them, which stands you in good stead for working life.

## **Why should an employer hire someone who has completed a year abroad?**

Students who have studied abroad are incredibly adaptable; this would mean that employers often would not need to spend time training graduates for lengthy periods. In my eyes, many employers need people to come into a job and hit the ground running straight away, particularly SMEs, who haven't necessarily the time or resources to devote to training new recruits. It's all about putting skills into practice in a new environment, which is what studying in Bordeaux has enabled me to do.

## **Finally, would you return to England to work after experiencing life in France?**

Studying in France has made me realise how good the English economy is, and moreover how good the standard of the UK education system is. I'm very happy that I am in France to polish my skills, rather than to obtain them! I would definitely come back to England to follow my career path. I don't feel that in future I will be confined to one area of expertise, as I believe that the days of people having a profession for life are over, which is why France has been such a great opportunity to refine my skills in an array of business areas.

*Aadrienne Gowns is a third year History student at Liverpool John Moores University who is interested in both local politics and world issues. Aadrienne has a passion for social media, establishing her writing online and is hoping to use these interests to forge a career in addressing social issues online.*

**Switch on to Business** met up with Jeffrey Dunn, Director and Co-ordinator of the Liverpool Schools' Parliament, and Mariam Waseem, a trustee of the UK Youth Parliament, who has also been working with young people in Merseyside.



Upper House parliament meeting

## LIVERPOOL SCHOOLS' PARLIAMENT

WORDS: Aadrienne Gowns

**T**he Liverpool Schools' Parliament is an apolitical organisation, gaining their representation from pupils of participating schools' across the county. The organisation invites members to take part in regular meetings, scrutiny panels and committee boards covering issues within the city and surrounding areas. The Parliament is separated into a Lower and Upper House, in order to focus on issues appropriate to a varied age range.

The organisation works alongside other groups, including but not limited to Liverpool EurVoice, The European Youth Parliament and various youth advisory groups. More recently, members had taken part in a Model International Criminal Court, in Kreisau, Poland. The majority of students involved were from Poland, Germany and Estonia. In the court, students prepared and enacted four real life cases, while adults who attended participated in a two day course on Human Rights. The two UK representatives had taken on the role of different Prosecution Teams, both cases looking at Genocide in Rwanda.

The Lower House has been focusing on local issues including Road Safety around Schools, with the members taking part in two Mock Trials. The House worked with Open the Door Theatre in Education, to help illustrate the dangers created by both speeding and inconsiderate parking outside of schools. Scripts from the play created had been sent out to primary schools with many already planning to use the play.

The Lower House has also been working on the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Resources, aiming the material towards pupils in Years 5 to 6. Both the Upper and Lower Houses have had the opportunity to discuss the first scenario produced in partnership with Ariel Trust,



Mariam Waseem speaking at British Youth Council Conference

looking at issues of grooming in public spaces. The scenario has been approved by both Houses so far and the project is soon to produce resources on issues around online gaming and unhealthy relationships. The CSE resources should be available to schools and youth groups free of charge by the start of the next school year.

The voice of young people across the country is not only valued but put into action with groups such as The Liverpool Schools' Parliament, and although their work is not always advertised, internally the city has reaped the rewards. Following the successes of the 'My Ticket' with MerseyTravel, the group are seeking to explore the possibility to introduce a 'Family Ticket' on all public transport across Merseyside, to enable more families to go out together. Already the My Ticket has saved young people £12,000 a week across the county.

Not only this, but the parliament is involved in wider debates with some of their members

involved in the UK Youth Parliament, and recently members had taken part in a committee debate in London. Members were debating the top five topics, as chosen by young people in the nationwide ballot, in the House of Commons. The topics chosen for UKYP National Campaigns of 2016 included mental health, to promote improvements in services for young people and the need for compulsory mental health education, in an effort to challenge stereotypes. The second campaign is aiming to tackle racism and religious discrimination; particularly against Islamic and Jewish faiths. The campaigns ethos is to promote all young people to work together in order to combat racism and other forms of discrimination, ensuring all know the dangers of such hatred.

It seems there is great benefit to young people having access to such organisations, not only to benefit their interpersonal skills, such as public speaking and critical thinking, but to give a broader voice to politics. The organisation had recently been debating the voting age being lowered to 16 and with the involvement young people have in politics, it is feasible many have a greater grasp on politics than some adults.

Also, although the number of women's representation in Parliament has greatly risen, there are still improvements that could be made to ensure there is equal representation not only for women but for people of minority backgrounds. Having a number of schools from different areas come together to discuss issues, locally and nationwide, is a significant step forward and hopefully even more schools will continue to involve their pupils in these organisations, as well as creating more focus groups that continue to approach Parliaments and Youth Panels alike to gain feedback from our young people of today.

# MY INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

## Legend Press

WORDS: Emma Rees



*Emma Rees, 23, studied at the University of Liverpool for four years, achieving both a BA Hons degree and an MA in English Literature. She is currently looking to start her career in publishing, and after writing an article for August's edition of Switch on to Business, she managed to find herself a two week internship with the London Book Publishing House, Legend Press. Since writing this article, Emma has been offered a six month internship with HarperCollins, the second largest consumer book publisher in the world.*

*Read on to discover her experience within the publishing industry, and what she learnt whilst she was there:*

### Thinking about getting into publishing? Take a look at this:

For the best information on the publishing industry, take a look at [www.thebookseller.com](http://www.thebookseller.com). It offers details about courses, news, events and jobs.

### Not sure what to expect?

[www.diaryofapublishingintern.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.diaryofapublishingintern.blogspot.co.uk) is the award winning blog detailing the career journey of Steff Lever and her experience in the publishing industry. Take a look for great CV and interview advice, and even the occasional job vacancy. The SYP (The Society of Young Publishers) offers great advice and advertises job vacancies: [www.thesyp.org.uk](http://www.thesyp.org.uk).

**L**ast September, having just completed my MA in Contemporary Literature, I finally found myself in the position where I had to think seriously about my future. On reflection, it was a little late to be suddenly considering where I wanted to start my career: I always knew I wanted to study English at university and the University of Liverpool was the place I had always dreamed of going, but after 4 years there, I had never actually stopped to think about what I might do once I had finished.

Working a part-time job as a Shift Manager at a local hotel and as an English tutor to tide me over, I started looking into the publishing sector as I am an avid reader and lover of all forms of literature. The prospect of working with it every day seemed almost too good to be true. But the more I started to research getting into publishing, the harder I realised it would be; the publishing industry is incredibly oversubscribed, even on a good day. After weeks of research and endless applications, I finally managed to score myself a two-week internship at Legend Press, a London-based book publishing company. Internships and work experience are like gold-dust, especially in the busy capital, so I was thrilled to finally get a chance to see what it would really be like to work in a publishing environment.

Situated at a very central and stylish office on Gray's Inn Road, Legend Press was an incredibly convenient location for me to commute to. After meeting the small but friendly team, I was set straight to work reading six full-length manuscripts (unpublished books) and was asked to compile Reader Reports for each. In these reports, I had to provide a synopsis of the story and then give my feedback and comments, including whether I felt the manuscript was suitable to be published by Legend. Reading six books back-to-back in two days was exhausting but exhilarating, and as I have always loved reading this barely felt like work to me. Once this was completed I was put in charge of accepting and rejecting incoming manuscripts from the Legend website. Amateur writers are encouraged to submit a synopsis of

their book, along with the first three chapters.

After sifting through hundreds of submissions, it became increasingly apparent that what some writers lacked in raw talent, they made up for in enthusiasm and commitment. Writing a full, 90,000 word novel whilst holding down a day job, and quite often a family, is no easy feat! I was told before arriving that as well as getting an insight into sales, editorial, publishing and rights, I would also gain experience in the MD's other business venture, New Generation Publishing, which shared the same office.

Experiencing the goings-on of New Generation Publishing was something I found incredibly fascinating; I soon learnt just how many people choose to publish their own books, purchasing different self-publishing packages from New Generation which would include things such as proof-reading, cover design, type-setting and the printing and distribution of their book. I was given several different manuscripts at various different stages of self-publication and was asked to proof-read and edit them accordingly. It was during this time that I learnt about the basics of desk-editing. I also sat in on meetings with authors and designers, and even provided direct feedback to potential authors. The Commissioning Editor also gave me the opportunity to sit down with her and discuss any promising manuscripts I had come across, asking me to give a detailed argument as to why it should be published.

Considering my lack of any previous publishing experience, I can honestly say that working at Legend Press was a real eye-opener. Gaining experience was hard work, especially considering I still had to work my part-time job in the evenings and weekends. It was also expensive as it was unpaid (as quite a few internships are). However, I thoroughly enjoyed myself: I became educated in the many different roles within a book publishing company. Not only has it expanded my CV, it has also expanded my understanding of different jobs and what kind of role I would like to apply for in the future. For now, the job hunt continues.

# REFLECTIONS: MY TIME AT UNIVERSITY

WORDS: Bethany Atkin

**I**t certainly feels strange writing about myself, as I am so used to writing about the amazing work of the businesses and individuals that we feature within Switch on to Business. However, as Edition 4 has centred slightly upon the theme 'development', I was asked by Lin and Jackie to write about what I had learnt during the most busy, stressful and successful years of my life, with the wonderful power of hindsight.

In September 2014, I started to study for a Masters degree in Consumer Marketing at the University of Liverpool, an institution where, for the past three years, I had studied for a BA in English Literature. The decision to complete a Masters was not one taken lightly; I thought for a long time about the risks, the benefits and what I intended to gain from the degree itself. I spoke to my work experience mentor at the time from 'Bounce Marketing', a children's literature marketing agency in London, and she advised me that I would be much more hireable if I had a second degree under my belt. Taking this on board, and wanting to further my knowledge and broaden my career prospects, I decided to go for it.

To rewind slightly, I would be lying if I said marketing was a career I intended to go into

after I finished studying, and I would also be lying if I said that the course itself made me want to work in the industry. For me, since I was seventeen my passion has always been the publishing industry. Perhaps my family nickname (Bookworm Beth) had something to do with it, but I just somehow knew that I would excel in that line of work.

When I first started university in 2011, I applied for internships with what I would call the 'Big Dogs': Penguin Group UK, Hachette and The Bookseller, the go-to magazine for the industry. I was surprised when the rejections came through, until I looked again at my CV. Initially, I had thought my A Levels and my weekend job in Scarborough's family department store would set me on my way to success, yet I learnt the hard way that 'one needed to have experience to get experience'. Therefore, I attended a 'Get into Publishing' talk at my university, and the speaker kindly said that students who lived in the south were, and I quote, 'laughing', as they were much more likely to get a job in the industry due to their location. For an eighteen year old student who lived miles north from the publishing hub of the country, this was a serious blow.



Quietly but surely angered by the speaker's comment, I decided to ardently search for opportunities in Liverpool. I started out as the staff editor of my university's student magazine and continued there until the end of my final year of undergraduate study, when I landed the role of Editor-in-chief. During my second year, an opportunity arose to copyedit a novel by local author Tom Slemen, and in my third year I successfully applied for an internship in London with the aforementioned Bounce Marketing (note to reader: the email regarding my successful application was found in my junk mail, so make sure this is checked regularly!). I travelled to London for two months every Tuesday evening to work at Bounce on each Wednesday of the week. This internship was particularly special, as I was invited to attend the London Book Fair and a two-day business conference; it was from this experience that I realised I wanted to get into the commercial side of publishing rather than copyediting, yet without securing these placements I may not have pursued this change of career direction until much later.

When I began my Masters degree, we were told in our first lecture to start applying for jobs and to meet with our careers advisor to discuss and plan the future. Again, I was told to move to London instead of staying in Liverpool, due to the opportunities that are offered down south. It seemed to me that instead of encouraging students to stay in the city, universities aim to push students away to where the jobs with the larger companies are and where the financial incentives may be higher. Not once was I advised or encouraged to start up my own business, my own publishing house or my own magazine; it was never even an option at twenty-two years old to become an Editor-in-chief. I was sent on my way with no help, no confidence, and a couple of links to editorial assistant internships away from the city.

The conversation made me realise at the time that university was unable to really help me get into the industry, or acquire the skills necessary in order to be successful in the job itself. Since then, I have believed that universities should do more to help students outside of academia. It's all very well and good being able to Harvard reference an essay – there were many, many lectures on this – but what about knowing how to conduct oneself in a professional environment? What is the right way to network with other businesses? What on earth is a tax return?

These questions buzzing around my head, I soldiered on through the year, managing to pick up another internship on the way. This time, it was at Hachette (a 'Big Dog' who had turned down my application in my first year) with Hodder & Stoughton, a company that have published the work of Jodi Picoult, Stephen King and Alex Ferguson to name but a few. I interned for two weeks; one week with their

Marketing department, and another at their Publicity department. If any students are reading this, here is a top tip for when you secure work experience: bake on your last day. You will be remembered! The brownies went down a storm, and I came back to Liverpool filled with confidence and determination (and also praising the stars that I did not have to step onto a tube again for a long time).

February 2015. This was perhaps my lowest career point to date; the role I had secured to enable me to finance my living costs suddenly decided to let go of all of its staff, and I was left unemployed with half of a degree to somehow attain and rent to pay. It wasn't looking good. Would I have to drop out of my degree? I did not have a clue what my next steps were, and that day seemed to last forever.

The same day, a friend who had heard of my predicament had seen a job advertised that she thought I would be perfect for. A local business was looking for a student to be the Editor of a business magazine, with marketing experience preferably required. I genuinely do not think a job could have been tailored any more towards my skills and experience, and the more I thought about the role, the more I realised how much it all made sense. I absolutely had to have it – there was no question about it – and it seemed that I had found my silver lining within what I had previously seen as a huge black cloud of misery.

I was invited for the interview, and I turned up with all of my ideas about the magazine to hand. Something just felt incredibly right; it seemed that

everything that had happened to me over the past few weeks was leading me up to this point. A few hours later, I received a phone call and was offered the job.

Being the Editor-in-chief of Switch on to Business has been absolutely exhilarating; it has dramatically developed my skills, with regards to both the editorial and creative side, and the business and networking side. University was brilliant at testing my academic intelligence, however it did not test me on the skills I have picked up from securing this role. Lin and Jackie have supported me in so many ways over this past year, and I could not be more thankful for all they have done – and even though they would want me to edit this sentence out, I won't. Also, they will probably be mad at me if I don't mention that in December 2015, I graduated my Masters with a Distinction, which made the struggle absolutely worth it.

If there are any students or graduates reading this who need to talk to someone who's been through it all, my email address is: [info@switchontobusiness.co.uk](mailto:info@switchontobusiness.co.uk). If there is any way I can help you, or direct you in the right way, I will. I know how tough it is to live in the limbo between being a student and wanting a career, so please do not hesitate to get in touch.



# LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY HOSTS FIRST PROFESSIONAL LIVERPOOL EVENT WITH DEBATE ON UK SKILLS GAP



(l-r): Professor Jim Keaton (Board of Regents, Liverpool Hope University), Mr Steve Stuart (Brabners Stuart LLP), Dr Valeria Andreoni (Liverpool Hope University Business School), Dr Martin Carey (Head of Liverpool Hope University Business School), Professor Gerald J Pillay (Vice Chancellor, Liverpool Hope University), Mr John Hall (Chief Executive of Professional Liverpool), Dr Paula Raper (Liverpool Hope University Business School), Mr Jim Gill (Chairman and Board Member, Professional Liverpool).



Jordan Wright, Liverpool Hope University alumnus and Chief Executive of Little League Sports.

**S**tudents and staff from Liverpool Hope University's Business School hosted members of Professional Liverpool for their first joint event at the University's Hope Park campus, where topics under discussion included the UK skills gap.

Speakers at the first event included John Hall (CEO of Professional Liverpool), Dr Martin Carey (Head of Liverpool Hope University Business School) and Jordan Wright, a Liverpool Hope University graduate who in 2008 set up sports coaching and education provider Little League Sports, which now employs 25 staff in Liverpool and won Business of the Year (up to 50 employees) at the 2015 Echo Regional Business Awards.

Calling for wider government funding to help students and graduates make more direct links with business, Dr Carey said:

*"The IMF World Economic Outlook Projections for July 2015 indicated that the UK will grow by 2.2% next year. However, according to the Confederation of British Industry, our economy is still suffering from a chronic skills shortage from graduates. There is a wealth of student talent*

*in the city. This first Professional Liverpool event was a chance for students to make connections with industry and for us all to delve deeper into what businesses want from graduates and vice versa."*



Jordan Wright delivers his presentation for Little League Sports.

Jordan Wright said: "We started Little League Sports while we were students, and thanks to the pastoral care and direction from the Liverpool Hope University Business School, we felt ready for the world of business when it came to graduation. That same approach is a fundamental part of our own business model, and all of our post-16 coaching qualifications involve work placements, allowing our students to go on to degree level and beyond with skills, experience, hunger for success, and a clearer idea of where they want their careers to take them."

John Hall CEO of Professional Liverpool said: "Tonight we've seen the immense knowledge and talent that exists at Liverpool Hope University. Facilitating this discussion is one of the first steps to Professional Liverpool working closer with the academic and student community to create opportunities."



Marissa Bright,  
(second left), owner of  
The Brightest Star Princesses

# THE *Brightest Star* PRINCESSES

WORDS: Bethany Atkin

PICTURES: Michelle Roberts

*The team at Switch on to Business can't resist a little bit of a sparkle now and again, so when we were introduced to Marissa Bright, owner of 'The Brightest Star Princesses', we knew she would fit perfectly into the magazine. At eighteen years old, Marissa started her business in September 2015 which she manages to run on the weekends and evenings, only after she attends her course in Musical Theatre throughout the week. We wanted to know how she is able to manage a business and attend a highly prestigious and demanding theatre school, and do so with a smile on her face. Read on to find out about The Brightest Star Princesses and of Marissa, who we believe has a very 'Bright' future ahead.*

"The Brightest Star Princesses is an entertainment company, with the main focus being upon Disney Princesses. All of the princesses are trained in musical theatre, and we offer party visits, photographs, party games, singing and dancing, and our visits vary between fifteen minutes up to an hour and a half. This is something I absolutely love doing, as it uses the skills in musical theatre which I have been developing over my whole life, and it is the industry which I want to end up in as my chosen career.

Initially, I started off buying only basic equipment and costumes as it was all I could afford at the time. I only started off with the offer of two princesses, but as time went on I managed to save and buy more princess outfits, and upgraded existing costumes. A typical visit now includes meet and greets, where the princess speaks to the children and tells stories about her fantasy life; we would then sing the songs relevant to each princess, and then allow photographs to be taken with the children, but this all varies depending on which package has been chosen. I haven't received anything but positive feedback from

my customers, which is fantastic.

What I find difficult is the lack of time I have, in terms of managing the business and attending theatre school. I am sometimes sat on an evening working out bookings when I should really be studying, but if I didn't manage the business in my free time I wouldn't have a business! The princesses I have are all musical theatre trained, as we are all studying for the same Diploma. I choose the princesses who have the right look, and who can sing, act and dance, and as I knew them all from the course already I didn't need to hold any formal auditions.

I think dealing with people is one of the most challenging aspects of owning a business that I have faced, as it is not something I am used to. I have to be both credible and professional when working, and make sure I manage each client on an individual level, depending on the changes they want to make to the party visits. I have learnt how to say 'no' in a professional manner, which is important to be able to do in this industry where I can only compromise so much.



My ambitions for the future are focused upon the West End in London. My business helps me fund my study, enables me to practise my trade outside of theatre school, and also provides me with another option if need be after I finish the course (which will be this July!). If I managed to secure a role in the West End, I would want to pass the business on to someone and manage it whilst I was away, as I wouldn't want to completely stop the business. You don't really know what's going to happen in the future, so I have to be prepared. In Liverpool, the performing industry is limited in terms of opportunities; we all have to fight for ourselves to get ahead and to be the first to know if there are any openings in the city, as otherwise they will be taken by another who heard of it first. The majority of opportunities are down in London,

as Liverpool only contains a small circle of professionals that can help and offer advice. In the capital there are hundreds of people to speak to, to help and to guide you through the industry, as well as the number of shows and performances that are staged on a weekly basis.

My biggest achievement has been the increase in bookings I have seen over the past month; during Christmas I was fully booked for a week, where I am only used to having two or three parties over the weekend! This has been achieved by the high standard of princesses that I hire, and from the old saying of: 'it's who you know'. When we attend family parties, there are people there who have children/grandchildren of their own who would also like a princess party visit, which is

another way I have managed to pick up more clients. We have also attended a few weddings! I recently started advertising on social media, which is when the bookings really took off because of the positive reviews shown on my Facebook page, which helped the business become well-known for its high standard of princesses."

*We think that Marissa and The Brightest Star Princesses are fabulous; Marissa especially is a perfect example of the future talent we have in the city, and we hope that Liverpool does all it can to retain its young people and to secure the skill we are blessed with.*

*If you would like to book a princess visit, please contact Marissa via her Facebook page by searching for 'The Brightest Star Princesses'.*

*Switch on to*  
**HEALTH AND  
WELLBEING**



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[www.switchontobusiness.co.uk](http://www.switchontobusiness.co.uk)

SWITCH ON TO  
**BUSINESS**

## JUICE RECIPES



## PICK ME UP

**Raspberries, banana and apple.**

Contains 13 vitamins and 7 minerals, and is the product that covers the most nutritional benefits. This is good for daily vitamin energy boosts.



## JOE'S AMG

**Apple, mint, ginger.**

This is one of the super juices. The combination of ginger and mint aids the senses, and the folate from the mint may help with the relief of headaches and can purify the skin.



## HEART BEAT

**Banana, pineapple, beetroot, avocado.**

The ingredients, when combined, have been proven to help reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes. The vitamin C from the pineapple increases the absorption of folate.



## ENERGISER

**Ginger, grapefruit and apple.**

This is the juice for when you feel tired. The zinc from the ginger aids the body in absorbing the vitamin C. The vitamin B3 within the grapefruit and ginger is essential for the body to create energy.



EDITOR'S  
CHOICE



# HEALTHY EATING AT WORK

## *An oxymoron in itself, or achievable?*

WORDS: Dalbinder Bains

*Dalbinder is a BANT registered Nutritional Therapist, ZEST4LIFE Weight Loss Coach and Medical Herbalist (MNIMH), practising in South Liverpool and Neals Yard Central Manchester. She offers support, guidance and coaching in order to put together a bespoke nutritional, herbal and lifestyle programme. Read on to find out how Dalbinder believes you can ensure a healthy lifestyle at work:*

**I**s work ruining your health? Do you feel exhausted, overwhelmed and find that you have no time or energy for your family, friends and interests out of work?

You are not alone...

One of the modern 21st century issues is that we are often told we can have it all, but we are not told how to have it all? A lot of us think we have to work harder and harder, but this often is not the answer.

I would not say that I have the complete answer, but I know that certainly a very large part of the answer centres upon what we eat and when we eat; diet and nutrition can equal more energy and vitality. What you do with this extra energy and vitality is up to you!

I like to use an analogy used by Dr. John Briffa, a leading expert in the optimisation of health & wellbeing: "Anyone who owns a smartphone will know the importance of maintaining its battery. Periodically recharging by plugging into the mains is

something we have to do if we want to take advantage of its functionality." He compares smart phones to the human body, and argues that there are certain things we have to do to make sure we work well, or we will ourselves suffer from periods of low battery.

Therefore, battery charging through diet and nutrition is something we have to do! So let's not overcomplicate it, let's make it second nature like dressing or travelling to work – as it is part of what we have to do to keep ourselves fully charged.

It may be shocking to discover that our diet is responsible for 80-90% of our success or failure when it comes to staying healthy. We all spend most of our waking hours at work, so it's no surprise that our workplace nutrition habits have a major impact upon our health. We consume at least a third of our daily calorie intake while at work, and what we eat and drink affects not just our health but our work performance too. If we don't eat regular well-balanced meals or drink enough water, we may get headaches, feel sluggish or have difficulty concentrating.

## What should we be looking at to stay fully charged?

### Timing

It's important when we eat, as well as what we eat. If we are skipping meals or eating too irregularly this can lead to irregular energy levels, and ultimately can manifest in us overeating at other mealtimes.

### Food

Don't overcomplicate it. Have a few staples that you rely on that are quick, easy and nutritious. Save the adventurous cooking for when you have time or when you eat out. Spend 10 minutes writing a shopping list thinking about all the meals and snacks for the week ahead. Always shop with a list!

### Breakfast

Think outside the box – think of any breakfast that you can take in a container to work! Here is some inspiration:

*Greek yoghurt* as a base with berries (can be frozen raspberries, strawberries, blueberries) and some nuts and seeds (walnuts, almonds, pecans, cashews, sunflower, pumpkin, maybe a drizzle of honey). Apart from the honey, you do not need to limit the quantities. Add oats. This breakfast can also easily travel with you!

*Avocado* on brown toast topped with poached eggs.

*Nut butter smoothies* –½ a frozen banana, 2 tablespoons almond butter, ½ cup no added sugar almond milk and a few ice cubes. Mix up in a blender and take to work.

### Lunch

This is often the biggest issue, as eating sandwiches every day are not the answer. But sandwiches do have nutritional value! Make sure you choose wholemeal bread - wraps are a good alternative - and ensure your fillings are rich in protein such as meat, hummus or cheese, along with plenty of salad. When buying from supermarkets I try to always buy a bag of salad/ spinach to accompany my sandwich.

An alternative is a salad which most sandwich shops will oblige, and you can add meat, fish, and seafood. For vegetarian options look at cheese, hummus, nuts and seeds.

Soups are good accompaniments but these depend on what they are made of; if you are trying to reduce your bread-intake, a soup alone may not sustain you. Often I make basic green soups with kale and spinach, and I have this as an accompaniment to my lunch. These are very nutrient-dense and can be stored for up to a week in the fridge

### Snacks

When planning snacks for work, choose snacks with a combination of carbohydrates, healthy fats and lean proteins to boost your metabolism, increase energy, and make you feel fuller for longer.

*Walnuts* – Walnuts are high in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants. Pair a handful of walnuts with a piece of low-fat cheese, your favourite fruit, or a bowl of oatmeal for a fibre-rich morning snack.

good bacteria needed for a healthy digestive tract. Add some crunch to 1 cup of yogurt by mixing in 1 cup of low-fat, fibre-rich granola and ½ a cup of dark cherries for a punch of antioxidants and phytonutrients.

Remember, the aim is to balance blood sugar and not to be too hungry in-between meals. Listen to your body; if you are not overeating and do not feel overly hungry, then snacking may not always be an option for you. Not all of us fit into the same pattern, for example, some people simply can't have breakfast. It's OK to be different, providing we are not overeating at other mealtimes.

### Are You Drinking Enough Water?

Maintaining hydration is key to maintaining energy. Drink enough water to keep your urine a pale-yellow colour. For most people, this can be around 2 litres of water.

Remember, tea and coffee with little or no milk and no added sugar should be limited to around 2 cups per day.

*Herbal teas* - as long as they are not caffeinated – also contribute to your water intake.

Bring in a water bottle. Start each day with a full bottle of water at your desk and make an effort to drink water often, starting first thing in the morning. You'll stay hydrated and energised.

### Throwaway the Rubbish!

Avoid having chocolates, sweets, crisps, crackers and other unhealthy snacks stashed in your desk. The less you're tempted by junk food, the healthier you'll eat.

### Always Make Time for Meals.

Block off 30 minutes each day to walk away from your desk and eat a healthy meal. You'll come back refreshed and re-energised. Set your alarm every 30 minutes, so that if you haven't moved in that time you can at least have a good stretch.

### Bring Leftovers.

Make an extra portion when you're cooking dinner each night, and you'll have a healthy lunch to take to the office the next day. You'll also save money by doing this.

### Plan Your Meals.

If you know you're going to eat two or three meals and snacks at the office, plan ahead. Coming prepared will help you avoid getting too hungry and indulging on unhealthy junk food.

*Choose snacks with a combination of carbohydrates, healthy fats and lean proteins to boost your metabolism, increase energy, and make you feel fuller for longer.*

*Apples* – Apples are loaded with pectin, which helps suppress your appetite. Eating an apple mid-day helps control blood sugar and may aid in weight loss.

Have it with a spoonful of nut butter (cashew, peanut, almond) adds muscle-building protein and healthy fat.

*Spinach Salad* – Mix up a fresh salad with 2 cups of spinach (rich in energy-boosting magnesium), 1 cup of antioxidant-packed strawberries, ½ a cup of black beans and one large hard-boiled egg for extra protein.

*Oranges and Almonds* – Staying hydrated helps you stay energized. In addition to drinking water throughout the day, eat fruits like oranges, which are 90% water. Pair one large orange with an ounce of raw almonds, which are loaded with fibre, protein, and heart-healthy fat.

*Yogurt, Granola, and Cherries* – Yogurt contains probiotics, which are known as the



### First Steps?

The first step is having a plan; this means we are planning our future which means we are having a future. Yes, it's powerful stuff.

So as we have meetings at our business, we should have a meeting with ourselves regularly, and for the very adventurous we should even involve our partners or family.

*List briefly what you want to achieve in each area of your life:*

**1. For yourself:** Improve your diet, exercise more etc. Write down your plans and ensure it is done, e.g. running with somebody every week.

**Studying:** What do you want to achieve outside of work? Allocate times in your diary for when you study.

**2. Family:** Write down what you want to achieve with your partner, children, and/or family. There is nothing more powerful than making plans with your partner!

Agree on how to improve your relationship, where to go on holidays, how often to take time out for each other. Whatever you agree on, you should put it in writing and sign it to avoid misunderstandings.

**3. Work:** Write down how you would improve your job - you may need to consult with other staff and colleagues.

**4. Groups:** If you are a member of an association, charity, religion or political party etc., write down what you want to achieve within these group(s).

Groups are important as they make sure others benefit from its existence.

**5. Animals/plants:** What you are going to do to protect and improve the life of plants and animals? That could be as simple as reducing poisons in your garden or giving your pet a better life. How about avoiding caged chicken or farmed fish?

**6. Environment:** Write down what steps you are taking to improve the environment. Avoid toxins in your household? Only use organic products?

**7. Society:** What professional association, political party etc. are you going to support? Which one is best to achieve your goals? Write it all down.

This list could be used as a letter to yourself that you open in a year to see how much progress you made.

Try not to become overwhelmed! There are people like me that can help you make your own plan.

*If you would like to contact Dalbinder for more information or to book a consultation, you can email her at: [dalbinderbains@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dalbinderbains@yahoo.co.uk)*

# CLAIRE HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOSPICE



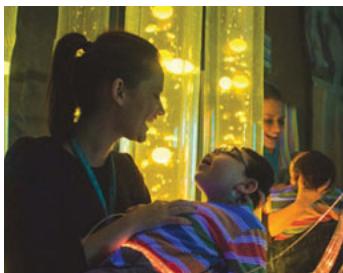
**Claire House**  
CHILDREN'S HOSPICE



## PROFILE

### BETHANIEPOCHIN

*Claire House Children's Hospice offers care, support and choice to families whose children won't live to be adults. Whilst the hospice building is located on the Wirral, Claire House aims to offer the very best care wherever and whenever a child and family needs it, whether they choose to come to the hospice or are looked after at home with their Hospice to Home Team. We recently met with Bethanie Pochin, a Corporate Fundraiser at Claire House, to find out more about her role and what the charity does.*



#### Tell us about your role at Claire House:

I have worked at Claire House since August 2015, and have had a brilliant first few months! I moved to Liverpool from Leicester six years ago to study English at the University of Liverpool, and after my degree I worked at The Reader Organisation for just under two years. I decided I wanted to stay within the charity sector, particularly in fundraising, so I took the opportunity to work at Claire House as a Corporate Fundraiser.

Fundraising is a brilliant job full of variation; I'm probably at my desk about 40% of the time, and the remaining time is spent out and about meeting people, discovering the ins and outs of the many industries we have in the city, getting to know some brilliant individuals behind these industries, and working out how we can work together to benefit both Claire House and their organisation. We want to help companies feel connected to their local community, and they can do this by supporting Claire House in many ways, from volunteering to hosting fundraisers.

#### What sort of businesses do you work with?

We work with lots of companies both small and large, from marketing agencies to solicitors. Recently MSB Solicitors chose us as their charity of the year which was fantastic. They have great team morale in the office and have got stuck straight into fundraising which is inspiring to see. We are also currently working with Wayne Rooney on his Testimonial season, and Google on a project in the hospice, so there's a real variety of amazing fundraising projects going on!

#### Can you tell us more about the children's hospice itself?

Claire House is a truly amazing place. Whilst Claire House deals with extremely sad situations, it is a place of positivity and laughter, where the darkest of times are made that little bit brighter. When people hear the word hospice, they can often think of it as a really scary place surrounded by death and the dying. However, the amazing care team at Claire House manage to create an environment that focuses on life and living, where parents get the chance to do the very best for their children, even during the toughest of times, and create special moments that will last a lifetime. The care team make every effort to get to know the families who come there, to ensure they receive the care and

support that suits their needs, and to ensure they can make their experience as personable as possible.

As well as offering end of life care, Claire House offers support through short respite breaks, days out, therapies and counselling.

We offer tours of Claire House to all supporters, and I would recommend anyone who has supported or is looking to support Claire House to come along to one of our tours, to discover more about the amazing work that goes on at the Hospice.

#### How does a family go about getting their child into Claire House?

Referrals can be made by family members or any professionals involved with the care of the child or young person. We work closely with local children's hospitals who can refer patients who they feel could benefit from the care we offer at Claire House. Referrals are of course only activated once a child/young person's parent/guardian has agreed to the referral being made.



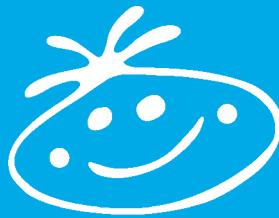
#### As a corporate fundraiser, what are your aims for the next twelve months?

We are aiming to get more charity of the year partnerships in place, so we are looking for businesses of all different sizes that are looking to partner up with a local charity to choose Claire House. Companies who support Claire House will receive support from myself or one of my colleagues throughout the year, and we have a fantastic variety of opportunities for businesses to get together and support us.

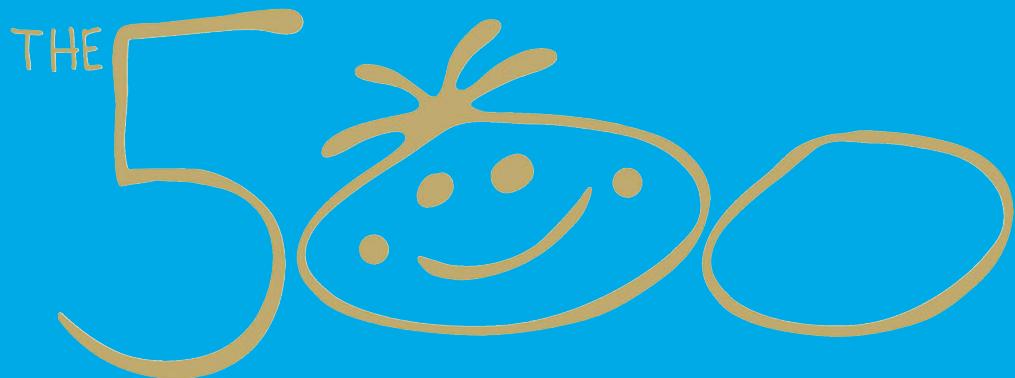
We are also currently launching a new initiative, called The 500. To become a part of this prestigious 500 Club we are asking companies who would like to support their community, but don't necessarily have the resources available to host a fundraising event, to donate £500 a year over a three year partnership.

Every company who signs up to this will be helping Claire House to have an income that is predictable and sustainable. In return they will benefit from the exclusivity of being a member, a link to their website will be uploaded onto our website and we will offer networking opportunities for The 500 Club members so that members can meet one another.

*To find out more about Claire House, visit their website at: [www.claire-house.org.uk](http://www.claire-house.org.uk).*



**Claire House**  
CHILDREN'S HOSPICE  
WHERE QUALITY OF LIFE IS PRECIOUS



Joining The 500 takes only a moment to do, and your support means Claire House can continue offering care, support and choice to children who are terminally ill, creating moments and memories for families to treasure.

If you would like to join The 500 or if you would like more information we would be delighted to hear from you. You can get in touch by emailing [corporate@clairehouse.org.uk](mailto:corporate@clairehouse.org.uk) or calling 0151 343 0883.

## KEN MULLEN



# THE MARATHON MAN



**At Switch on to Business, we love to celebrate Liverpool in all its glory. However, once in a blue moon we hear of an individual who has completed a challenge in such an inspirational way, that we cannot help but feel the absolute need to share it. This story is not about business, this story is not about profit – this story is about an overweight man who dramatically transformed himself into a marathon runner. We think that everyone can take something from Ken Mullen, who defeated the odds and achieved his dream of running 26.2 miles in one go.**

"Can you please get off and disembark the ride to the right?" These words told me the workers were unable to secure me to the ride – words nobody wants to hear – but these began the process from being a 19 stone depressed man, to a marathon runner. It's a story that has probably saved my life.

Flashback to July 2011. I was unhappy. I was binge eating. You eat to make yourself feel better, which after 24 packets of crisps certainly doesn't make you feel happier; it makes you feel ashamed, so you eat to make yourself feel better. Couple this with depression and a lack of self-worth, and I was at a serious low. However, I loved sport and was a huge Olympics fan. Seeing the success of the Olympics coupled with the so-called "Olympic fever" that was taking over the UK inspired me to download the Nike App. I walked 5k.

The spark had turned into an ember. I was determined to get fit. My diet changed. I started eating healthily, which is something I've never done. Out went the white bread, hello wholemeal; out went full-fat milk, hello semi-skimmed. The change began.

I was having a passing conversation with my friend at work. We became close after she joined the company a few weeks after her

father died, and we hit it off instantly. I said I'd started the Couch to 5k program. Her eyes widened as she said "I love running!" She then encouraged me with her endless nagging of "are you running tonight?" which became a frequent phrase. People started to ask "have you lost weight?"

My confidence began to grow; people were noticing a change – not just in the size of my waist, but in my personality. I'd changed from being so quiet to allowing myself to open up. It was a transformation I never dreamed would happen. There were times where I could barely run to the top of the road without stopping, but over time I became stronger and fitter week by week.

My friend completed the last Liverpool Half Marathon towards the end of 2012 with a battered knee – she could barely walk, yet she completed it. I was blown away – how could someone do this? In awe I asked her: "do you think I could ever do something like running in an event?" Her response:

"Yes I think you can, and I'll help you".

I signed myself up to the BUPA Manchester 10k for June 2013, with an estimated finish time of 90 minutes. It was time to "train" for my first event. At the time, 10k seemed like an

*My confidence began to grow; people were noticing a change - not just in the size of my waist, but in my personality. I'd changed from being so quiet to allowing myself to open up. It was a transformation I never dreamed would happen.*



impossible dream, but with the help and support of my friends through wind, rain, and snow, I ran. I realised the 90 minutes I had set was wildly over-estimated as I was running the distance closer to the hour, I had improved so much that I was doing what I had reckoned six months previously was "impossible".

I arrived in Manchester excited, nervous, but proud. This was it, my first event. To be honest, the race itself was a bit of a blur. I remember there were far too many people to get a rhythm going early, but it soon panned out and I'll never forget the feeling heading back into Manchester to the finish with people cheering your name, the sense of pride I felt after running my first 10k race. I crossed the line in 1 hour and 3 minutes, and I received a massive hug and congratulations from "Coach" who had seen me transform from an obese depressed man to a thinner happier me.

By summer 2013 I had my heart set on my first half marathon in my home city of Liverpool. Coach had moved away so I had to learn about mental toughness for the first time as I trained. Again you appreciate the joy of running, with every Saturday going further and longer than ever before. Every long run an achievement, every step a joy.

Training went well and come March 2014 I was at the start line of the Liverpool Half Marathon. From the start to the initial run along The Strand, to the only big climb on the course at Upper Parliament Street, around Sefton Park to the Otterspool Promenade along to the finish at the Three Graces.

**My time:  
1 hour 56 minutes 10 seconds.**

I did it in under two hours! I was absolutely ecstatic, the joy of running a half marathon is completely different to a 10k - the rewards seem greater, there's a bigger sense of achievement. I ended up running four half marathons in total that year. By this time I had lost six stone. Running had changed my life. At the end of 2014, I joined the Nike+ Running Club Liverpool. Suffice to say they welcomed me with open arms. At the time there was about fifteen runners on a Tuesday evening. Since then, under the leadership of Melissa Haigh, we have grown to about 70-80 runners a week.

I decided to take on the Chester marathon as a natural step-up from the half. I knew it was going to be hard, I knew it was a different beast, I knew I was going into completely uncharted territory. I was terrified of what they call 'the wall' - a state

where everything stops working after your body runs out of fuel to keep your muscles working, so it switches to burn fat.

Each Saturday we'd meet up in a different location around the Merseyside area and train. I had to learn very quickly that you have to slow down. Suddenly I was running into new records and new experiences. We once ran a twenty mile run from Southport to the Liver Buildings. I remember thinking "how did I run all this way?" I was ready for my first marathon.

**I nearly never ran Chester.**

Two weeks before the race I tweaked a nerve in my back after a standard run - nothing speedy just a maintenance run. I decided to rest and by Tuesday it felt a lot better, so I tried running with Run Club. Half a mile in, the pain came back. With five days to go I was pretty sure it was over and I would have to pull out. I was heartbroken and I had to leave after the session quickly otherwise I would have broken down.

I had one last chance so I organised a sports massage which helped so much, but unfortunately a day later it was back to square one. I then spoke to my sister who advised me to get some more powerful pain



killers which I trialled Friday night. I woke up Saturday morning almost pain-free, and suddenly I was confident that maybe I was on the mend. I packed my kit, put my bag on my shoulder, and the pain came back.

#### **This was it - now or never.**

Running through the city centre was amazing. I admit I wasn't feeling great - I hadn't ran in two weeks and the first six miles I found myself trying to get back into a routine. I started running with the 4:45 pacer gang, and at one point the pacer asked if any of us got into the London Marathon; I put my hand up and was enviously booed!

We got to half-way and I wasn't feeling great, but we were clicking off the miles which was the main thing. I noticed my pace had dropped and the 4:45 people went away, but I didn't panic. "Keep going" I said.

Then 16 miles hit. Suddenly my legs felt full of lactic acid and I had to stop and walk. I have never walked in any race which led me to a point where I had to argue with myself. There was a voice saying 'quit now and walk away,' another voice was saying 'yeah and what happens then?' Do you wait? Do you have to make your own way back? I was even thinking of telling my running partner Katherine to go on ahead. She told me off, kept me going and offered sage advice in regards to her marathons. We ran slowly as much as my legs would take me, but I was getting nothing out of them.

Gels and Lucozade didn't seem to work and I was really feeling the pain - but I couldn't give up now. My legs ached, my back ached, and I felt sorry for myself. I hadn't ran past 20 miles in training and it hurt, I remember thinking what are the last 6 miles going to be like? Suddenly out of thin air who should I see coming up the opposite direction? Melissa, Julie, Darren and Sarah - all from run club.



I was amazed, shocked and overwhelmed.

Mel said "Come on we've got six miles to go - we've got this!" and she started to run us to the finish. Suddenly, although my legs were tired I found a bit more energy and we ran/walked. We chatted about this and that - the 5 hour pacer ran past us but at that point I could not care less about the time. Before we knew it we were at 24 miles. At this point I started to get very emotional thinking back to the battle inside my head at mile 16-20. At this point I started to get very emotional thinking back to the battle inside my head at mile 16-20, all the support I'd received the days leading up to the run from the beginning of my journey where I couldn't run up the street, all the training, all

*I hadn't ran past 20 miles in training and it hurt, I remember thinking what are the last 6 miles going to be like?*

the messages and the fact that I'm actually going to complete a marathon. I said right - dig deep, these last two miles are going to be hard but you are going to try and run them as best as you can. So we went up ANOTHER hill.

Mile 25.5, who is suddenly running with me? Austyn - an ultra-runner from run club. He came alongside and said something so true: "They don't give the medals up easily do they?" That last mile and a bit seemed endless; I was trying to picture where I was on that mile to where I run a mile generally and I had no idea. I was exhausted, I wanted to stop and walk across the line but I couldn't let myself stop. I reached the race course and ran onto the straight and I saw all of the cheer squad that had stayed after

their metric marathon (26.2km) and those who came to see me home. I wanted to go over to them all and high five everyone, but I wasn't allowed. When Ali came alongside me - that was the start of the waterworks. I crossed the finish, and as soon as I stopped I cried my heart out to Katherine, Melissa, and Ali, my dad, brother and sister. I collected my medal, and made my way to all of the people who came to support me.



\*

*I've learned so much from running a marathon; it's incredibly hard, the journey is tough, and it hurts both mentally and physically. But I have never experienced such joy and happiness crossing that finishing line.*

*So there we have it - three years from depressed and obese, to marathon runner. A journey of self-discovery, wonderful people, blood, sweat and tears and you know what? I wouldn't change it for the world.*

*Switch on to*  
**HOSPITALITY**



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SWITCH ON TO  
**BUSINESS**



## ZIFERBLAT ALBERT DOCK: A NEW APPROACH TO MEETING SPACE

WORDS: Ben Davis, Head of Marketing, Ziferblat



**O**ur working lives have been drastically transformed in the last decade. We now have the capability to work anywhere and anytime we want. It's an exciting time for small businesses whose horizons have been extended tenfold by modern technology. Therefore, our business services need to be as flexible as possible to fit in with our careers.

As we become more efficient the need for extra office space for meetings has become costly and unproductive. At our place of work, it's difficult to justify the infrequently used extra square footage for the rent it incurs. More often now we find ourselves hosting important meetings in coffee shops as the most readily accessible space we can use with the usual professional utilities (i.e. coffee and Wi-Fi). For larger or more private meetings, we require a proper room to delve deep into discussion, stay focused and be creative, and our environment has a

huge impact on our productivity and ability to problem-solve. Many thought leading global companies flaunt their meeting interiors in design magazines and blogs as being the optimum surroundings for progress in their work. However, as a small and dynamic company these sorts of spaces are best to be used when they are required and not left to gather dust.

Nevertheless, the market for meeting rooms hasn't yet adapted to our needs. Currently, four stale white walls can be purchased for a costly fee. Bookings must be a minimum of at least half a day and unexpected extra charges are incurred for basic requirements such as projectors, teas and coffees.

Ziferblat took a new approach to the market for meeting rooms. The rooms are booked at 8 pence per person per minute (inc VAT), with a minimum spend set to each room to manage capacities. So using this new pricing model, the rooms can be booked for as little as £4.80 (inc VAT) per person for



an hour, and all projection equipment is provided as standard. Opening hours are flexible and the sitting room space provides a cosy breakout area for when you want to take five minutes to recharge.

Ziferblat believes meetings can be fun. The rooms are decorated with their own unique theme, one styled like a grandma's dining room, another like a primary school classroom and the other rooms will be revealed soon. The space is designed to feel like a home from home so there is also a fully stocked kitchen where guests are welcome to help themselves. Fresh locally roasted coffee, tea varieties, soft drinks, cakes, cookies, biscuits, brownies, breads, cereals, fruits, snacks, yoghurts and other treats are unlimited and are always included in the per minute price of the rooms.

Clients so far include start-ups, social enterprises and larger companies, such as the BBC, NHS, Google, Co-Operative and others. Brief meetings can be informally booked with a quick phone call or large-scale events can be methodically planned out with the support of the experienced events team. The emphasis is placed on the flexibility, unusual room design and cost-effective nature of their offering. This new transparent way of using meeting rooms is designed to be adaptable to how and when they are needed and the Ziferblat team are incredibly excited to bring this to Liverpool.

Ziferblat has big plans to expand their offering and open new branches during 2016; announcements will be made later in the year.

## WHAT IS ZIFERBLAT?

*Ziferblat is a co-created environment, which is curiously dressed as a traditional British sitting room. The vibe is relaxed and homely; the ambiance echoes that of a private members club, but the doors are open to everyone!*

*Founded by a group of poets in Moscow in 2011, the Ziferblat concept has raised many a curious eyebrow since its inception. For just 8 pence per minute per person, guests are welcome to inhabit the space and help themselves to the unlimited kitchen of tea varieties, soft drinks, freshly ground coffee, biscuits, cakes, brownies, cookies, fruits, breads, cereal, snacks and more! Board games and Wi-Fi surround you under this vaulted brick ceiling; laptops are dotted around on tables with people working away and informal meetings are taking place in the softly lit corners. The model is an alternative to the pre-established hot desking market or café culture. The second phase of their development will see four new meeting spaces, which will be unveiled later in the year.*



# JOE & THE JUICE

*At Switch on to Business, we are always on the look-out for new and exciting business ideas, which is why we visited Joe & The Juice, Liverpool's new healthy fast-food and juice bar, located in John Lewis Liverpool. Joe & The Juice is a part of John Lewis Liverpool's £4.5million refurbishment of their first floor. Established in Denmark, the business prides itself on its freshly made juices, delicious coffee and sandwiches, which are all made to order using fresh and natural ingredients.*

*We spoke to Esben Mou, Head of UK Operations, and Stephen McCarrick, John Lewis Liverpool Bar Manager, as we wanted to learn more about Joe & The Juice and its plans for the future.*

## **Tell us about Joe & The Juice's background.**

**Esben:** Our founder, Kaspar, wanted to provide a healthy alternative to ordinary fast food places. He, as an elite sportsman, realised there was a severe lack of this. Kaspar started Joe & The Juice in 2002 in a small fashion store in Copenhagen – it has now grown to be about much more than only delicious products and we now have one-hundred and twenty Joe & The Juice bars worldwide, reaching as far as Seoul in South Korea, Singapore and New York.

## **What is Joe & The Juice all about?**

**Esben:** Joe & The Juice is about much more than serving freshly made and healthy products to an ever more demanding audience in all our markets. We wish to create the best work culture in

the world for young people, with a focus on energy, ambience, inclusion and opportunities for our staff to develop the company and play a large role in our worldwide expansion. We believe that if we focus on these things, our dedicated employees will make the products we sell come alive as visiting Joe & The Juice should be an experience.

All of our juices are put together in a way that maximises each ingredient's nutritional benefit, and we place a strong focus on training our staff, because although we make everything fresh when ordered (nothing is premade), we also want to make sure it is made as efficiently as possible. We conduct speed sessions for all of our staff to ensure this; the record for when a juice is ordered, all the way to putting it in front of the customer, in thirteen seconds.

## Who is Joe?

**Stephen:** Joe is American slang for a cup of coffee! We have our own 100% organic coffee from South America, and we take a lot of pride in serving fantastic coffee – life is too short for bad coffee. Our bread is made especially for Joe & The Juice in Denmark. All of our ingredients are prepared fresh every morning before opening, from the tuna mix to homemade pesto.

## How long have you been open in Liverpool?

**Stephen:** We opened in John Lewis at the end of November, as part of the wider refurbishment to the branch's first floor. Over the Christmas period we had strong sales and a high footfall and we look forward to serving Liverpool healthy products.

## Tell us about your role?

**Stephen:** I started in December last year. From starting as a newbie, there were recipes to learn and an education in ingredients to be had in order to provide customers with the best possible service. I've recently been promoted and I'm now the Bar Manager. It just shows how Joe & The Juice looks after its employees if they work hard enough, and in turn it ensures that the employees look after the customers.

## How has Joe & The Juice been received in Liverpool?

**Stephen:** Really well, and we have enjoyed our time in Liverpool so far. A customer recently approached the counter and told me that we made him the best cup of coffee he had ever had, and that is what we strive to achieve. I think that as long as we get the customer service right, the products speak for themselves.

## What are your future plans?

**Stephen:** We want to take over the world! If you go to Copenhagen and try to find a Starbucks, you'll probably run into a Joe & The Juice first. With the success of this branch, we would love to open up more bars in Liverpool.

**Esben:** We have had a really great start in Liverpool, and it's exciting to see how the bar will continue to grow.

*If you would like to have a go at making your own Joe & The Juice inspired products, the Health and Wellbeing section provides four recipes of nutritionally beneficial juices; turn to page 60.*

*If you'd rather keep it to the professionals, pop in to Joe & The Juice on the first floor of John Lewis Liverpool, 70 South John Street, L1 8BJ.*





# JOIN THE EVERTON BUSINESS CLUB

**E**verton has launched a new and exciting business club which offers Evertonians the chance to network and do business with fellow Blues.

The networking club was launched by Everton Manager Roberto Martinez and Blues' Chief Executive Robert Elstone, at an event in the Hilton Hotel in November 2015, which was attended by over 150 local companies and individuals who relish the opportunity to mix football with commerce.

The Blues' new business club will not only strengthen members' commercial networks but also provide valuable business insights into managing a team, pioneering leadership, communication, recruitment and supporting local people – all key components for success on and off the pitch.

The launch was a huge success with guests taking to social media to express their praise for the event.

Insurance broker, Andrew Kirkby, tweeted: "(I) went to the Everton business networking event this evening, Elstone & Roberto were excellent. Great evening."

Lucy O'Connor, of Wates Construction, tweeted: "Excellent first Everton Business Club tonight. Insightful interviews with Martinez and Elstone. Look forward to being part of it."

Business club members enjoy a range of benefits including exposure on Everton's official website, a quarterly newsletter and the chance to attend exclusive events featuring members of the Everton First Team squad and influential business leaders, to gain an insight into how football and business work hand-in-hand.





Existing Hospitality Lounge Members at Goodison Park receive free membership to the club, meaning that the new network already boasts over 500 members. New members can join the Everton Business Club for a small seasonal membership fee of £99+VAT, which is donated to Everton in the Community, the Blues' official charity.

Richard Kenyon, Everton's Director of Marketing and Communications said: "We are really excited to be able to launch the Everton Business Club. We want to engage with the vibrant and strong business community here in Liverpool and provide a completely new networking forum, which combines two of the most important institutions in the city – football and business."

*"Our vision is to extend the already strong Everton community into the business world and create a network which facilitates opportunities for its members in a familiar and enjoyable environment."*

*To join the Everton Business Club and attend future events please contact Amanda Chatterton, Corporate Partnerships Manager at Everton in the Community, by emailing [amanda.chatterton@evertonfc.com](mailto:amanda.chatterton@evertonfc.com) or calling 0151 530 5253.*

*For more information visit:  
[evertonfc.com/EvertonBusinessClub](http://evertonfc.com/EvertonBusinessClub)*





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# *Switch on to* ARTS

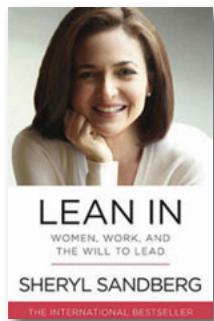


IMAGE: Caleidoscope Photography

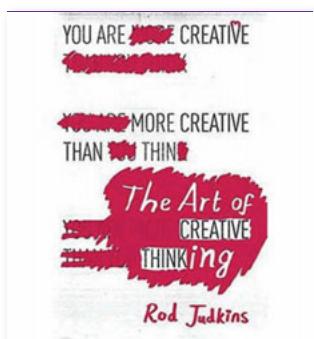
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SWITCH ON TO  
**BUSINESS**

Adam Waldron  
**Waterstones,**  
Liverpool



*Like us here at **Switch on to Business**, you're probably wondering what the year ahead holds, what challenges you will meet and how you will rise to meet the business needs of 2016. Or maybe you're making some personal resolutions for the year ahead? In any case, Adam from Waterstones Liverpool has been busy rifling through the business section to find the best books to help you get through the year.*



### 1. Lean In – Sheryl Sandberg

Sheryl Sandberg's 'Lean In' has been the big business hit of 2015. Its main message concentrates upon empowering women, but there is much for everyone to learn here. Women hold just 20 percent of seats in parliaments globally, and only eighteen of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women. In 'Lean In', Sheryl Sandberg – Facebook's Chief Operating Officer – reflects on her experience in business and what you can do to get ahead. There are many tips here, both small and large that you can enact to make a difference. More women clearly deserve to be at the top, so 'Lean In'.

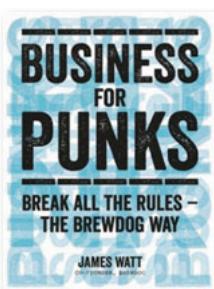
**Publisher:** Ebury Publishing  
**ISBN:** 9780753541647

### 2. The Art of Creative Thinking – Rod Judkins

Rod Judkins, of the world-famous St Martin's College of Art, has made a career from studying successful creative thinkers from every walk of life. He's researched the greatest creative brains from history to create this book, a stunning read that will show you how everyone, from Michelangelo to Steve Jobs, used creative thinking to achieve success. You will learn how it's a good thing to fail and how to take advantage of all life's creative moments to succeed. Train cancelled? Good. Use those moments to engage your brain.

Not quite a self-help book, but a reference study of great minds, jam-packed with tools, pathways and inspirational quotes to help you unlock your potential.

**Publisher:** Hodder & Stoughton General Division  
**ISBN:** 9781444794496



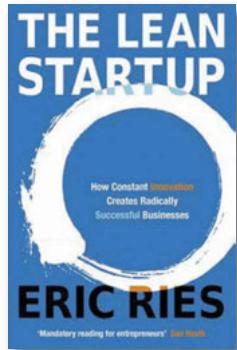
### 3. Business for Punks: Break All the Rules The BrewDog Way

**- James Watt**

Forget sales. Ignore advice. Put everything on the line for what you believe in. These mantras have turned BrewDog into one of the world's fastest-growing drinks brands, famous for beers, bars and crowdfunding. Founded by a pair of young Scots with a passion for great beer, BrewDog has catalysed the craft beer revolution, rewritten the record books and inadvertently forged a whole new approach to business.

In 'Business for Punks', BrewDog co-founder James Watt bottles the essence of his success. From finances ('chase down every cent, pimp every pound') to marketing ('lead with the crusade, not the product') this is an anarchic, indispensable guide to thriving on your own terms.

**Publisher:** Penguin Books Ltd  
**ISBN:** 9780241202890

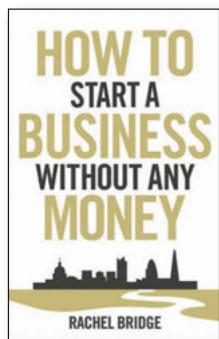


#### 4. The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses – Eric Ries

Most new businesses fail, but author and entrepreneur Eric Ries argues that most of these failures are preventable. "The Lean Startup" is a new approach to business, about learning what your customers really want rather than what you think they need. It's a lesson that many of today's large corporations need to learn - and fast. It's about testing your vision continuously, adapting and adjusting it before it's too late. Don't think 'could it be built', you should be thinking 'Should it be built'. Now is the time to be lean.

Publisher: Penguin Books Ltd

ISBN: 9780670921607

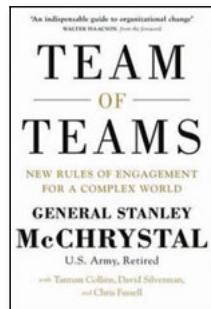


#### 5. How to Start a Business Without Any Money – Rachel Bridge

Do you dream of starting your own business but don't have any money? What if you could set up a venture with nothing but a good business idea and the determination to make it work? It's an appealing idea, particularly in the current economic climate where cash is limited and austerity rules the day. In fact, studies show that more people start businesses during recessions than at any other time. The good news is that it can be done, provided you follow a few golden rules. Based on Rachel Bridge's popular workshops, this book will help set you on the way to success. As the former Enterprise Editor for the Sunday Times, Rachel has interviewed hundreds of successful entrepreneurs. This book allows you to join her on her journey as she starts up her very own enterprise, [www.entrepreneurthings.com](http://www.entrepreneurthings.com), and covers all the ups and downs she encounters while giving examples along the way of how real-life entrepreneurs have coped with the same problems that beset everyone in business at some point.

Publisher: Ebury Publishing

ISBN: 9780753540879



#### 6. Team of Teams: The Power of Small Groups in a Fragmented World - Stanley McChrystal

As commander of Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), General Stanley McChrystal discarded a century of management wisdom and pivoted from a pursuit of mechanical efficiency to organic adaptability. In this book, he shows how any organization can make the same transition to act like a team of teams - where small groups combine the freedom to experiment with a relentless drive to share their experience. Drawing on a wealth of evidence from his military career and sources as diverse as hospital emergency rooms and NASA's space programme, McChrystal frames the existential challenge facing today's organisations, and presents a compelling, effective solution.

Publisher: Penguin Books Ltd

ISBN: 9780241250839



#### The World of Adult Colouring books:

Following the news that the colouring books are making a comeback, we've decided to give it a go and what do you know? We feel wonderfully calm.

Psychologists say it's because when we focus on the activity of colouring, it calms the mind and takes our focus away from worries, whilst stimulating motor skills, senses and creativity. So, join the movement and free your minds to a world of creativity, mindfulness and clearer thinking. It makes for better business decisions.

All books are available at [www.waterstones.com](http://www.waterstones.com) and at your local Waterstones, Liverpool, L1 3DL.

Happy Reading.



# Sophie GREEN

WORDS: Bethany Atkin

PICTURES: Caleidoscope Photography



**B**ack in November, on a gloomy afternoon, I found my way to the Gostins Building on Hanover Street where I had planned to meet the very talented artist, Sophie Green. I honestly did not know what to expect, having never been in a professional artist's studio before and having a certain lack of knowledge and appreciation when it comes to contemporary art. However, as I entered Sophie's world, I was absolutely blown away. Her studio is blazoned with bright colours and beautiful work, which matched Sophie's energetic and welcoming personality (and rich red hair!). Despite this, what I found the most interesting (and this included a huge blue rhinoceros called Spike) was Sophie's business acumen; her knowledge of how to make a startup business successful was incredible, demonstrated not only by her own success, but of her knowledge regarding what creates a successful business in any industry.



### Tell us about your business.

I am a freelance artist and illustrator, and have been for about six years since moving to Liverpool about seven and a half years ago. Previously I was a graphic designer and worked various jobs, after having studied Graphic Design at the University of Derby. I moved to Liverpool for love (ahh), and we are still together so that worked out really well. Initially when I first came to Liverpool I was looking at getting a new job as I had obviously quit my old job to move over here, so I began to indulge my more creative passions. Obviously graphic design is creative to a point, but it still had that corporate feel to it with its office work, and 9-5 mentality, which didn't allow me to explore my own creative outlet as much as I would have liked. I decided to get involved in the Liverpool art scene when I arrived, and received my first illustration commissions quite early on. It's been slow to build, but it's there now and the last few years have been really busy.

### Has becoming an artist been something you have always wanted to do?

When I was younger it was either going to be art or archeology, as I had a big fascination for the natural world. Then I thought, "Archeology... quite a lot of work isn't it!" You're either in mud or dirt for weeks on end, or you are studying incredibly hard till your head explodes. I find being an artist incredibly easy; I'm doing something that I love sat in a warm studio, and it's up to me to make it work, so it was a no-brainer really.

However, coming out of university I didn't really know what it was I wanted to do, and personally I wasn't in a particularly good place. I didn't have the spur or the excitement about me and I went from job to job, but at the back of my mind I always wanted to be my own boss, to work in illustration and to be paid to do something I

love. All of the horrible jobs I had in the past when I was a student coming out of university (including working in explosive factories and milk processing plants) I am now able to look back on, and they spur me on with what I do today. I make the most of what I do, and everyday I try to get as much from it as I possibly can. I still do have the 9-5 ethos which was instilled within me during those ten years of corporate work, which has really helped me going freelance as a lot of creative people find this quite difficult to incorporate. If you are creative, you want to produce things, but it's hard to make that into a business – I think I have the balance about right now. I want to paint, but I also want to sell my work.

### You have mentioned earlier that you also work on a commission basis – have you ever been able to decline any work?

Yes, people have asked me for tattoo designs which I haven't felt entirely comfortable doing and various jobs of which I don't feel I should complete. However, when I started I pretty much did say yes to everything! I had lots of PR companies contacting me because I was a new registered business, and a couple of them did manage to take advantage. I managed to learn very quickly that they weren't worth my time, and once I was in a position where I had enough work, I was able to flat-out refuse things which was great. I'm busy now, and I don't really have time for any nonsense; if somebody wants something then they ask me, they pay the deposit and they get their product – that's how it works!

### It must be a lovely feeling having so much control over your business, being in the position to decline work you don't feel you have to create!

It's very good, but it is incredibly difficult when you start out to get into that position

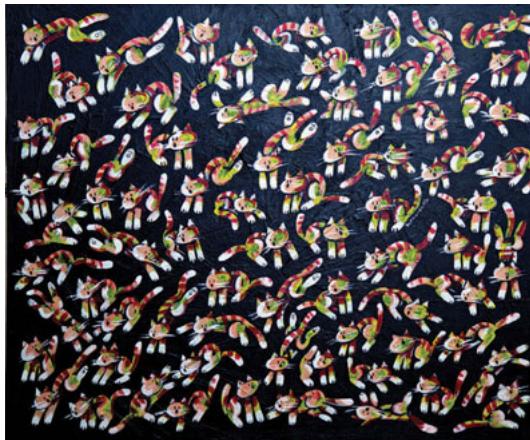
as it takes a long time to be able to do so. It seems to be getting much better every year, which is great as I think you begin to understand what people like and what works for you, and what events work for your brand. You tweak things and make the process run smoother, which only comes with time and experience. I've only just launched an actual eCommerce website, and that's going to help drive my sales much more – my previous website was quite static and the images weren't great which isn't the best when you're trying to sell artwork. In terms of social media, Facebook has been really good for me as it feels like there is a nice little family on there who share and buy my work. I've invested a lot of time on Facebook over the last few months to get more people visiting the site and it seems to be working.

### Did you find social media quite tough to handle as a startup business?

It's almost like a full time job! I'm on social media all the time; I have my personal account, my business account, and the other organisations which I work for or have set up. There is constantly something to keep up-to-date with, and there is always a conversation I need to be involved in, so it can be difficult to step back from it all as it can take up so much time.

### Have you ever considered taking on an apprentice or an intern to do some work experience?

I've had three students intern for me: one college student, one A level student, one GCSE student, and I might be having another in a few weeks. I've done that in the last couple of years as I wasn't really in the position to do it till fairly recently, but it's been great to have them in now that I'm able to. It's difficult sometimes as I never really know what the setup is going to be like for me, as I'm never quite sure what I'm



going to be working on so I always make sure they have their own project to concentrate on. I don't want them to think their time with me is ever boring, which it can be sometimes, just like any other business!

### What is the art industry like in Liverpool?

Liverpool has been incredibly supportive of my work, which has been fantastic. There seems to be a lot of creatives in the city, and loads of events that take place to celebrate art. I did a lot of networking when I first came to Liverpool to try and find my feet, but I don't really do much of that now I'm more established. When I started out I didn't know what I was doing, who to speak to or where to go, so I found myself riding on the coattails of my partner who had set up his own business, so I'd usually just go as his plus one. Many of the artist networking events seemed unnecessary to attend for selling purposes, as I wanted to attend events where people would go who were looking to buy art! So, I decided to change networking from art to business, as there were no other artists at these events. My networking is now mostly online, through word of mouth and meeting people - whether this is achieved through run club, hula hoop lessons, salsa, or whatever else I get involved in. That is my networking! Primarily though, you do need to get out and speak to as many people as you can.

### How did you go about getting your own art studio?

I had a space in the Plaza on Old Hall Street, as they were redeveloping some space and had an area I could work in. This was through Dot Art - an organisation who supports local artists - but they had secured this space so it allowed me to work from outside of my kitchen! Unfortunately that fell through, and I managed to find this space and I've been here ever since. This was about three and a half years ago, which was when my business was really starting to pick up. I really believe this was to do with getting my own studio space, as once I had

this, it meant I was leaving the house in the morning and working all day with no distractions, just me and the radio. Work creates work, so if you're busy more work will come.



### What about weekends?

No, the weekends are mine! It's an important habit to get into, however when I was putting up my website it was taking a lot of time, and I was working weekends then which was unfortunately necessary. You also factor in social media which can take over my weekends as I make a lot of sales through my pages. My weekends can therefore be so busy, I sometimes actually look forward to Monday morning!

### You've mentioned that you often work alone, how do you manage that?

It can be quite lonely; I'm sat here sometimes on a cold winter morning and I just think "What am I doing? Just go home, it is freezing!" I try and break up my loneliness from being active, joining in with

sports activities as you just have to. You have to get other things in your life, especially if you work at home. You must get out of the house every day, as I know people who work from home and their body clock just goes out of sync - they don't know what day of the week it is, they can't sleep, it's a nightmare! I love a routine, so get a routine and stick to it. There are networks available to attend, for example the Jelly network who meet at LEAF, who are techy and creative freelancers who meet to work or chat, which hands down beats the home worker routine.

### What has been your biggest struggle and your biggest achievement?

I struggled to develop my reputation and name, as it took a long time. It seemed almost impossible to start with, but I just kept going with it and eventually people started to recognise me and my work. My biggest achievement in terms of my art is hard to pin down, as I don't really know; there's been lots of little things to mention, but what comes to mind is that I now think every piece of work I produce is good. I never used to think that about my work, I never used to like it. But through the last couple of years it has seen a bit of a shift, where now I have found that I like what I put out there. That is my personal achievement - that I believe in what I'm doing and the projects I'm working on. I'm happy, I love what I do, and it all fits neatly into my life - it's very much a part of me. I've found my style, and when I started out I used to compare myself to everybody else. I stopped doing this a few years ago and it made my life a lot easier, by doing my own work and not giving a stuff about what anyone else is doing! The community I have around me is fantastic, so again my biggest achievement isn't really something specific, it's just the whole thing.

**For more information about Sophie, or to purchase some of her artwork, please visit: [www.sophie-green.com](http://www.sophie-green.com)**

**You can check her out on Facebook at: Sophie Green Artist, or follow her on Twitter: @sophiegreen**



## LUCY BYRNE

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### DOT-ART

I run an organisation called dot-art, which is made up of two separate arms. We have a social enterprise arm, 'dot-art Services CIC', which supports local visual artists in Merseyside, Cheshire and Greater Manchester and we run a unique membership scheme for those artists to provide them with a package of support, promotion and opportunities. We also provide a programme of art classes for the public which are run by our artist members, working in partnership with the Bluecoat, Sefton Park Palm House and Hope Street Ltd where these classes are held. Within the social enterprise we also provide affordable artist studios, and hold our annual, inter-school competition, 'dot-art Schools'.

Our commercial arm, 'dot-art Ltd', sells, rents and commissions the work of our member artists. We are opening a new gallery this year so we will have a city centre retail space and we also do a lot of work with businesses. We have around six-thousand art pieces for sale on our website at any one time and we offer a bespoke commissioning process so that individuals and businesses can commission art from us. We also have our art rental scheme, a service that people don't tend to realise is available to them. Businesses who are moving or refurbishing may find themselves with blank walls, so we will come up with a variety of different proposals for what art would fit their office the best, help them select suitable work, then deliver and install it. After six, twelve or eighteen months, we will come in and do it all over again! This means if they have clients that come to visit them once a year they will always see new art on the walls. It's really affordable, starting at £5 a month per piece, so it's an easy and flexible way for businesses to have art in the workplace.

I came to Liverpool to study Art History as I have always been very passionate about art and Liverpool has such an amazing art infrastructure including the Tate, the Walker Art Gallery and the Liverpool Biennial. However, when I finished my degree there were no jobs in the arts and everybody told me to move to London, which I didn't want to do. This was around the time that Liverpool won the European Capital of Culture title, and so I thought there was a lot

corporate work disappeared pretty much overnight. I thought to myself, I haven't worked this hard to give up now, so what can I do to sustain the business? I decided to focus on the social enterprise side of dot-art, as I found more and more artists who wanted to get involved with us despite the fact that businesses did not. We developed new income streams and services, focusing on the skills and requirements of our artist members and I believe this is what pulled us through the recession. Fortunately in the past few years we have seen business improve significantly and now have exciting plans for 2016 and beyond.

*I came to Liverpool to study Art History as I have always been very passionate about art and Liverpool has such an amazing art infrastructure*

of opportunity in the city. I kept meeting artists who were incredibly talented but didn't have any platforms for their work and I was also surprised that there was nowhere in the city to buy art on an affordable level. With these two things in mind I saw a gap in the market and decided to create my own job! That's where it started, and dot-art is now ten years old. I've had ups and downs along the way, but I'm very lucky as I love what I do and have supported hundreds of artists during my career.

The biggest challenge I faced was the recession; they say the first few years of running a business are the hardest, and you begin to settle into things afterwards. However, after my first two years the whole economy fell apart! Art is an incredibly easy thing to cut out of a budget, so businesses were not spending with us at all – our

In two years' time, I'd love for our new gallery to become a destination for art lovers to buy affordable and locally sourced art in Liverpool, as there still really aren't that many places to do so. The gallery is situated in Queen Avenue near the Town Hall on Castle Street, and people have described it as a cross between Diagon Alley (from Harry Potter!) and Covent Garden. It's a great location, with exhibition space over two floors so we are able to showcase our member artists' work with regularly changing exhibitions and offer our framing, valuation and art restoration services to the public.

I would tell anyone who was thinking of starting a business to get as much help as possible, because people are generally very willing and happy to share their own experience – especially if they have been there themselves. I was incredibly lucky to have supportive people around me when I was starting up and took all the advice I could possibly get, so keep talking to people.

*To find out more about dot-art, please visit the website at: [www.dot-art.com](http://www.dot-art.com)*



# CLAPPERBOARD UK

**WORDS:** Bethany Atkin

**PICTURES:** Caleidoscope Photography



*Clapperboard is a charitable, not-for-profit organisation and film production agency led by young people who are involved in the project from script to screen. The charity brings creativity into education and communities across the North West through an exciting educational filmmaking initiative with young people and their communities. To date, over one thousand people have participated, which is why I was thrilled to meet up with Maureen Sinclair, founder of Clapperboard, to find out more.*

"Clapperboard is a small, but very successful youth charity working with young people from deprived areas who display challenging behaviour or suffer from mental health issues. I set the charity up eleven years ago whilst working for BAFTA and it has gone from strength to strength. Sadly, with the present government's austerity implementations, like most charities we have had our funding drastically reduced. Most of our funding, unlike bigger charities, goes directly into the project – not into anyone's salary or into PR and Marketing etc. We used to work with young people across the whole of the North West, but because of lack of funding, we have recently had to focus on Merseyside as we were fortunate to receive funding from Mersey Care, Liverpool Mayor Joe Anderson, Cobalt Housing and the British Board of Film Classification.

Our Youth Worker and Business Development Manager, Colin Farrell (the original, not the actor!) has the difficult task of finding our income and fortunately, Mersey Care have just allocated us further funding for 2016, as they are delighted with our innovative project with their young service users.

We have also just been commissioned by Tobacco Free Futures to make another anti-smoking promo. We worked with them in 2013, and the actor Neil Fitzmaurice and *Hollyoaks* actress Jazmine Franks both starred in the film, aimed to highlight the risks of smoking in cars with child passengers. Now, doing so is against the law.

We work with a lot of students who we train and pay, and help them to gain their first commission. This is what we did with the Mersey Care Group, 'Re-arrange Film, Media and Creativity'. We developed creative workshops to train the group and set them up as an independent social enterprise and commissioned them, so Mersey Care won't need to use Clapperboard to produce their films in the future, they can now commission 'Re-Arrange'. This might be doing ourselves out of a job, but it's all about giving those young people an opportunity they may not have previously had. I've always trained young people throughout my career and helped them find employment in the creative industries, which is really satisfying and an achievement I'm very proud of.

My career background has been a bit of a fluke! I went to school in Kirkby and left with hardly any qualifications as I wasn't at all academic, so I decided to move away, eventually living in Holland for about eight years. One subject I did enjoy in school was a secretarial course, so when I was in Amsterdam in the 1980's I got a job with Cinema International Corporation, which was a new group of multinational film companies (Paramount, Universal, MGM etc.) who were setting up a legal department to combat video piracy. It was incredibly innovative and a very new organisation, so I was taken on board and had the most brilliant professional experience. I had a lot of freedom to develop the role and we had the privilege of seeing all the new film releases in the company's private cinema!



Approaching my thirties, my husband wanted to go to university to study Criminal Justice at Liverpool John Moores, so we returned home in 1986. I didn't have a clue what I was going to do, but a friend of mine told me about a new TV channel that had started up – Channel 4 – and a Liverpool weekly TV soap called *Brookside*. I went for three interviews, was offered all three jobs, and after much thought I accepted the offer to work for Mersey TV, producer of *Brookside*, as Office Manager for Phil Redmond's (creator of *Brookside*, *Grangehill* and *Hollyoaks*) new Head Office as he had just bought a building in the city centre on Rodney Street.

I was there for seven years, the last five years working directly for Phil and Alexis Redmond (Alexis is Phil's wife, and was the Managing Director of Mersey TV). During this period Liverpool City Council set up the Liverpool Film Office after the success of the Liverpool award winning film *Letter to Brezhnev*. The Film Office was one of the first in the UK, and its role was to promote Liverpool as a film city and increase the amount of film productions nationally and internationally. At the time, Liverpool had just been given the Objective One status from Europe, which meant there was a lot of funding coming in to help the local economy and some would be allocated to the creative industries. A creative agency was set up, MIDA (Moving Image Development Agency) to work with the Film Office and its role was to promote the creative people behind the camera (writers, directors, producers, etc.), and fortunately, I got the job to set up the whole project together with its new Director, Roger Shannon. So, that's when I started attending film festivals - Cannes, London and Edinburgh, to name a few - and my job was to organise events to promote the films produced by new and emerging Liverpool talent, such as acclaimed writer Frank Cottrell Boyce's first feature film *Butterfly Kiss*, directed

by award winning director Michael Winterbottom, their first collaboration.

After three exciting and successful years at MIDA and when our funding was due to end, Roger told me that BAFTA was looking for someone to run a new office branch based in Salford University to promote their work in the northern regions and my name had been put forward. It was 1993, I didn't want to work away from Liverpool as my husband had only recently passed away, but my colleagues, close friends and family were encouraging and told me to go for it. So I did, and worked for them for almost ten years, which was the most fantastic and privileged experience as I travelled extensively and met many wonderful people.

Whilst working for BAFTA creating and producing new events, I offered work experience to students, trained them and eventually was able to offer them paid employment. I think it was during this period where the foundation of Clapperboard began. After I left BAFTA to concentrate on the charity Clapperboard UK, I started working in partnership with the Creative Partnership Merseyside, going in to schools with a production team and bringing creativity into education. For example, we would make five minute short films to help young people understand the work of Shakespeare by delivering lessons in a contemporary way. I would then enter these films into Film Festivals to gain profile and recognition. I also started the Clapperboard annual award ceremony to premiere the films and celebrate the work of young people, which had a fantastic response. We won Liverpool Echo Pride of Merseyside Award for Best Community Event in 2014 when we held the event at Hope University's Capstone Theatre, and last November's Ceremony was our tenth Awards anniversary.

I have been very fortunate to be sponsored and helped along the way by some amazing companies and people, which is one of the reasons we have been so successful. We screen between six and ten short films a year, and they always focus upon issues that affect young people and their communities, such as race, gun and knife crime, sexuality and health, disabilities, etc., and we have worked in partnership for a long time with Merseyside Police who have been brilliant. Knowsley Housing Trust and Cobalt Housing commissioned us to work with their communities and with people who are excluded from school, which can be challenging, but at the end of the day those young people are being empowered to have a voice and have their say in telling their stories whilst learning how to make a short film. They can be involved in every role from script to screen, including pre and post-production, and they are also able to be involved with the actual high profile awards ceremony (brochure design, event management, marketing, PR etc.). There are lots of opportunities here that allow young people to gain work experience and at the actual Awards evening itself, they are presented with awards for their achievements by the many celebrities that give up their time to support us. When I see the young people's reaction and the feedback from their families who attend, it's very emotional. That's when I realise why I do this job, as it's the positive end result that makes it all worthwhile, seeing them achieve so much with the assistance of Clapperboard's team and our many kind supporters, funders and sponsors.

*To find out more about Clapperboard or become involved you can visit the website at: [www.clapperboarduk.com](http://www.clapperboarduk.com) or call Maureen Sinclair on 07973783140.*

# THE Arts AND EDUCATION

WORDS: Adrienne Gowns

**A**ccording to The Arts Council report, businesses in the arts sector alone contributed £7.7 billion to the economy in 2013. With the sector seemingly prosperous for many businesses and more students pursuing degrees in arts and humanities, it's clear that there is not only interest in art based fields, but there are quantifiable benefits to a career within the arts sector.

After looking at these statistics, I wanted to understand how students can use their arts degree to enter fields directly related to their studies and how they feel the arts is important for education. Nicole-Marie, a Drama graduate from Liverpool John Moores University, has been involved in working with young people across Merseyside - particularly in performing arts. Throughout university life, Nicole had been pursuing her passion for drama mostly via youth centres and in-school visits.

Liverpool John Moores University provides the opportunity for students from creative backgrounds to take part in the programme, 'Theatre in Education'. The project offers students the chance to get involved in interactive performances for local secondary schools, promoting higher education for pupils who otherwise may not have considered university. Not only this, but the performances promote gaining qualifications in Maths and English, exploring the importance for job opportunities; they use the sessions as a fun way to get young people to begin thinking about their options

and understand the importance of their own choices. After one of the group's last visits, 80% of students said that they found the performance informative and are now considering university as an option.

Nicole-Marie has since become a sessional youth worker, creating materials and workshops for alcohol awareness and drug abuse appropriate for 11-18 year olds. Not only does Nicole create these short pieces in order to involve young people in potentially real-life scenarios, but she also works with her groups on improvisation.

Nicole believes that "involving young people in drama, whether as a hobby or throughout their school life, is extremely important for building confidence and helping students explore themselves as individuals, helping them to embrace their own identity".

Working in areas with limited activities for local children provides a safe and creative space, keeping more children off the street and in centres that will build their confidence alongside their peers. "In many areas, having centres like this is useful in lowering some young people's risk of becoming involved with crime related issues".

When discussing the importance of drama within schools, Nicole emphasised how with more companies actively seeking innovative individuals with big ideas, subjects that will allow pupils to express their creativity and allow their imagination to flourish would only be of benefit to future employers in

nearly all fields of work. Performing arts carry various transferable skills, and they provide both confidence and character building qualities.

Not only are performing arts useful for refining personal attributes in young people, but they have begun to have growing relevance for wellbeing methods for all ages. Drama therapies have started to become widely practiced as a new method for adults to overcome various issues or to simply allow an emotional and creative output. Many larger companies provide these sorts of facilities for their employees – again for creative reasons, but also to boost employee satisfaction and wellbeing.

Nicole's new graduate career examples not only one of the ways that drama can be directly linked into a practical field – outside of the obvious choices – but also the impact these jobs can have more widely in local communities. These roles are a sector for drama in itself, touching education, practiced for therapy and have been used even in companies outside arts itself. The use of the arts in this way is continually evolving, as should our ideas of the prospects for students pursuing education in these fields.

Nicky Morgan, the current Education Secretary, expressed her feelings that 'pupils are held back for the rest of their lives by the overemphasis on arts'. By the looks of the thriving arts sector and its benefits to society as a whole, she couldn't be more wrong.



Nicole (middle left) taking part in Liverpool Community College play, 'The Revenger Tragedy' in 2012

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# SWITCH ON TO BUSINESS

## EVENT LISTINGS

### 1st – 6th February

**THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW,**  
The Empire Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 2nd – 6th February

**WILLIAM GOLDING'S LORD OF THE FLIES,**  
The Playhouse Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 5th - 27th February

**THE MASSIVE TRAGEDY OF MADAME BOVARY!,**  
The Everyman Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 8th February

**REBECCA FERGUSON,**  
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall,  
Ticket prices vary

### 11th - 13th February

**RENT,**  
LIPA,  
Ticket prices vary

### 14th February

**JOHANN STRAUSS GALA,**  
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall,  
Ticket prices vary

### 16th - 20th February

**MATTHEW BORUNE'S SLEEPING BEAUTY,**  
The Empire Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 18th February

**LIVERPOOL BEER FESTIVAL,**  
Brownlow Hill,  
£7 - £10

### 21st February

**LEONA LEWIS,**  
The Empire Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 26th February

**BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL,**  
13 Crosby Road, L22 0LD,  
£10 - £12

### 26th February

**THE CLASSIC ROCK SHOW,**  
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall,  
Ticket prices vary

### 27th February

**WET WET WET,**  
Echo Arena, Liverpool,  
Ticket prices vary

### 2nd - 6th March

**DYNAMO LIVE,**  
Echo Arena, Liverpool,  
Ticket prices vary

### 7th - 12 March

**ANNIE,**  
The Empire Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 10th March

**ELLIE GOULDING,**  
Echo Arena, Liverpool,  
Ticket prices vary

### 11th March – 9th April

**DOWN THE DOCK ROAD,**  
Royal Court,  
Ticket prices vary

### 16th– 19th March

**GUYS AND DOLLS,**  
The Empire Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 22nd March

**LIVERPOOL BUSINESS FAIR 2016,**  
Anfield Road, L4 0TH,  
£0 - £1,500

### 25th March

**THE JOHNNY CASH ROADSHOW,**  
The Empire Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 26th March

**PETER KAY'S DANCE FOR LIFE,**  
Echo Arena, Liverpool,  
Ticket prices vary

### 11th– 16th April

**THRILLER LIVE,**  
The Empire Theatre,  
Ticket prices vary

### 17th April

**GREGORY PORTER,**  
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall,  
Ticket prices vary

### 30th April

**MICHAEL BOLTON,**  
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall,  
Ticket prices vary

# Fall INTO WINTER



Dressed by JQ Events, owner Jane Quirk



Dressed by Parties for You, owner Michelle Roberts

**I**n December, Switch on to Business (in association with the New Business Development Club) hosted its second Ladies Evening event at The Elephant Pub and Bakehouse in Woolton, Liverpool to celebrate the turn of the season, and to get dressed up!

The aim of the evening was to bring businesses together to demonstrate their products and services, and to allow the guests a night of relaxation and time to be spoilt. Prosecco and canapés were served, and guests were given the opportunity to have luxurious hand massages, have their makeup done, purchase gifts (mainly for themselves!) and watch a fantastic Fashion Show, presented by Jemma Brown, Style Consultant. The staff at The Elephant provided a cocktail making demonstration, so that the guests could recreate them at home or for corporate celebrations, and they also provided the guests with samples of each creation!

The evening was photographed by Beans Martin Photography, and we have selected some of the shots to give you a flavour of the evening.

*If this all sounds like something you would like to be involved in, either as a business or a guest, then visit our website ([www.switchontobusiness.co.uk](http://www.switchontobusiness.co.uk)), where you will find details of our next event.*



The charity auction raised £232.30 for The Whitechapel Centre, Liverpool



Yvonne Jones of Sweet Lottie Keepsakes showcased her high quality handmade keepsakes and gifts



Director Jackie Lee looking fabulous as a model



The staff at Woodlands Spa, Woolton, Liverpool giving their luxury hand massages



Canapés were served throughout the night



The Jemma Brown, Style Consultant Fashion Show



An original design from Strasser Créations, owner Eliane Strasser



Some of the luxurious Neal's Yard Remedies products presented by Bev Clark



Antonia from Lipstick, Powder & Polish Salon & Boutique, Woolton, Liverpool giving a guest a makeover



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**New Business Development Club**  
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**Switch on to Business**  
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**Knowsley Hall**  
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**Parties For You**  
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**Uniqs Bridal and Events**  
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### Wedding Planners Guild UK

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**Joe & The Juice**  
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**Dot Art**  
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**Sophie Green**  
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**Sweet Lottie Keepsakes**  
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