

MARCH | APRIL 2025

Island Business

features | interviews | articles | news

includes Isle of Wight Chamber member news and events

A DAZZLING RETURN

ROBIN HILL REOPENS FOR AN EXCITING NEW SEASON

IW Chamber Awards 2025
Real Employment Law Advice
Mission Zero
IW Chamber Expo 2025
Go For Growth
WRS Systems
Nosy
Isle of Wight Lottery

Plus IW Chamber
member news and events



Keep on top of your finances

Financial planning for tax efficiency



Like households, businesses are feeling the pressure and right now it's easy to fall into a negative mindset. However, there are positive steps you can take that could help strengthen your financial framework and deliver durable benefits to you and your employees.

Ensuring your business is tax efficient is key to successfully charting a course through challenging times. We help business owners with their financial planning and work alongside accountants by helping to implement the most appropriate choices to maximise the tax efficiency of your business.

Your business is your focus and your employees are key to its success. Keeping on top of your finances benefits everyone.

For independent financial advice call our team of Chartered Financial Planners and Certified Financial Planner™ professionals.

Call us on: 01983 535740

Email: advice@rouseltd.co.uk

ROUSE
INTELLIGENT FINANCIAL PLANNING

rouseltd.co.uk

Island Business Magazine
Published by the Isle of Wight
Chamber of Commerce


Editor
Amber Beard
amber.beard@iwchamber.co.uk

Sales
Amber Beard
amber.beard@iwchamber.co.uk


Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce
Unit S1, Branstone Business Park,
Stockmans Close, Branstone,
Isle of Wight. PO36 0EQ
Telephone: 01983 520777


Designed & Printed by
Meridian3.co.uk


While every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of Island Business magazine the publishers do not accept any liability or provide any guarantee that the information is accurate, complete or up to date. The publisher and its employees and contractors have used their best efforts in preparing these pages and this publication but make no warranty of any kind, expressed or implied, with regard to the information supplied. The views of contributors do not necessarily represent those of the IW Chamber of Commerce. The IW Chamber of Commerce and its employees and contractors shall not be liable in the event of incidental or consequential damages in connection with, or arising out of, the providing of the information offered here.
Contains material sourced from responsibly managed forests, certified in accordance with the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council).

 isleofwightchamber

 @iwchamber

 Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce

 Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce

 Please recycle this magazine



EDITOR'S FOREWORD

WELCOME TO MY FIRST ISSUE OF ISLAND BUSINESS MAGAZINE AS EDITOR!

Stepping into anyone's shoes, especially when they are big ones is never an easy task and replacing someone who was at the helm of this magazine for as long as Tom, is harder still. As your new editor, I'd like to emphasise that this is your magazine as Chamber members and I'm looking forward to all of your input, whether it's success stories for the news pages, in-depth interviews to hear how your companies are growing and thriving or advertising your goods and services.

In this issue, we're covering everything from new employment legislation to the reopening of Robin Hill Country Park, our Island commitment to Mission Zero, and Go For Growth opportunities.

Businesses are waiting on tenterhooks to see if they've been nominated for the prestigious 2025 IW Chamber Business Awards with WRS Systems and we'll be revealing those nominations and who'll be hosting in the next issue. There's also Expo 2025 with Wightfibre to look forward to and stands are flying off the shelves, so don't delay in booking your spot at Ryde School in July.

Lots to look forward to on our Island business calendar. Enjoy your Chamber magazine. ■

AMBER BEARD
EDITOR

CONTENTS



10 NOSY AND WRS SYSTEMS



18 ROBIN HILL

- 02 NEWS
- 08 EMMA TOPPING
- 10 NOSY AND WRS SYSTEMS
- 12 IW CHAMBER AWARDS
- 14 ISLE OF WIGHT LOTTERY
- 16 MISSION ZERO
- 18 ROBIN HILL

- 20 EXPO 2025
- 22 REAL EMPLOYMENT
LAW ADVICE
- 24 GO FOR GROWTH
- 26 EVENTS
- 32 IW CHAMBER PRESIDENT

**IW CHAMBER'S
VISION**

To bring the Island business community together. Helping organisations of all sizes achieve more than they could alone.

Gurit Launches Epoxy Product Workshops and Online Shop for Isle of Wight Businesses

Gurit UK has launched epoxy product workshops and an online shop to support Isle of Wight businesses already using or looking to use composites. Held quarterly, the workshops provide a valuable opportunity for companies to deepen their understanding of epoxy products and applications.

The new online shop offers businesses convenient access to Gurit products, streamlining purchases and enabling quick collection or delivery of locally produced materials.

The workshops will also showcase Gurit's locally developed materials, including multipurpose, laminating, and infusion

resins and fillers. Manufactured on the Isle of Wight, with a focus on innovation and quality. Attendees will gain practical insights into the product range, application techniques, and benefit from expert advice provided by Gurit's technical support team.

"We are pleased to support the Isle of Wight's business community by offering direct sales of our epoxy solutions developed right here on the island," said James Daws, Site Manager. "These workshops and our online shop reflect our commitment to supporting local customers. Spaces are limited, so early registration is encouraged." ■



Expansion for Richardson's Yacht Services

Richardson's Yacht Services is thrilled to announce the opening of a new branch in Cowes at Thetis Wharf, situated near the floating bridge. This exciting expansion marks a significant step forward for the company, reinforcing its dedication to serving the Isle of Wight's vibrant boating and sailing community.

The new location will offer enhanced accessibility for local boat owners, making it even easier to access Richardson's services. The Cowes branch features a well-stocked chandlery and provides expert marine engineering, offering added convenience for sailors with boats in the area. Customers can expect to see familiar faces Nick, Carla, and Katie, ready to offer advice and assistance.

While the new Cowes branch will focus on engineering and chandlery services, Richardson's has confirmed that all the services currently offered at Island Harbour, including boat building, slipping, and chandlery, will remain unchanged.

This move is part of a larger growth strategy for Richardson's, which includes hiring an additional marine engineer and further expanding the team by spring 2025. The company is confident that the new Cowes location will strengthen its position as a trusted provider within the boating community, building on the high-quality service it's been known for over its 35 years in business. ■

Isle of Wight Open Studios returns with exciting new dates and opportunities for 2025



Photo by Julian Wilmslow

The Isle of Wight's Open Studios is back from 16-26 May 2025, with over 150 artists ready to welcome visitors into their creative spaces. This 11-day celebration invites residents and tourists to immerse themselves in the Island's vibrant art scene and witness the magic behind the masterpieces.

This year brings fresh innovations, including a partnership with Brave Island, offering five young visual artists the chance to exhibit their work in a professional open studio venue, hosted by an established IW Open Studios artist. The festival's commitment to nurturing new talent adds an exciting dimension to the event.

Guiding visitors across the Island's artistic landscape is a beautifully designed brochure by Peekaboo agency. In addition, an upgraded digital platform and a showcase exhibition at Quay Arts' West Gallery (3 April-31 May) will further highlight the depth of local talent.

Georgia Newman, Co-director of Isle of Wight Open Studios CIC, shared: "Our vision is to expand this celebration of creativity and inspire even more people to connect with the arts. Businesses eager to support this legacy, financially or otherwise, are invited to get in touch."

Join this unmissable artistic event, powered by a dedicated team of artists and skilled professionals, and kindly supported by CREATIVE ISLAND – the cultural development agency for the IW. ■

Winchester based SME and University of Southampton collaborate



A new integrated approach to organisation and personal development

A ground-breaking partnership of three established experts has launched on the Isle of Wight, marking a significant advancement in professional development services for local businesses.

Alison Thorogood, Ed Grey, and Zoe Irvine are now collaborating, offering an integrated approach to organisational and personal development. Their experience spans decades, having worked across multiple sectors and with organisations of all types and sizes. They said, "We are thrilled to share our joint expertise; Island businesses will now have access to a genuinely comprehensive set of leading-edge practices in the critical areas of organisational and people development."

In a commitment to supporting the Island's business community, the partnership will be hosting several free-to-attend sessions over the year to share their knowledge and experience. These dynamic workshops will showcase cutting-edge practices in organisational development, challenge current thinking about leadership and advise on creating people development strategies and creating high-performance teams. The workshops will also cover the best ways to support employee's mental health and well-being.

The new partnership is looking forward to welcoming the Island business community to these workshops to learn more about the challenges they face and to share ideas on how to best address them. ■

Spearfish Security Ltd who provides security risk management for large UK Foreign aid programmes and the University of Southampton, has successfully completed a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) culminating in an enhanced digital offering. This was achieved by leveraging academic expertise in Strategic Management Science and Electronic Computer Science.

Managing Director Dan Hooton reflects on the impact of the KTP saying, "The KTP has truly been a game-changer for our business. Over the past two years, we've developed a bespoke risk management platform that's not only tailored to our needs but also provides exceptional value to our clients. Having an associate guided by two University professors, supported by the expertise of two entire faculties, brought unparalleled depth to the project. This collaboration allowed us to approach the software build with a level of strategy and intelligence far beyond what a standard developer could offer. Now, as we prepare to launch Spearfish Sonar, we're excited to explore new opportunities to partner with the University and Innovate UK, ensuring this inspiring collaboration continues to thrive." ■

Cowes Fringe returns with an eclectic line-up

Cowes Fringe is back for its third year, promising a spectacular May Bank Holiday weekend (May 23-25th) packed with music, theatre, and comedy. Taking place across multiple venues in Cowes, this vibrant festival brings together local and national talent for an unforgettable experience.

The first wave of acts has been announced, featuring an eclectic mix of performances. The Cuban Brothers bring their signature blend of funk, soul, comedy, and outrageous dance moves, ensuring a high-energy show like no other. Classical guitar virtuoso Gianluigi Secchi will mesmerise audiences with his intricate jazz and world music compositions. For pop nostalgia,

Mumma Mia delivers the ultimate ABBA tribute, complete with costume changes and singalong anthems. Fans of classic British comedy can enjoy Ode to Joyce, celebrating the legendary Joyce Grenfell with Cheryl Knight's acclaimed performance.

Drag sensation Velma Celli, known for dazzling vocals and West End pedigree, promises a high-energy show blending musical theatre and pop hits. The young DJ and drummer JAMRoKi, at just 15, will bring an electrifying mix of beats, while the Amy Bird Band and The Rocka deliver powerhouse sets of soul, funk, and rock classics. Tickets on sale online. ■





Green Impact Awards Winners Announced

The Green Impact programme runs annually on the Island, supporting businesses to move towards environmentally and socially sustainable practice. It is a United National award-winning programme run by Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK) and supported by the Isle of Wight Council.

In 2024, fifteen businesses on the Isle of Wight received awards for their remarkable efforts and commitment to sustainability, while 40 businesses took part in the programme and accessed the free resources.

Throughout the year, businesses have been working hard to complete actions on an online platform bespoke to the Island. These actions address the United National Sustainable Development goals, and cover categories ranging from energy efficiency to Island community. Dr Holly Jenkins, Senior Project Manager at SOS-UK congratulated the winners saying, "Green Impact is accessible for all businesses on the Island, but the awards are not easy to get. To get a platinum award, businesses have to gain 500 points equal to around 90 actions which is why those who have done so should feel extremely proud! The people involved have worked tirelessly to change the way their businesses run for the better, which broader benefits society in the fight to reduce and adapt to climate change"

Platinum awards: Camp Wight, Nettlecombe Farm, NOSY Creative Agency, The Garlic Farm.

Gold awards: Isle of Wight Council - County Hall & 46SS, Sandrock Services Ltd, Visit Isle of Wight. ■



New spring exhibitions at Dimbola Museum and Galleries

Two outstanding exhibitions by Lee Miller and Marco Sanges are showing at Dimbola Museum and Galleries until May 18th, 2025. Style is Strength – Lee Miller: The Forties Fashion Photos and Marco Sanges: One Step Closer are both curated by Julian Bell.

Fashion photographer Lee Miller captured the essence of women for magazines such as British Vogue. Living in wartime Britain, she turned her talents towards documenting the experience of women during World War II.

Miller does not disguise the wartime context of her work: defiantly, models pose in front of the destruction inflicted by the devastating bombing raids of the Blitz, and 'Style is Strength' showcases her work from 1940-1944.

Marco Sanges explores the nature of charisma. Some inward fantasy pulls along the star we all gaze up at. It's a drive from who knows where that energizes them, perhaps beyond their own control. This is the dynamic of 'One Step Closer'.

The photographer recalls the 1940s heyday of black-and-white glamour shots by the likes of Lee Miller. Sanges will be dedicating the profits from this project to the homelessness charity 'Under One Sky'.

The exhibitions run from the 2nd of February until the 18th of May 2025 and are curated by celebrated artist and writer Julian Bell, President of Dimbola Museum and Galleries. The Lee collection is on loan from the Lee Miller Archives. ■

Robin Hill collaborates with the Isle Film Company



The Robin Hill Adventure Park has announced its plans to make an observational documentary in collaboration with The Isle Film Company.

The new Robin Hill Partnership, co-headed by local businessmen Lee Priddle and John Smith, has spent the last six months investing in the Isle of Wight adventure park which is due to open in April with over 15 new attractions for the 2025 season including real mini diggers, crazy golf, a boat safari, and an

indoor ice rink. These join the existing attractions which include the popular Jungle Heights, the Skywalk, and the Toboggan Run.

Lee Priddle, CEO, said, "Last summer, two Isle of Wight boys with no experience in running a tourist attraction bought a much-loved Island treasure in the shape of an 88-acre country park! We've had a lot of fun shopping and are now installing all our new attractions in time for our opening in April. It's certainly been quite an

adventure so far and makes an interesting story, which we are delighted to be telling through The Isle Film Company."

Jules Baker-Smith, Producer at The Isle Film Company continued, "Having only launched our company in December we are super excited to be working on this project with the Robin Hill team." The documentary will be broadcast on television later this year. ■



Services

- RESIDENTIAL REFURBISHMENT
- BARN & LOFT CONVERSIONS
- NEW BUILDS
- GENERAL BUILDING
- EDUCATION & HEALTH SECTOR
- RESIDENTIAL REFURBISHMENT
- INDUSTRIAL REFURBISHMENT
- MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS
- DRONE SURVEYS
- ROOFING WORKS



With over 30 years experience in the industry, our dedicated skilled workforce are reliable, efficient and friendly. Your project will be managed by a dedicated contract manager.

Accreditations



contact@rplconstruction.com



www.rplconstruction.com



01983 856031



Visit us online



Why Risk It?

CCTV Systems are one of the most effective methods in the fight against crime.

HD Images, Remote Smart Device Control and Viewing, 24 Hour Monitoring, Insurance & Police Approved.

Lifeline are award winning specialists in securing properties across the Isle of Wight.



The Island Security Centre, Riverway, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5UX

01983 521621

info@lifeline-security.co.uk

lifeline-security.co.uk





ROACH PITTIS

LEGAL NAVIGATION

EST. 1873

GET THE EXPERT LEGAL ADVICE YOU NEED

Residential Conveyancing / Commercial Property / Wills, Trusts,
Tax & Probate / Debt Recovery / Leases / Company & Commercial
Agriculture & Estates / Development / Property Litigation

60-66 Lugley Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5EU

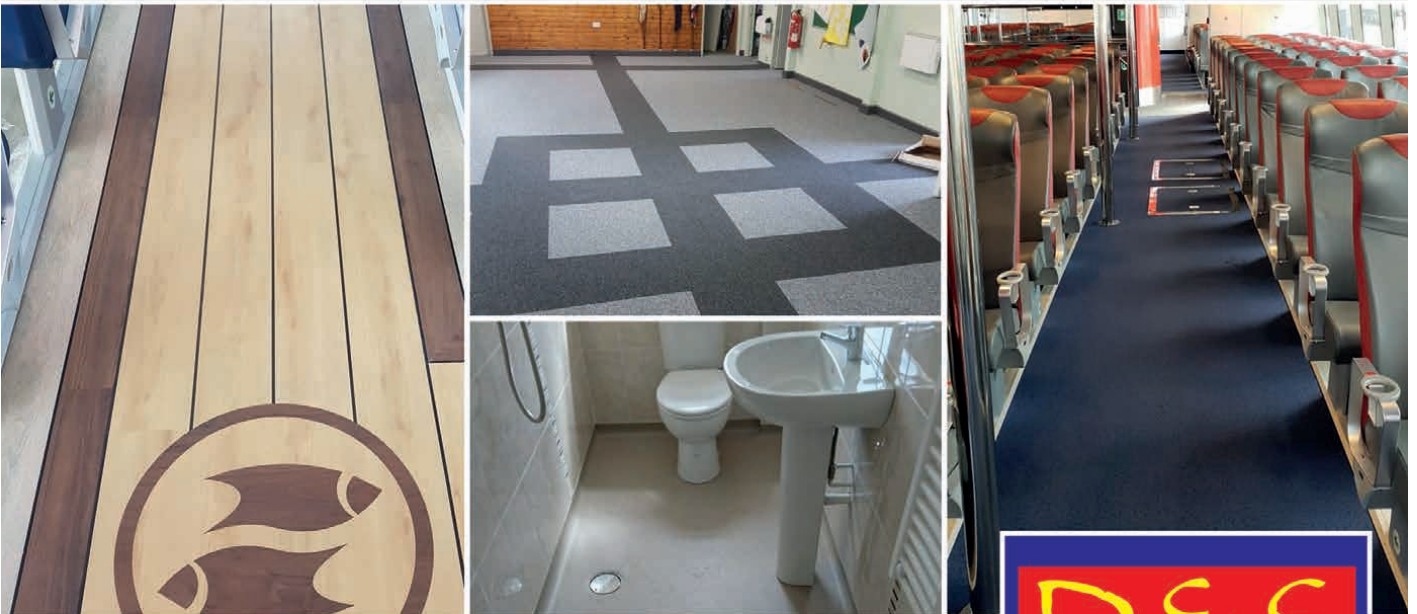
T: (01983) 524431 E: info@roachpittis.co.uk W: roachpittis.co.uk

CELEBRATING

150 YEARS

1873 - 2023

Flooring for all your commercial needs



The Island's **CARPET & FLOORING SUPERSTORE**

12 Hurstake, Riverway Industrial Estate, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5UU

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK • FREE ESTIMATES ISLANDWIDE • FREE PARKING

Mon - Fri 9am - 6pm, Sat 9am - 5pm, Sun 10am - 4pm



01983 533150

www.dscarpets.co.uk

Rugs

Luxury
Vinyl Tiles

Wood & Natural
Flooring

Vinyls

Carpets



A FOND FAREWELL TO EMMA



After over eight years at the IW Chamber, Emma Spinelli one of the most familiar faces of the Chamber team has decided to step down as Membership Coordinator.

Reflecting on her time with the Chamber, Emma described the role as an 'incredible experience' that has allowed her to grow both professionally and personally. "The experience gained has been invaluable, and I am proud of the work I've accomplished," she said. "I've learned so much through events and meetings and have been part of an amazing team of talented people. The team and directors have made my work life so enjoyable and this was an incredibly hard decision to make."

Emma has built strong relationships with businesses and professionals

across the Isle of Wight during those eight years. "The Chamber has provided me with the opportunity to meet and connect with some truly fantastic people on the Island, all with a real passion for helping others through their expertise. Everyone I have met along the way has provided me with some form of knowledge. I'm excited about the journey ahead of me and am always open to networking, conversations, and coffee meetings. Thank you to everyone who has supported me and as I embark on a new chapter, I'm excited about the opportunities ahead."

From the whole Chamber team, we wish Emma all the very best for whatever the future holds for her. ■

PATRON SPOTLIGHT: TOP MOPS

TOP MOPS UNVEILS A FRESH NEW LOOK FOR THE FUTURE

For 27 years, Top Mops has been a trusted name in cleaning services on the Isle of Wight. As they step into the future, they are excited to unveil a bold new look that reflects their modern approach and our longstanding commitment to excellence. While they've embraced change, they've ensured that the essence of the brand, recognisable by the iconic dolphin and distinctive blue stays familiar to their customers.

Sarah Ford is delighted to share the highs of the past few years.

Top Mops has grown significantly in the last six years, earning multiple awards. In 2022 we were honoured with the IW Chamber Customer Service Award and named Business of the Year. Our success continued at the South Coast Business Awards, where we won Mid-Large Business Growth, and we were also recognised by BICSc (The British Institute of Cleaning Science) for Outstanding Candidate of the Year. In the past year, we achieved accreditation as a BICSc Training Centre, allowing us to provide industry-standard qualifications for our operatives, ensuring the highest level of expertise in our cleaning services.

In 2023, we celebrated our 25th anniversary, a milestone that reaffirmed our commitment to growth and innovation. Over

the last five years, our turnover has more than doubled from £1.9M to over £4M, and in January 2025, we secured key Island contracts, leading to a 10% growth in just one month.

As we embrace this exciting new chapter, one thing remains unchanged: our dedication to delivering outstanding cleaning services tailored to our customers' needs. Top Mops is ready for the future, and we look forward to continuing to serve the Isle of Wight with excellence and professionalism.

You can learn more about Top Mops by visiting www.topmops.net ■



EMMA TOPPING

From voicing national radio ads for Disney to narrating promos for Girls Aloud's comeback tour and lending her voice to Virgin's inflight videos, Emma Topping has built a reputation as a trusted voice for global brands. She's also currently the voice behind ITV's sponsor credits for Graham Norton's Wheel of Fortune as well as Amazon's Seller University tutorials - all produced from her garden studio in Cowes.

With a background as a News Editor at the BBC and Isle of Wight Radio, as well as roles in marketing and communications, Emma has always had a love for storytelling and the power of audio to move people to take action. She decided to launch her limited company in 2021 and just two years later, she was presented with a prestigious 'Oscar' of the voiceover world; a One Voice Award for her work narrating e-learning courses for an international food safety company.

"Companies often think hard about their branding, their logo, and key messages. And rightly so. But equally important is the way they sound. From the very first time a customer makes contact and listens to your automated phone messages, to the narration of your online promotional videos or TV and radio commercials, the voice you choose to represent your company is vital in portraying your values and communicating whether or not you're a company to do business with.

"I'm proud to have quickly built up a client list of globally recognised brands, including Aston Martin, the NHS, and Audi. From my home-based studio, I can connect with clients all over the world thanks to superfast broadband. But I also love working with smaller businesses to help them find their voice and tell their story.

"Being invited to be the voice of a company is a real privilege; you're not just reading a script, you're embodying the ethos of that company's values and bringing their unique story to life."

You can hear Emma's voice by visiting www.emmatopping.com and request a free, no obligation sample of your script. ■



Keep Your Business Cool, 24/7

Reliable refrigeration, heat pumps, and air conditioning – trusted by 100+ Isle of Wight businesses.



vectisrefrigeration.com

35
Walk the Wight
with
Mountbatten

The first **Walk the Wight** was a team-building event. Let its 35th anniversary unite your team!

Sunday, 11 May 2025
Walk the Wight with Mountbatten

Register now:
mountbatten.org.uk/walkthewight2025

RED FUNNEL
Isle of Wight
AWARDS 2024
— 2024 —
GOLD AWARD
BEST ISLAND
EVENT



NOSY

“WRS SYSTEMS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF WHAT AN ISLE OF WIGHT COMPANY CAN ACHIEVE.”

NOSY has relished the opportunity to work with WRS Systems since they started collaborating two-and-a-half years ago.

The two companies have worked together on website, film, graphic design and other development projects, and in recent months, NOSY has taken on full marketing support for the Epos solution specialists.

Matt Greg, NOSY founder, believes their values and ambitions align, making them the perfect partnership.

“The Solent can often be seen as a barrier, but WRS Systems has the opposite view and it’s one shared by us.

“We’re both very connected to the Island and feel great pride in working here, but recognise the opportunities and potential elsewhere too.

“WRS Systems cares about creating

solutions for its customers, while influencing positive change for people - and also the environment.

“Those values match our own and we’ve enjoyed growing together over the last two-and-a-half years, with more to come.”

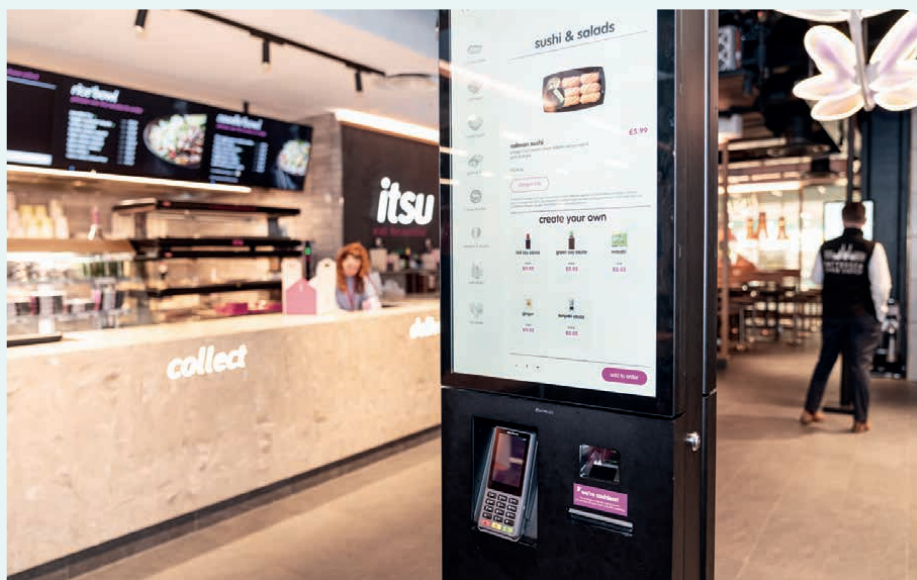
WRS Systems has enjoyed ‘substantial’ growth over the last six years, with the company now supporting clients all around the UK and across seven different countries.

Their clients include Costa Coffee, itsu, Cornish Bakery, Wightlink and Thunderbird Chicken.

Keen to realise an ambition to become the go-to place for Epos solutions,

Above: From left, NOSY’s Creative Director, Scott Bennett, WRS Systems’ Head of Business Development, Jamie White, NOSY founder Matt Greg, WRS Systems’ Marketing Lead, Simon Best, and WRS Systems’ Chief Operating Officer, Sophie Jackson.

Right: An epos kiosk installed by WRS Systems at itsu





WRS Systems' Chief Operating Officer, Sophie Jackson, during one of NOSY's Rubbish Networking events.



NOSY's Aaron Bentley and Richard Brimson

the WRS Systems leadership team recognised the need to elevate the brand and enhance outside perceptions, so looked to NOSY for help.

"This was something we really needed to focus on," said David Jackson, WRS Systems CEO.

"We felt we needed to become more sophisticated with our approach to communications, as we have noisy competitors who are very effective in how they promote themselves.

"To continue our growth, we've reached a point in time where we need everyone to know we're a multi-national company.

"We felt NOSY's expertise, experience and insight could really help us. We're already feeling the benefits, it's a great collaboration and we are excited about achieving more together."

A strategic approach to marketing has been introduced, with key colleagues from both companies involved in delivering it.

For Matt, ensuring everyone plays a part is vital.

"What we don't want is to feel like an external resource," he said.

"Involving the wider teams across both companies gives us all an opportunity to contribute to the decision making and that creates a collective commitment to moving forward together."

The Green Impact Award is another commitment shared by the two companies.

For the last three years, NOSY has been involved in the scheme, recently gaining platinum status - the highest level - in recognition of developing business practices that benefit people and the planet.

NOSY's influence inspired WRS Systems to take part and it recently achieved silver status, with ambitions to secure gold next year.

WRS Systems colleagues are also big supporters of NOSY's Rubbish

Networking event and the two companies combined to create a new website for WightAID, at no cost to the charity.

Sophie Jackson, WRS Systems Chief Operating Officer, feels the two companies bounce off each other.

"It doesn't feel like we're working with an agency because everyone at NOSY has really invested themselves in our work," said Sophie.

"They advise, we listen and we have input too, which is really valuable, especially internally, and makes everyone feel a part of it.

"Over the last few months, we've had an increase in enquiries from our social media activity, so we're already seeing the benefit.

"It's a very transparent relationship and it really works to have NOSY with us." ■

The WRS Systems team at their Newport HQ.



IW CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS 2025 WITH WRS SYSTEMS

Awards submissions closed at the end of January, and the Island's business community is looking forward to seeing who has been nominated for this year's prestigious awards. Excitement mounts and tension grows whilst the panel of impartial, independent judges assesses the submissions for the sixteen categories.



IW CHAMBER
**Business
Awards** 2025

IN ASSOCIATION WITH **WRS**

COMING SOON: THE 2025 IW CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS

This year's awards held at Cowes Yacht Haven on Friday, May 9th, will be presented in association with WRS Systems for the first time as headline sponsor, and the Chamber's Gold Patron.

No one is looking forward to the event more than the Chamber's Chief Executive Steven Holbrook. "Every year we present the Island business community's biggest party, and this year will be no different; a spectacular event, full of entertainment and surprises, which celebrates the success stories of the brilliant businesses based on the Island. Being shortlisted is a huge achievement and winning one of these highly coveted awards is a game-changer. We're really looking forward to this year's awards, and my team is working hard to make this our biggest event ever; we've set the bar high in previous years, and it'll be even higher this year for entertainment, fine dining, and talented performers with a few surprises along the way.

"We have a panel of independent judges based on the Island, mainland, and internationally who will be scrutinising the entries and using their business expertise to pick the best business submissions and I'm as ever, grateful to them for their time and commitment for what is a huge endeavour. We're thrilled to welcome WRS Systems as our headline sponsor, and I'd like to thank all of our supporting sponsors for their help in making this event happen. I look forward to seeing you on the night!"

"Being a part of this event is an exciting opportunity for us, as we have always valued our collaboration with the Chamber. Having been previous winners, we can attest to the greatness of these evenings and the fantastic opportunity they provide to celebrate the hard work of our teams. The Awards evening is the highlight of the Island business scene, and we are eagerly looking forward to seeing you all on the 9th of May."

David Jackson, WRS Systems

THE CATEGORIES IN FULL:

Start Up Business of the Year

Sponsored by PC Consultants

Entrepreneurship Award

Sponsored by Red Funnel

Customer Service Award

Sponsored by RPL Construction

Community Award

Sponsored by Moore (South) LLP

Training and Development Award

Sponsored by Top Mops

Environment and Sustainability Award

Sponsored by IFPL

Technology and Innovation Award

Sponsored by Lifeline Alarms

Employer of the Year

Sponsored by Glanvilles Damant Legal Services

Tourism and Leisure Business of the Year

Sponsored by Visit Isle of Wight

Hospitality Business of the Year

Sponsored by Cherry Godfrey

Manufacturing and Export Business of the Year

Sponsored by GKN Aerospace

Creative Impact Award

Sponsored by Medina Publishing

Business Social Impact Award

Sponsored by WightFibre

Growth Business of the Year

Sponsored by WRS Systems

Micro Business of the Year

Sponsored by Gurit

Small Business of the Year

Sponsored by Wightlink





A LOTTERY LOAN WINNING FORMULA FOR GROWTH AND SAFETY

In 2018, the company applied for an Isle of Wight Lottery Loan, one of the largest ever granted at the time, with a £25,000 award. This financial boost played a key role in helping the business enhance its safety measures, upgrade essential equipment, and improve operational efficiency as John Nightingale, Managing Director explains. "It made a massive difference to us. We needed to make changes and expand, and the support allowed us to do just that."

Following the success of their first loan, CNC Coatings reapplied for further funding in 2024 to continue their expansion and to improve their equipment. "The application process was seamless and very straightforward. We have done it before, and as long as you follow the steps, it works fine. With the assistance of the loan, we were able to make significant safety improvements, including upgrading our chemical treatment facilities to meet modern health and safety standards. We used to work with a particularly unpleasant acid that required strict handling procedures. Thanks to the loan, we've been able to replace outdated methods with safer alternatives, improving conditions for our staff."

Beyond safety upgrades, the investment also supported the company in expanding its services and sustaining local employment. "The Isle of Wight Lottery has been a fantastic resource for local businesses like ours. It's helped us grow and improve in ways we couldn't have done otherwise." ■

IW Chamber President presenting the £30,000 cheque for the latest funding to John Nightingale



SIGN UP TODAY!

ISLEOFWIGHTLOTTERY.COM/JOIN-NOW

There's never been a better time to play and at just £1 a week, you'll also be helping the IW Lottery to create and sustain Island jobs.

The lottery's unique interest-free loans have nurtured hundreds of jobs with more than 100 loans to Island businesses pumping more than £1million into the Island's economy since 2001.

£5K
TO BE WON
IN OUR SPRING DRAW
FRIDAY 28TH MARCH

★
JUST £1
PER
WEEK
★

ISLE OF WIGHT ★
LOTTERY

★ **JOIN NOW** ★

[ISLEOFWIGHTLOTTERY.COM/JOIN-NOW](https://isleofwightlottery.com/join-now)



A BRIGHTER FUTURE WITH BIOSPHERE

In this edition of the Island Business Magazine, Mission Zero Business Hub Isle of Wight takes a closer look at the **BETTER ISLAND PROJECT**.

Using data trends around the Island's economy, population and public health, the project provides a picture of what the Isle of Wight's future could look like in the next 15 years.

Stakeholders involved say the predictions for 2040 and beyond, based on the data, are alarming, though believe the Island can still have a bright future, if opportunities presented by the Isle of Wight's UNESCO Biosphere status are maximised.



"Biosphere is a tool for sustainable development. We have made a commitment to using our natural and cultural capital to chart a new course for the Island and now is the time."

Ian Boyd is part of The Common Space, one of a collection of organisations committed to creating a sustainable Island, under the umbrella of the Beacon Project.

Its initiative, the Better Island Project, presents a plan to bring new investment and opportunity to the Isle of Wight through the Biosphere status.

"The Biosphere connects us to a global network of 730 territories in over 130 countries including 20 island states and nations, all facing similar issues and challenges and all supported by the work of UNESCO and the United Nations," said Ian.

"Being part of this family gives us the potential to build substantial partnerships and elevate the Island into the realm of major investment projects, seeking out what are called 'high integrity' opportunities to demonstrate sustainable environmental and social change that unlocks new enterprise.

"The Island is beautifully positioned to begin these global conversations right now, and even more so in the context of the Solent region covered by the 915 km² Biosphere Reserve."

Ian and his colleagues at The Common Space have been studying data around the Island's population, public health and economy over recent years.

The statistics, all publicly available, show more young people are leaving the Island, and more older people are retiring here, creating an imbalanced demographic, potentially the biggest in the UK by 2043, if the pattern continues, as it is forecast to do.

"The Island is losing its young people, at school and working ages and it's a decline that is steepening," said Ian.

"The ratio of retired to working age on the Island is already extreme and it is becoming more so.

"The economic consequences are a real worry. It will continue to impact education and business and it will get much worse, based on the statistical models provided by the government.

"The data and the trends are there. Rather than ignore it, deny it, or just resign ourselves to it, this information actually gives us what we need to map a different direction for the Island, and the Biosphere is one solution."

The Isle of Wight was granted biosphere status in 2019, only the seventh place in the UK to achieve it, and only the third in England.

Biosphere status is recognition of the Island's unique combination of nature, people and places, where communities and the environment can work together in a sustainable way for a better future.

However, Ian accepts there have been some misconceptions around what it actually means.

"We need to look at the Biosphere through a different lens," said Ian.

"It's really not all about finding environmental reasons to stop new housing schemes, there are plenty of good laws, regulations and policies in place that provide a framework for appropriate and sustainable development.

"Biosphere is all about quality. Whether its development, transition in farm businesses, training and skills, community health or landscape management, we want it to improve the lives of Island communities within a healing, healthy ecosystem.

"The Biosphere recognises the amazing natural assets on the Island, our enormously strong cultural identity, with 33 parishes all boasting strong identities, and seeks to build Island wealth and prosperity from those foundations.



Storytelling with Sue Bailey at the Biosphere Festival

"In the UK economy, the creative sectors are off the scale in significance, and the Isle is absolutely a centre of excellence in the cultural and creative industries. We need to be saying to people, come here if you want to learn about it.

"The whole world, in terms of investment, is interested in sustainability. Investment is now actively seeking out those helping to solve the global problems we all share - climate change and storm events, poverty and deprivation, stagnant economics and wildlife extinction.

"Biosphere gives us the platform to lead

and if we're doing something interesting around these things, we can bring global money and opportunity for new enterprise to the Island.

"All of this can buffer and advance our established industries like tourism, maritime engineering, the care economy and the tech and electronics sectors.

"It's a pivotal moment for the Isle of Wight."

The Better Island Project report is available to anyone interested in learning more about the data and the opportunities presented by the biosphere.

"Everyone involved in the Beacon Project cares deeply about the Isle of Wight and we want to find ways to realise the best possible future.

"It's in all of our interests and we would of course welcome input from the business community, so please get in touch."

To find out more, email thebetterislandproject@gmail.com ■



St Catherine's Oratory - known as the Pepperpot, is the only medieval lighthouse surviving in England.

PROFILE:

ROBIN HILL COUNTRY PARK: A NEW ERA OF ADVENTURE AND HERITAGE

Robin Hill Adventure Park is preparing for a grand reopening under new ownership. With a vision to preserve its legacy while introducing exciting new experiences, the park is set to become bigger and better than ever before. Amber Beard talked to Amanda Ribbins, Head of Sales and Marketing at Robin Hill, to discuss the transformation, the Park's deep-rooted connection to the local community, and what visitors can look forward to this season.

Can you start by telling us a bit about the new owners and their vision for Robin Hill?

Robin Hill was bought by two local businessmen, Lee Priddle and close friend, John Smith, both with deep roots in the farming industry on the Isle of Wight. They're both very successful in their own right, very humble about that success and passionate about maintaining Robin Hill's legacy to ensure it remains a treasured place for generations to come. Their goal is to preserve the park's natural beauty while expanding its attractions to create an even more engaging experience for visitors.

We're introducing 16 brand-new attractions, with more to come, and one of the biggest changes is the way the park is structured. Previously, families with young children found themselves walking long distances between activities. Now, as visitors stroll through the park, they will find myriad attractions on both sides of pathways, ensuring that there's always something exciting to see and do. Additionally, we are launching a separately ticketed area the 'Adrenaline Zone,' suitable for all ages, and which we think will really appeal to teenagers. While I can't reveal all the details just yet, I can say that it will feature high-energy, high-octane activities designed to keep visitors coming back for more.

You're opening a new restaurant for visitors to enjoy too.

We're also excited to announce our new partnership with Alex Kimber, Executive Chef and Owner of Heron Food IOW. Alex has been on the Island for the last five years, building The Heron restaurants in Ryde and Cowes, and more recently, The Braii at Nunwell Farm.

The Heron at Robin Hill will be a seated restaurant with an open-plan kitchen and bar, offering both indoor and outdoor dining and located at the very top of the park so that diners can enjoy breathtaking panoramic views sweeping across the valley and up to Brading Downs. Focusing on farm-to-fork ethical dining, the restaurant will feature a smokehouse-style BBQ grill menu using local ingredients sourced in collaboration with Nunwell Farm and the wider Isle of Wight farming community.





Alex is also working closely with our in-house catering team to enhance the menus for our existing food and beverage outlets across the park. These will provide something for everyone, from goujons and chips to poke bowls and paninis. We will also be serving great coffee at Robin Hill, with Cowes based roastery Jasper's, providing our coffee beans. The Heron at Robin Hill is set to open in early summer and will be open to both Robin Hill visitors and the general public.

There are also plans to make Robin Hill more inclusive and sustainable.

This is one of our major goals. We are implementing new accessibility initiatives, including an exclusive early-access session for visitors with disabilities before the park opens to the general public. Additionally, we are bringing back animals to Robin Hill, with an expanded falconry experience and a new interactive farm area.

We're also focusing on sustainability by committing to sourcing ingredients locally for our food outlets. Supporting island businesses is a priority, and we're working with local suppliers to make this happen.

For many, Robin Hill is a special place filled with family, friend, and festival memories.

Robin Hill has always been a special place for Islanders. Many people have fond childhood memories here, and now they're bringing their own children back to create new ones. Our new owners understand that emotional connection and feel a responsibility to uphold it. Beyond offering a great day out, we're also contributing to the local economy by creating up to 25 full-time jobs and around 80 seasonal positions, and thanks to the year-round Adrenaline Zone, we can provide more stable employment opportunities beyond the typical tourist season.

That's a significant boost for the local economy. Finally, when can visitors expect to experience all these exciting changes?

We officially open our doors to the public on April 4th and we're working tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure everything is ready for a spectacular launch. It's an ambitious project, but we have a passionate team working day and night to bring this vision to life. Our CEO, Lee, wants to make sure that everybody that arrives through our gates in the morning, has a brilliant day out. It's a bit scary to be responsible for people having fun, but actually, I think it's a privilege to work in an environment where you see people having fun around you every day and we can't wait to welcome everyone back and share this new chapter with our visitors. ■

IWChamber BUSINESS EXPO 2025

9 JULY
RYDE SCHOOL

Sponsored by

WightFibre



SAVE THE DATE FOR EXPO 2025!

Wednesday 9th of July is the date for your diary as Expo returns with an exciting lineup of exhibitors and networking opportunities and is promising to be bigger and better than ever.

Island companies are already showing they want to be at the IW Chamber's Business Expo, by far the biggest business networking day of the year, with hundreds of attendees and a wide range of exhibiting businesses.

Stands are now on sale with over half already reserved and there are still opportunities for marquee naming rights and advertising. Returning to Ryde School and still proudly supported by WightFibre, the Expo is the highlight of the Island's business networking calendar.

Entry is free to visitors; you don't have to be a Chamber member to attend, and it really is open to everyone. It's a brilliant way to engage with the Island's business community and to chat to people from businesses of all sizes and sectors. "We're looking forward to making Expo our best yet," says IW Chamber Chief Executive Steven Holbrook. "In our third year now at Ryde School, we'll be making the most of the opportunities on offer in this brilliant location. Expo really works as a summer event, and we're expanding our Expo marquee, to integrate more stands and encourage footfall around the

exhibitor space. We'll be giving our exhibitors more space outside too, to encourage informal networking and increase time spent at the event.

"If you've exhibited at Expo before you'll know how valuable this day is and how well the business community supports this event. If you've never exhibited before, I would recommend it as a great way to promote your business, plugging into an already established network of other Island businesses. As an Island, it's so important that we trade with each other as much as we can. Expo really helps nurture those connections and relationships. Join us on **Wednesday 9th July!**"

Book your stand at Expo 2025

For further information and bookings email: expo@iwchamber.co.uk. IW Chamber members receive discounted rates, but you don't have to be a member to book or take part in Expo. ■








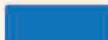


RESERVE YOUR STAND TODAY

Email: Expo@IWChamber.co.uk



WIGHTFIBRE NETWORKING ZONE



Premium Double Stand		£675 + VAT	Double Stand		£575 + VAT
Premium Single Stand		£425 + VAT	Naming Right Sponsor Stand		£900 + VAT
Single Stand		£375 + VAT	Pavilion		Please enquire
Charity Stand		£250 + VAT	Reserved		-

BIG CHANGES FOR EMPLOYERS COMING SOON

By Real Employment Law's Alison Colley

On the 10th October 2024 the government published the Employment Rights Bill, containing proposals to significantly reform workers' rights. This is the biggest change to employment law in decades and will have a fundamental impact on how all employers treat their employees and the procedures needed to legally safeguard the business.



The changes are going to be wide ranging including the following:

1. Right to claim unfair dismissal from day one of employment

The Bill proposes to reduce the qualifying period to claim unfair dismissal from 2 years to 1 day.

Employers will be allowed to operate a statutory probationary period (likely to be 9 months) during which they will be able to dismiss an employee who is not suitable for the job only by following a basic procedure.

2. Right to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from day one of sickness

SSP will be payable from the first day of sickness absence and there will be no earnings threshold for entitlement to SSP.

3. Removal of qualifying period for Paternity Leave and Parental Leave

Employees will have the right to take paternity leave and parental leave from the first day of their employment rather than having to have been employed for 26 weeks' (as it currently is).

4. Ban on "fire and re-hire"

The change will mean that employees will have the right to bring a claim for

automatic unfair dismissal in a situation where an employee is dismissed and offered re-employment on less favourable terms.

There will be some limited exceptions where the business is in a dire financial situation, but it is likely that the threshold for this exception will be difficult to meet.

5. Bereavement leave to be extended to all

Presently bereavement leave is only available to those who lose a child under the age of 18. Under new proposals, this right will be extended to all employees who need to take time off work to grieve.



6. Expansion of Right to Flexible Working

In April 2024, the right to request flexible working became a “day one” right. Employees were also given the right to make up to two flexible working applications a year (one allowed previously).

The headlines before the Bill was published were that the new law would make flexible working a mandatory requirement for employers. The changes however do not go this far instead under the proposal an employer will only be able to refuse an application for flexible working if it is reasonable to do so.

Employers will need to, not only state which of the 8 grounds for refusal they are relying upon but also explain, in writing, why they consider their refusal on the stated ground(s) to be reasonable.

7. Extension of protection on returning from maternity leave

In April 2024 protection from redundancy was extended to cover pregnant employees and employees within 6 months of their return-to-work period after taking maternity or adoption leave.

The current law does not prevent the dismissal for redundancy or any other reason, but instead requires employers to prioritise those employees for alternative available roles.

The Bill proposes to extend the protection further and make it unlawful to dismiss women who are pregnant, on maternity leave or recently returned to work after pregnancy/taking maternity leave, except in specific circumstances.

8. Further changes to protection from harassment laws

Since 26th October 2024 all employers have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to protect workers from sexual harassment.

Under the Bill employers will become liable for “third party” harassment and there will be an obligation on employers to take all reasonable steps to prevent third-party harassment.

9. Regulations on use of Zero hours contracts

Despite the headline grabbing pre-election promise to ban “exploitative” zero hours contracts, the Bill falls short of a total ban.

Instead, the new law will introduce regulations which are aimed at restricting the use of zero hours contracts by increasing the administrative burden on employers. In my view it is a ‘backdoor’ attempt to reduce the use of zero-hour contracts, as employers will not want to take the time and risk of complying with the regulations!

The main points to note:

- Zero hour and limited hours workers will have the right to be given a guaranteed hours contract if they have worked regular hours over a 12-week reference period.
- Workers can elect to remain on a zero-hour contract if they wish to.
- A requirement for employers to give zero-hour workers reasonable advance notice of a shift or any changes to a shift.
- A right for zero hour workers to claim compensation if they are not given reasonable notice before the start of a shift or a shift is cancelled or changed without reasonable notice.

Prepare for change

There are lots of things for employers to consider but the changes will take time to be refined and to become law, and it is not proposed that any changes are implemented until 2026.

You can start to prepare for the changes by taking the following steps:

- 1) Review and make any changes to contract terms before the new law comes into effect.
- 2) Review your use of zero or limited hour contracts and consider if you need to continue with them.
- 3) Check that you have taken steps to comply with the new law on sexual harassment.
- 4) Complete a third-party harassment risk assessment.

Given announcements about the intention for further reforms of employment law you can expect to be kept busy with HR and employment law compliance for the foreseeable future. ■

Alison Colley is a solicitor and founder of Real Employment Law Advice. She specialises in providing advice to employers and employees on all aspects of Employment and HR, including mediation and dispute resolution within the workplace.

GO FOR GROWTH

FUTURE-PROOF YOUR CREATIVITY

Combine artistry and technology to realise your true worth and shape the future of your creative business.



**Go for
Growth**

The IW Creative Network and Go For Growth are joining forces and running an exciting one-day training and networking event for creative professionals on Thursday, 6th March 2025, at Building 41, Cowes, titled Future-proof your creativity: Combine artistry and technology to realise your true worth and shape the future of your creative business.

Designed to help artists, designers, writers, and creative entrepreneurs turn their passion into a sustainable and financially rewarding business, this event will explore the true value of creative work and how to align artistic vision with business strategy.

With expert-led sessions from leading AI consultant Jocelyn Burnham, award-winning voice actor Emma Topping, and business strategist Ross Findon, attendees will discover how to leverage AI, redefine their value, and build a business model that works.

This interactive, hands-on event is an essential opportunity for creatives looking to develop, grow, and thrive. Book your spot now and take the next step in your creative career!

REGISTER HERE:

<https://bit.ly/IW-Future-Proof>

or scan the QR code



AGENDA

- 9.30am - 10am: Arrive. Coffee. Mingle / Network.
- 10am - 10:15am: Introduction and welcome from your hosts, Georgia and Gavin
- 10:15am - 11:00am: Leveraging AI to support your creativity, with Jocelyn Burnham
- 11:00am - 11:45am: AI breakout session: practical use-case
- 11.45am - 12.05pm: Discussion - has the morning helped you see a new opportunity?
- 12:05pm - 12.30pm: Emma Topping's creative journey, a fireside chat
- 12.30 pm - 1.15 pm: LUNCH
- 1.15pm - 2.00pm: How to define and communicate your true value, with Ross Findon
- 2:00pm - 2:45pm: Breakout Session: Re-thinking your value (proposition)
- 2.45pm - 3.00pm. AI Generated podcast of the day
- 3.00pm - 3.40pm. Closing Q & A with presenters from the day
- 3:40pm - 3:45pm: Closing Remarks



GO FOR GROWTH PRESENTERS



JOCELYN BURNHAM

Jocelyn Burnham is one of the UK's leading independent artificial intelligence consultants, trainers, and speakers, specialising in AI innovation through creativity and playfulness. She has been commissioned by organisations including Arts Council England, Tate, The Church of England, Art Fund, Shakespeare's Globe, RADA, Kew and Bloomberg Philanthropies to produce bespoke AI workshops and resources.



EMMA TOPPING

Emma is an award-winning voice actor trusted by global brands including Amazon, Disney, Netflix, Virgin Atlantic, the BBC and many more. She has over 30 years' experience working across voice acting, radio, television, marketing and communications. This background means she not only delivers the highest quality audio, but she also understands the production process and how to interpret a script to engage and connect with an audience.



ROSS FINDON

Ross Findon is a former journalist, whose career started in Bolivia, before a return to his native UK, where his work has featured across some of Britain's biggest news organisations.

Now, as an independent communications consultant he helps international clients shape their brands and tell their stories. Based in Cowes, he is also Global Director of Communications for the international climate communications organisation New Zero World and the lead author of Pop Culture: Bursting the Climate Communications Bubble.



IW CREATIVE NETWORK:

The IW Creative Network is delivered through Creative Island - the cultural development agency for the Isle of Wight.

We help creatives on the Isle of Wight develop sustainable careers in the creative industries through business support, networking, resources and profiling. A bespoke talent development programme is available for individuals and organisations joining the network, which aims to nurture and inspire, allowing creatives to thrive and become more sustainable. Explore more and join the network at iwcreativenetwork.com

INCLUSIVE ISLAND



Inclusive Island is celebrating with 13 of the organisations that joined the programme last year and have now been accredited as 'Inclusive Island Employers'. They can now proudly display this badge as a demonstration to the world that they are committed to being inclusive employers, with an active programme in place to monitor and improve the ways in which they work.

Inclusive Island has been delivered in collaboration with Go for Growth, led by Marnie Janaway.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- Creative Island
- ERMC limited
- Fried Air Limited
- Community Action
- Isle of Wight Construction Training Group
- Isle of Wight Youth Trust
- Liz Earle Beauty Company Ltd.
- New Carnival
- Quay Arts
- Seetec Pluss
- St Catherines School & College
- WightFibre
- Wildheart Animal Sanctuary

"Inclusive Island has really given us focus on the opportunities; a super approachable format to follow. We are looking forward to developing the programme going forward".

Emilie Thomas – Head of People, Isle of Wight Youth Trust

IW CHAMBER NETWORKING BREAKFAST**The Stag, Cowes Road, Newport****Friday 7th March, 7.30am-9am****IW Chamber members - £18 per person**

Join us for an excellent networking opportunity at the Stag, with a hot breakfast and a great start to the business day, networking with other Chamber members.

IW CHAMBER NETWORKING BRUNCH**The Garlic Farm, Newchurch****Wednesday 12th March, 9am-11am****IW Chamber members - £20 per person**

Please join us for Brunch at The Garlic Farm. This event has capacity for 30 people, as one of our smaller events, we would love to hear about your business in a one-minute pitch.

MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK COURSE**Delivered by Good Skills Training, Shanklin****Wednesday 12th March, 9am-4pm****YMCA, Shanklin****IW Chamber members - £99+VAT**

The QNUK Level 2 Award in Mental Health at Work (RDF) is the ideal introduction to understanding mental health in the workplace. The qualification covers the most common mental health conditions, how to identify potential mental health concerns in colleagues and then how to discuss their needs and assist them to access suitable services and support.

FIRE MARSHAL COURSE**Delivered by Good Skills Training, Shanklin****Monday 24th March, 9am-12.30pm****IW Chamber members - £68+VAT per person**

This half day course is designed specifically for those who have been designated with the responsibilities of Fire Marshal or Fire Warden. The course will look at the legal responsibilities of both the company and the individual. By the end of this course learners will understand what their duties as a fire marshal are.

IW CHAMBER MEMBERS EXCLUSIVE ISLE OF WIGHT DONKEY SANCTUARY TOUR**Isle of Wight Donkey Sanctuary, Wroxall****Thursday 27th March, 9.30am-11am****IW Chamber members - Free**

Join us in March for a free, IW members-only tour of the Isle of Wight Donkey Sanctuary. Celebrate spring with a tour around the beautiful site, discover how they care for their animals and meet some of the lovely donkeys. Afterwards, relax with tea, coffee and pastries in the café and meet the team and the new GM Stephen Tobitt.

Booking required, wellies recommended!

*The Chequers*



The Stag



The Stag

IW CHAMBER NETWORKING BREAKFAST

The Chequers, Rookley

Friday 4th April, 7.30am-9am

IW Chamber members - £18 per person

Join us for an excellent networking opportunity at The Chequers, with a hot breakfast and a great start to the business day, networking with other Chamber members.

EMERGENCY FIRST AID AT WORK COURSE

Delivered by Good Skills Training, Shanklin

Tuesday 15th April, 9am-4pm

IW Chamber members - £78+VAT per person

This one-day course is designed to give delegates the knowledge, skills, and confidence to help those that have become unconscious, and those with minor injuries. The Emergency First Aid at Work Course also looks at the responsibilities of the Emergency First Aider. On successfully completing this course, attendees will be confident, safe, prompt, and effective emergency first aiders.

IW CHAMBER NETWORKING BREAKFAST

The Bandstand, Sandown

Friday 2nd May, 7.30am-9am

IW Chamber members - £18 per person

Join us for an excellent networking opportunity at the Bandstand, with a hot breakfast and a great start to the business day, networking with other Chamber members.

IW CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS 2025

In association with WRS Systems

Cowes Yacht Haven

Friday 9th May

Tickets will go on sale after the shortlist has been announced. These will initially be for nominated businesses before going on sale to Chamber members. Further details about the event will be available when tickets go on sale.

COFFEE AND CAKE NETWORKING

Caffe Isola, Newport

Wednesday 21st May, 3.30pm-5pm

IW Chamber members—FREE

Join us for afternoon networking and a superb way to meet other members informally, in the great setting of Chamber patrons Caffe Isola. If you're new to networking, it's a brilliant way to get started and promote your business.

BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW!

Go to www.iwchamber.co.uk or
Email chamber@iwchamber.co.uk

IW CHAMBER | NEW MEMBERS

Aspire Cleaning Contractors Ltd
aspirecleaning.co.uk
iow@aspirecleaning.co.uk
01983 211560



The Events Co.
Khia Janzen
theeventSCO.co.uk
hello@theeventSCO.co.uk
01983 731130



Global Spatial Technology Solutions
Edward Wood
gsts.ca
ed.wood@gsts.ca
07376 138460



The Fig Tree Shanklin
Billy Urry
thefigtreeshanklin.co.uk
thefigtreehotel@gmail.com
01983 241010



SB Vacuum Packaging Solutions
Stephen Bradley
sbvacuum.com
steve@sbvacuum.com
01983 407884



The Wave Project IOW
Abbie James
waveproject.co.uk
abbie@waveproject.co.uk



www.iwchamber.co.uk

Call 01983 520777

Join the CHAMBER!

Being a member of the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce is a great business decision! Membership starts at little more than £3 a week and entitles you to a huge range of business support, exclusive events and member discounts.

IW Chamber members have access to these four essential services:

- ChamberHealth & Safety
- ChamberHR
- ChamberTax
- ChamberLegal

These services give you unlimited access to no less than five business advice lines and a website which features over 750 free downloadable template documents. Not only that but you are protected by £1,000,000 of legal expenses insurance which includes employment cover and tax enquiry cover.

All these services are included in your membership fee.

Don't delay...join today!

WE CALL THEM

SUCCESSSHIPS



"Excellent"

100+ employer reviews
on gov.uk

Upskill and inspire your staff with an HTP Apprenticeship, and you will too.

For 25 years, HTP Apprenticeship College has delivered high-quality vocational training to over 6,000 apprentices of all ages and skill levels.

We're a trusted partner for employers across the Island—from small independent businesses to major public sector organisations like the NHS and Isle of Wight Council.

Our Apprenticeships are a win-win for staff and employers—boosting commitment, satisfaction and retention. They help you strengthen your team, attract new talent, and enhance productivity and performance.

Develop your talent in 2025—with HTP *SUCCESSSHIPS*.

Take advantage of
95-100% government
funded* Apprenticeships!

- Business Administration
- Management
- Human Resources
- Customer Service
- Hospitality
- Professional Cookery
- Childcare & Education
- Teaching & Assessment

Call us now 01983 533926

OR VISIT [HTP.AC.UK](https://www.htp.ac.uk)

*Directly or via large employers' Apprenticeship Levy funds

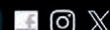


 **HTP** APPRENTICESHIP
COLLEGE

Main Campus 118-119 St James Street • Newport • PO30 5HE



HTP 25 YEARS
2000 2025



IW CHAMBER PATRONS

GOLD | SILVER | BRONZE | LOTTERY

GOLD PATRON



SILVER PATRONS

SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



SILVER PATRON



BRONZE PATRONS

BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



BRONZE PATRON



LOTTERY PATRON



LOTTERY PATRON



ISLE OF WIGHT LOTTERY BUSINESS START UP COURSE



DO YOU WANT TO BE YOUR OWN BOSS?
ARE YOU LOOKING TO START
YOUR OWN BUSINESS?
WE CAN HELP!

The **Isle of Wight Lottery** has been supporting Island entrepreneurs and new businesses since 2000, helping to create and nurture hundreds of jobs.

Our **one-day course** is sponsored by Red Funnel and delivered by expert business mentors, designed to get you started with lots of useful, friendly advice.

We'll give you an overview of running your own business, operating as sole trader or company, bookkeeping, insurance, professional services, marketing and more.

The **Isle of Wight Lottery Business Start Up Course** is a great way to learn more about the world of business and how to get moving in the right direction. The informal environment is also a friendly place to ask questions and learn with like-minded people.

The **Isle of Wight Lottery Business Start Up Course** is sponsored by **Red Funnel**, who are proud to support new businesses and help to create new jobs and employment. The one-day course is only £5 to attend, thanks to the support of **Red Funnel**. The courses are presented by the **Isle of Wight Lottery**, as part of the Lottery's work to create and sustain employment on the Isle of Wight.

Sign up today!

Thursday February 20th 9.30am – 4.00pm

Thursday March 20th 9.30am – 4.00pm

Thursday April 24th 9.30am – 4.00pm

Thursday May 22nd 9.30am – 4.00pm

Thursday June 26th 9.30am – 4.00pm

at IW Chamber Office, Branstone Business Park

Visit: www.iwchamber.co.uk/startmeup

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY **RED FUNNEL**



RED FUNNEL

THE ORIGINAL ISLE OF WIGHT FERRIES





IW CHAMBER PRESIDENT

Supporting Business Resilience in Challenging Times

By Jonathan Thornton, IW Chamber President

As we navigate the complexities of 2024, businesses continue to face significant pressures. Economic uncertainty, shifting market demands, and workforce challenges all contribute to a difficult landscape for companies of all sizes. But while these obstacles are undeniable, they are not insurmountable. Now, more than ever, focusing on resilience, adaptability, and the support networks available to business owners and leaders is essential.

IW CHAMBER'S MISSION

To provide value and benefits for our members through listening, representation, support and collaboration.

The Chamber of Commerce plays a vital role in assisting businesses through these uncertain times. While some challenges are beyond our control, there are practical measures that can provide relief and opportunities for growth. One such example is the Isle of Wight Lottery, which has distributed over £1.3 million in loans to local businesses, enabling them to invest in new equipment, diversify their offerings, and become more efficient. Companies like CNC Coatings have successfully used these loans to expand their operations and improve their business, demonstrating the actual impact of financial support.

However, financial assistance is just one aspect of business resilience. Equally important is the ability to seek help and maximise the resources available. A recent Chamber survey revealed that many members are unaware of the full range of benefits at their disposal, including valuable discounts and promotional opportunities. Whether through cost-saving initiatives or networking events, businesses have multiple ways to strengthen their position within the local economy.

But resilience is not solely about navigating financial pressures. It also involves maintaining mental well-being and making sure that there is a supportive environment within teams. Leadership comes with huge responsibility, and business owners must prioritise their own health to effectively support their staff. The Time to Talk Day in February (mind.org.uk) serves as a crucial reminder of the importance of open dialogue about mental well-being in the workplace. I know from personal experiences in recent years that by making the time to talk and actively listening, we can help ourselves and others manage these pressures. By encouraging discussions and creating spaces for reflection, we help build stronger, more sustainable businesses.

Engagement with the Chamber provides the opportunity for visibility and connection. Hosting business tours, networking breakfasts, and other events allows companies to showcase their offerings while building relationships within the community. These opportunities not only strengthen individual businesses but also reinforce the collective resilience of our local economy.

The start of the year always brings challenges, but as we move past winter and look toward spring, there is room for optimism. The longer days ahead help us to look forward to renewed opportunities for growth and collaboration. With the continued support of the Chamber, a proactive approach to available resources, and a commitment to building resilience, businesses can weather uncertainties and emerge stronger. Let's continue to support one another and build a thriving, adaptable business community. ■



Your friendly local design & print company!



attentive and reliable service



full design service available




meridian 3
DESIGN & PRINT

The next time you require any design & print services feel free to give us a call or email us

meridian3mail@icloud.com
07777 155663
meridian3.co.uk

1,000 Businesses can't be wrong!

Over 1,000 Island Businesses use WightFibre for their phones and broadband connections. Join them today!



business.wightfibre.com

01983 300 000

Resilient, High Availability Broadband for your business and your customers.

Free WorkPass App. Easily manage guest WiFi networks, security settings and device access.

Business Phone Systems. Truly Flexible for home and office working.

Advanced AI Security with Shield™. Enterprise level security without the hassle, or cost.

Made on the Isle of Wight.

Island engineers, Island call centres, Island staff.