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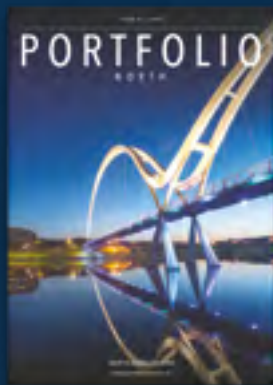
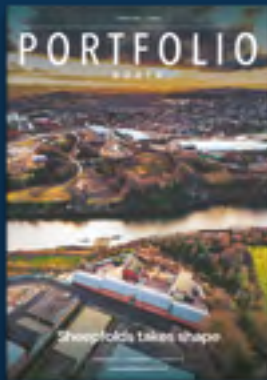
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SCAN ME



# The future of publishing

## Editors notes from Cassie Moyse

The recent sudden death of digital news sites BuzzFeed and Vice got me thinking about the huge changes which the news and magazine industry has gone through over the past few years, the struggles faced by both print and digital outlets and what's next for the future of publishing.

For many years, digital news sites have been hailed as the future and an answer to all the challenges associated with print - but that hasn't worked as expected. The New York Times recently published that; "Digital media start-ups have flailed for years. Analysts have long warned that these companies rely too much on social media to gain readers."

Social media is a tricky game. As the monetisation of platforms has evolved, it becomes increasingly more difficult for businesses to reach more of the right people without big budgets. In the past five years I've seen the ability to target demographics be taken away, organic reach diminish and prices increase significantly. Algorithms change regularly and suddenly, and contrary to popular belief, social media requires a lot of time, expertise and strategy. More-often-than-not significant investment into paid campaigns alongside the creation and appointments of roles of varying levels is required, as well as regular training to be able to stay up to date and utilise platforms to their full potential. It requires knowledge, expertise and deep pockets.

Digital news sites should be the perfect solution - and when done well are a brilliant and unrivalled way to gather data which is useful for the publication and its advertisers. You can track exactly how many readers you've had, how long they've read for, what they've read, their age, gender, what other topics they're interested in - the list goes on.

Unfortunately though, the negatives still seem to outweigh the positives. The digital news landscape has been tarnished by unregulated news sources, fake news, click-bait and the race for publications to be first to report - leading to poor journalism and inaccuracies. Many readers don't instinctively believe what they read online due to years of mistrust - which is a difficult feeling to restore. National operators of local news-sites now rely heavily on digital advertising revenue, but all these websites are littered with pop-ups, poor layouts and advertising which make it unreadable and create a poor user experience. From my own personal experience as the marketing director of a property firm, digital campaigns with these platforms have never provided a good return on investment.

In response to the news on BuzzFeed and Vice, many commented that there's

limited commercial opportunity or financial sustainability in creating a publication which concentrates on the strategy of simply reaching as many people as possible or 'going viral'. There's only a small percentage of businesses which could create direct sales or enquires from a campaign which is based on simply reaching as many people as possible - the digital world is optimised by algorithms and the most successful news platforms deliver the most relevant content based on a reader's interests.

That being said, I am a strong advocate of brand building. In my role as a director at Bradley Hall we reached 126,000,000 impressions last year - almost accidentally. We had just relaunched our new brand and it was beneficial for as many people as possible to see our new look and understand our redefined purpose. The company has also recently sold properties priced from £36,000 up to multi-million pound mansions, offering a range of commercial and residential services which suit different audiences, which is why we do around a 50/50 split between brand building and direct marketing.

It's important for companies to be at the forefront of people's minds when they do require your product or service, but as budgets tighten and economic pressure rises, many businesses are looking closely at ROI where they can and how they can convert the people they reach through marketing more efficiently.

In a world where digital can tap into target audiences, we can reach the right people at the right place at the right time, print must be able to do the same. And it is possible to do this - Portfolio North is created for professional and aspirational people, business owners and decision makers and that's exactly who we reach thanks to strategic distribution and relevant content. As the magazine is free for readers, we are able to choose where every copy goes.

It's widely known that daily newspapers are struggling as newsreaders habits have changed - gone are the days where many would pick up a newspaper every day. Value also plays a part - the phrase 'Today's news is tomorrow's chip shop paper' rings true in that people would rather read online for free than pay for a paper copy which will be disposed of so quickly.

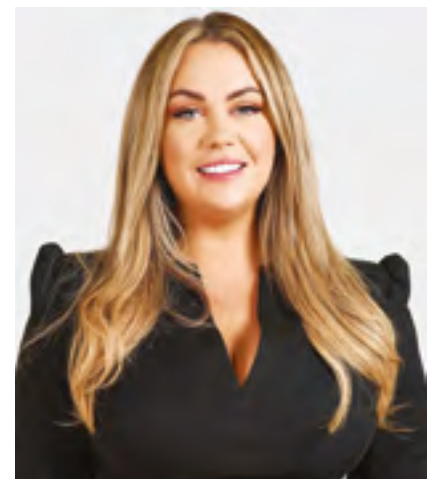
Regional and local publications of

any kind, be that print or digital, are also now stepping further into the event space. Providing different and engaging events for readers and business development opportunities for advertisers and partners creates a new, experiential arm for stakeholders, keeping it relevant and interesting while adding another opportunity to create revenue. Each of our events so far has sold out including our business lunches, property updates and marketing mixers. The Portfolio North Wine Club has also piqued interest - and we've successfully hosted these invite-only events since last year.

It's important to consider preferences; one reader might prefer to read via their mobile on the commute to work, some may prefer to sit down at a weekend with a cuppa or a glass of wine and flick through the pages, some may catch up on their desktop on their lunch break. We're just about to launch our news-app with exclusive content, an improved layout and journey while creating a clearer and easier to read experience compared to browser - providing choice for our readers.

It seems that creating a print publication with better quality, better content, a longer 'shelf-life' and genuine value in its print quality, content and production, coupled with user-friendly digital platforms and in-person events could be the magic combination.

Despite the turbulence in the industry, print is not dead and digital isn't the answer. News is changing - and as publishers it's our responsibility to deliver what our readers and clients want.



**Cassie Moyse**  
Director, Portfolio North

# PORTFOLIO

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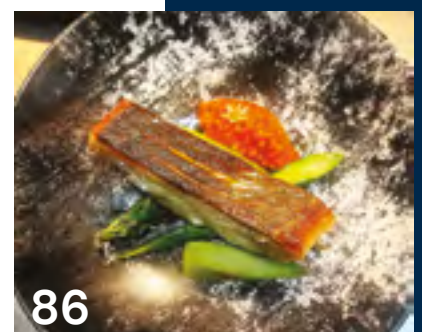
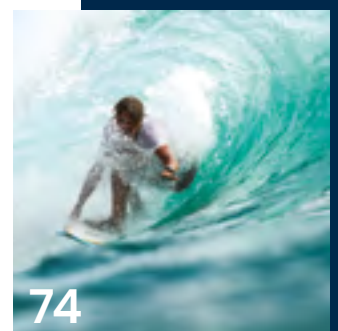
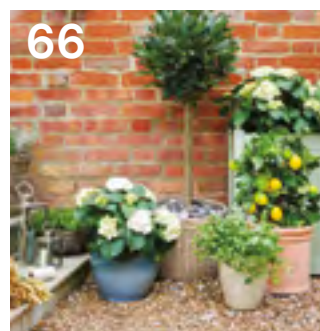
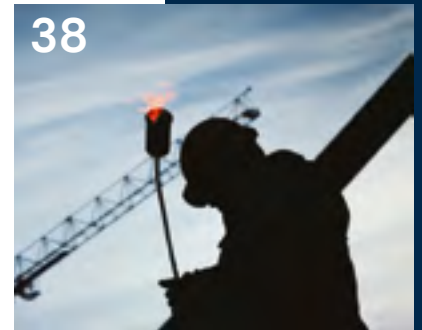
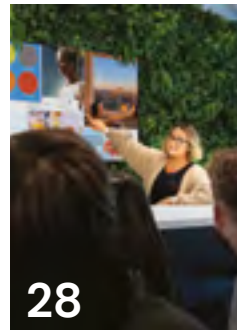
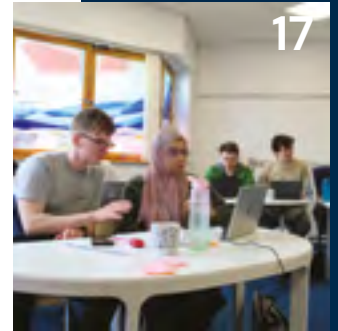
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# More exciting businesses hotfoot it to Sheepfolds Stables

This year Sunderland's hotly anticipated Sheepfolds Stables will open its doors as a food, drink and entertainment destination.

The former stables buildings, which stand in the shadow of Sunderland AFC's Stadium of Light, have already attracted some top names in the world of hospitality, including Hairy Biker, Si King; Tamer Hassan who will open a Japanese fusion restaurant and Speyside Distillers who are to open a whisky and cigar lounge.

Led by one of the region's most ambitious and dynamic professional services businesses, Building Design Northern (BDN), Sheepfolds Stables has now announced three exciting new additions to its line-up of tenants, as the transformation of the Grade II listed space gathers pace.

The Calabash Tree, a Trinidadian eatery serving up tasty morsels from the Caribbean Island, is the latest business to add its flavoursome offering to the destination-venue.

Founded by chef and entrepreneur Ryan McVay, The Calabash Tree will deliver an exciting choice of dishes, inspired by the traditional taste of Trinidad, such as curries, rice and peas, jerk chicken and saltfish.

Ryan, a former fire fighter who was forced to leave through injury, has a street food business based in Washington, and has already run pop-up events in collaboration with Pop Recs. He is taking a permanent base in Sheepfolds, with his eatery based next door to Hairy Biker Si King's venue. Ryan said: "I was made in England with Trinidadian parts, so it's brilliant to be able to bring the food I grew up with to Sunderland.

"I think Sheepfolds Stables is a long overdue investment for Sunderland and it's brilliant to be part of it. I want to raise the bar with my food. To give people the chance to







taste something different and exciting.”

Award-winning contemporary dance company Southpaw Dance Company, will also be an anchor tenant at the new £2m venue. Southpaw specialises in large-scale, outdoor dance extravaganzas and innovative and imaginative theatre productions. The company is particularly renowned for its participatory work, creating original, mass movement spectacles for new or inexperienced community dancers.

In addition to being a hub for Southpaw Dance Company, the new studio space at Sheepfolds Stables represents a unique addition to the Sunderland artistic landscape. With a multi-functional space that can host a variety of events and activities, Southpaw hopes to make the space available to other artists and companies. By encouraging collaborations and partnerships with other creatives, Southpaw aims to promote a thriving arts scene in Sunderland and beyond.

The stage was just one of the attractions that convinced Southpaw Artistic Director Robby Graham to take a studio space at the exciting new development.

“We were talking to BDN’s MD Rick Marsden about an opening night performance and I thought what an amazing space the Sheepfolds Stables is going to be. When Rick showed me the space and his idea for what it will be, I was blown away,” said Robby.

“We got talking and Rick agreed that one of the spaces they had available could work as a full-length studio, which is what we’ve been looking for. The courtyard area is perfect for outdoor performances and I can see us performing preview shows and rehearsing there.

“What’s happening in Sunderland – and the Sheepfolds development is part of it – is so exciting. Southpaw is all about connecting with audiences and working in community participation and there’s so much of this happening on Wearside right now.”

Contemporary cocktail bar Yem will also be opening its doors in the new riverside venue, with the aim to raise the standard of cocktails in the region.

Founded by life-long best friends

Daniel Lemon and Ashton Williamson, who were both born in Sunderland, Yem aims to be the region’s best cocktail bar offering a unique concept that merges the classical and contemporary, the international and the local.

The venue will deliver high-end cocktails with a North East spirit, but inspired by world-famous cocktail bars.

Ashton, who embarked on his cocktail-making career at Revolution, where he climbed the ranks to Head of Brand and Training, said: “While working in and managing some of the best bars in London, Edinburgh and abroad, we always asked ourselves ‘why can’t we have this back yem?’. We were always incredibly keen to return to our roots and bring something new and unique to our hometown.”

Ashton has managed international cocktail venues in London, Manchester and Edinburgh, including the world-famous Portobello Star Cocktail Bar in Notting Hill and Dandelyan in London, which was named World’s Best Bar in 2018 during Ashton’s tenure. Daniel is an actor, writer, producer and director, who returned to the North East in 2018 to open the Newcastle based creative and education hub The Actors Forge, now one of the region’s leading training and education centres for budding thespians.

The pair are working together to create their new flagship cocktail venue in the Grade II listed venue – located in Riverside Sunderland – which is currently being transformed by Sunderland and Ulverston based architecture and engineering practice Building Design Northern (BDN).

Daniel said: “Sheepfolds Stables is such an incredible venue, with stunning architecture along with a presence and sense of scale that is really unique to Sunderland. Operating alongside some of the best food and drinks providers in the region, such as Si King, was an opportunity we simply couldn’t pass up.

“The unique vision of quality and speciality presented by Rick Marsden, who is MD at BDN, was incredibly appealing to us and the creative and collaborative working relationship we have developed since has made the entire process of planning and designing the venue an

absolute joy.

“Our vision is to create a modern, forward-thinking, high-quality destination that can truly put Sunderland on the map as a city of culture, cuisine and now drinks. Yem will be a grand, beautiful venue, with a touch of class and a welcoming feel. We want all of our customers to feel at Yem.”

Yem will serve a range of classic and original drinks using local inspiration and ingredients and has plans to partner with another Sheepfolds tenant, Speyside Distillers, to create a unique whisky and gin experience for customers. The venue will also host cocktail masterclasses and tasting events.

Planning permission was granted for the Stables’ transformation in May 2022, paving the way for the existing listed buildings to be transformed into a new, creative destination, for food, drinks, events and entertainment. BDN has been supported with its plans for the building by Sunderland City Council, who have led the charge to regenerate the entire Riverside Sunderland area.

Richard Marsden, managing director of BDN, said: “We want to create a lively, animated space, where our visitors enjoy a unique experience, and that relies on us bringing together amazing occupiers and organisations. Sheepfolds is an exceptional space, and we are determined to present a diverse, exciting offering for all visitors when it opens its doors later this year – one that will raise the bar for Sunderland.”

A new Smartbridge that will provide a pedestrian and cyclist crossing between Sheepfolds and the former Vaux Brewery site will connect sheepfolds to Sunderland city centre.

Councillor Graeme Miller, leader of the council, said: “The quality and diversity of the offer at Sheepfolds Stables really is fantastic and, like everyone in Sunderland, I am looking forward to seeing it open its doors this year, creating a fantastic new venue for residents and visitors.”

For more on BDN’s Sheepfolds Stables development, go to [www.bdnltd.com](http://www.bdnltd.com) or follow Sheepfolds Stables on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.

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# Ten tasty reasons to visit Roker and Seaburn this summer.



Boasting stunning award-winning beaches, picturesque promenades, and a vibrant culinary scene, the twin resorts offer an array of delightful dining and drinking experiences that have left the region's foodies raving.

A programme of regeneration, driven by Sunderland City Council, has delivered a plethora of new options to enjoy, as well as old favourites that have been serving up pleasing plates for years. And events and activities - including The AJ Bell 2023 World Triathlon Championship Series Sunderland on July 29 and 30 - are bringing more vibrancy to the seaside.

Here are ten tasty reasons to visit the city's coast this summer...

Sunderland's coastal resorts, Roker and Seaburn, have fast-established themselves as foodie hotspots over recent years.



## 1. North

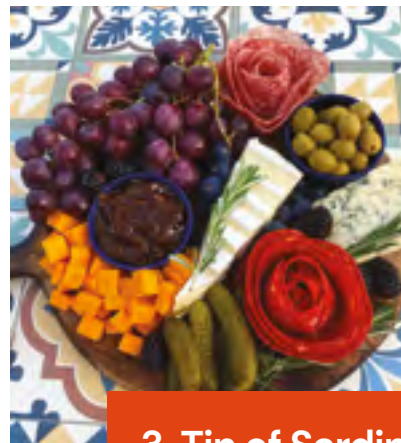
A stunning seafood restaurant with breath-taking views, North has quickly become a firm favourite since opening at the end of 2022.

Serving up fresh, tapas style seasonal dishes, served with a wide range of wine, cocktails, and beer, North is nestled on the promenade of Seaburn Beach, in a building that was once an old storage unit. North's redevelopment was delivered as part of a wider council-led regeneration scheme to make the most of empty seafront buildings.



## 2. Cole Kitchen

A local fan favourite, Cole Kitchen serves up some of the best breakfast 'sando's' around! Using De Giorgio butchers locally sourced meat, in some of the best combinations you could think of, including the 'Bodega', combining De Giorgio smoked streaky bacon, fried egg, cheddar house chilli jam in a brioche roll. Located on the quaint street of St George's Terrace, the café also offers delicious speciality coffees and sweet treats!



## 3. Tin of Sardines

With its unrivalled views of Roker's picturesque beach and pier, this trendy bar offers a huge selection of gins and other delicious drinks.

Offering a brunch and a tapas menu, including Brisket Mozzarella Bon Bons, Satay Belly Pork, Truffle Parmesan Tots, Garlic King Prawns and much more, Tin of Sardines is perfect for all occasions, whether that's a quick pit stop on your dog walk (yes, they're dog friendly), a celebration with friends and family or just a chilled afternoon.





## 4. Six

Six is a luxurious charcuterie-style restaurant and wine bar located right on the beautiful Roker beachfront. The restaurant serves up small plates, sides and boards including cheese boards, seafood boards, The Artisan board and much more.

It is one of a number of stunning eateries that form part of the Pier Point development, that also saw significant improvements to Roker beach's public realm and playpark.



## 5. Seaburn Inn

Open all day, every day, the Seaburn Inn is another fantastic new addition to the seafront. Home to some delicious and hearty pub classics, the options are truly endless, from breakfast, light bites, and Sunday roasts to their seasonal menu.

A perfect place for all occasions and one of a number of new seaside developments that has made Sunderland one of the most vibrant coastlines around.



## 6. Goa Exemplary Indian Cuisine

Home to both traditional Indian classics and original new dishes that apply Eastern flavours with a Western twist, Goa has proven a very popular spot for locals and visitors for many years. Their dedication to sourcing the finest herbs and spices directly from India to create some of the most amazing flavours around has earned them a deserved reputation as one of the best restaurants in the city.

## 7. Fausto

Known for its speciality coffee and picture-perfect location, Fausto looks out towards Roker's award-winning beach and is a popular pit spot for cyclists taking part in the C2C route, which ends in Sunderland.

Not only does it offer exceptional coffee, but Fausto's quiz and pizza nights have also proven to be a popular addition to the buzzing café.

## 8. STACK Seaburn

STACK is a popular destination for all, providing an impressive selection of street food vendors and bars, including Big Fat Indian Kitchen, Acropolis, Bao Down, Downey's Fish & Chips, The Gin Cabinet and many more.

With live entertainment year-round, it's easy to see why this has become a go-to venue for families and friends to get together by day and night.



## 9. Love Lily

Love Lily is home to the most scrumptious sweet treats that (almost) look too good to eat, with a menu that includes traybakes, cupcakes, American-style pancakes, milkshakes, cookies, and coffee. A perfect place for sweet-toothed visitors, this pastel-pink venue also serves up stunning views out, from its prime position at Pier Point.



## 10. Salt House Kitchen

The Salt House Kitchen is a welcoming bar restaurant serving breakfast, lunch and high tea. Using locally sourced and seasonal ingredients, its talented chefs have created unique and tempting menus including comforting homemade classics, a Sunday lunch sharing platter, and the option of sweet or savoury high tea.

They also specialise in coffee, cakes and cocktails, and even have a menu for your dog when enjoying the outdoor seating area with views of the coastline.



# Startup success WOODSmith win North Yorkshire StartUp of the Year

**WOODSmith Construction Group claimed the title of North Yorkshire StartUp of the Year at the 2023 StartUp Awards.**

The award-winning Teesside based group provides the end-to-end delivery of construction projects, specialising in residential, commercial, civil-engineering and public sector developments.





Under the leadership of Gary Wood, Managing Director of WOODSmith Construction Group and COO of The SDDE Smith Group, the company's triumph was attributed to their exceptional team.

Gary Wood commended his award-winning team, emphasising that their success extends beyond completed projects and financial milestones. He believes building strong relationships and making a lasting impact in the industry were key factors contributing to their recognition.

Gratitude was also extended to the company's external suppliers, acknowledging the invaluable role they have played in strengthening WOODSmith's position in the industry.

WOODSmith's victory at the StartUp Awards serves as a testament to their remarkable journey since starting out in 2021. In two years, WOODSmith has forged partnerships with prestigious commercial clients such as British Steel, Anglo American, Middlesbrough Train Station, and ESH Group, solidifying their reputation in the industry.

Growth has also been achieved in the residential sector, with WOODSmith achieving their highest number of projects and revenue to date. It's not just the quantity of projects that has increased, but also their scale, including multi-unit developments and extensive renovations. Standout projects include the renovation of La Baia Hotel in Scarborough. The tired bed and breakfast underwent a complete refurbishment, transforming into a collection of luxurious holiday let apartments.

With a commitment to action and accountability, WOODSmith has also made strides in accreditations as well as awards. They obtained the ISO9001 accreditation and the Elite level of CHAS accreditation in 2022 and again in 2023, demonstrating their dedication to upholding high standards. In addition, they successfully passed the RISQS Audit, meeting the necessary requirements for health, safety, operational excellence, and competence to work in the rail environment.

Finally, WOODSmith success extends into the local area, with a real focus on giving back. Significant

investments have been made in local football initiatives with the aim of enhancing on-field success and promoting the growth of clubs for the benefit of the local community.

Their support extends to various organisations, including Middlesbrough FC Foundation and Redcar Athletic FC. Through these investments, WOODSmith actively contributes to the development and success of local football, fostering a positive impact on the community.

Being recognised as North Yorkshire's StartUp of the Year 2023 underscores WOODSmith's dedication to delivering exceptional construction services, and with a clear vision and a commitment to action, WOODSmith will continue to make a positive impact on the local community and thrive in a competitive industry.

Want to work with WOODSmith? No matter the size or scope of your project, they can work with you to take it from concept to reality.

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**;) )**





## Aspiring individuals take their first leap into Tech with support from Land Digital

Twelve digital pioneers have just completed a 2-week Digital Work Experience programme where they gained hands-on experience working in the tech industry.

They worked with digital partners Land Digital and Sunderland Software City, as part of a Tech Talent Ready programme, to come up with a business idea and go through an entire product development process, from ideation to launch.

The work experience programme provided the group with the opportunity to learn various digital skills and experience working in a tech environment.

At the end of the two weeks, they presented their fully functioning prototype and marketing plan to the team at Land and Sunderland Software City. Joanne, who joined the work experience because she wants to work in the tech industry said, "I've loved the engaging sessions and I'm feeling confident with my prototype. The pacing has been steady and the platforms have helped keep all the progress in one place. I've enjoyed fleshing out my business idea and creating wireframes, and I couldn't have done it without the amazing team's help."

Joanne's idea was to create a wellness platform that focused on prioritising mental well-being, where users would select a flower to grow through completing various challenges.

Scott, Head of Design at Land said "We set the students a challenge in coming up with a business idea, creating a prototype and then crafting a marketing plan to take to market all within 2 weeks. Everyone rose to the occasion and presented some amazing ideas to our judging panel showcasing fundamental skills. We're excited to see what they achieve in the future!"

Sunderland Software City said "Sunderland Software City has been delighted to collaborate with Land Digital on the Tech Talent Ready program. Sponsored by the North of Tyne Combined Authority, this program provides training opportunities for individuals to increase their skills and enter the tech and digital sector. Land has hosted an invaluable 2-week

program, enabling students to gain a comprehensive understanding of their work and create a prototype based on a business concept.

This is an extraordinary work experience opportunity - and we look forward to working with Land Digital again in the future."

A number of students are now eager to continue working to bring their innovative ideas to market. With the guidance and support of their mentors, these students have already made significant progress in developing their products and services, and they are confident that they can achieve even greater success with the continued support of Sunderland Software City.

Land Digital and Sunderland Software City are planning to run further programmes to support ambitious individuals who want to explore a career in the tech industry.



# Raft of promotions at property firm following year of success

**James Thompson, Carl O'Brien, Callum Armstrong and Helen Wall have all recently been promoted to senior roles at Bradley Hall.**

Callum Armstrong joined Bradley Hall's Durham office in 2017 as part of a university placement and was offered an opportunity to re-join the company following his graduation, taking up a graduate surveyor position in 2019. He has since been promoted to the position of senior chartered surveyor, marking it his third promotion in just over three years.

He said: "I am absolutely delighted to be embarking upon the next stage of my career with Bradley Hall.

"My experience and the mentorship I receive consistently enhances my knowledge of the industry and increase my skillset and has given me opportunities which I really don't think I'd have had anywhere else."

With nine offices across the North, Bradley Hall has a team of over 60 experts in their field who work across estate agency, valuation, property management and planning. Helen Wall has now been appointed as director of the Sunderland branch on Fawcett Street.

Helen has over 14 years of experience as a general practice surveyor and RICS Registered Valuer and has spent much of her career focused on providing Red Book Valuation Reports for a range of purposes including secured lending, probate, matrimonial, tax and accountancy purposes.

Her skills will enable the Sunderland branch to expand its services to include land and development, new homes, property management, building surveying and mortgages.

Helen said: "I am delighted to have been made a director of Bradley Hall Sunderland after the progression I have experienced in my short time here.

"The last few years have been a very exciting time for the company with a brand refresh, the announcement of

ambitious growth plans for the next ten years and changes to the board; I am delighted to have been able to be part of the success the firm has achieved and has planned for the coming years."

Since joining Bradley Hall, Helen has been appointed to market several of Sunderland's flagship properties including the former Gilbridge Police Station, now known as The Yard, and the historic Commissioners Building. The firm is also the first of Sunderland BID's corporate partners.

Established over 30 years ago in Newcastle, Bradley Hall prides itself in investing in its staff and promoting from within. Many of its board members began as junior staff including Neil Hart, chief executive, who started as a placement student and Cassie Moyses, who joined the firm over five years ago and is now group marketing director.

James Thompson, 27, joined Bradley Hall after completing a Building Surveying degree at Northumbria University in 2018 and has since secured two promotions, the most recent seeing him take to the role of senior building surveyor with the firm.

"I'm delighted to be starting a new role at Bradley Hall," said James. "The management team have been incredibly supportive ever since I joined, and I can't thank them enough for their support."

"Many of the team started out as trainees, either on placements or through the company's structured training programme which allows and encourages staff to reach their full potential.

"I'm grateful for the support I have received in my career so far. It's a really exciting time to be part of the team due to the growth of the firm and I'm looking forward to getting stuck in to my new role."

Carl O'Brien rounds off the promotions, taking up his new role as head of valuation and professional services last month.

Carl, who oversees a team of valuers, has been with the company since 2015 and is thrilled to be in his new role. Carl said: "I am pleased that my hard work and dedication has been rewarded by the Board of Directors.

"I've been part of a small team that has grown exponentially over the past few years and I look forward to growing the department further with the right recruitment to grow existing workload and to continue to offer our clients a great service.

"We are looking forward to our graduate cohort starting in September which will provide support to help grow the Landlord & Tenant side of the business."

Neil Hart, chief executive of Bradley Hall, said: "As a business, we have always taken great pride in the fact that we invest in our staff, which is why we have a high percentage of senior employees who have started in junior roles.

"It is vital for Northern businesses and organisations to provide opportunities for young people and ambitious professionals. In order to continue growing our local economy, we must retain talent in the North, and will only do so by providing great professional opportunities.

"We are proud of how we continue to buck industry trends by providing opportunities to young and emerging talent and empowering them to grow.

"Our recent promotions are testament to the hard work and effort of our staff and I am pleased that Callum, James, Helen and Carl will take on further responsibilities within the company."

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# News in Brief



## Luxury jewellery specialists expand to Newcastle

Distinguished and internationally renowned luxury jewellery, antique and auction specialists, Lanes & Co has set up a gem of a base in Newcastle city centre.

A prominent player in the industry, Founder and Managing Director Casey Lane is at the helm of the prestigious operation.

With an established international client base and presence in Hatton Garden, London, the heart of the jewellery and diamond merchant industry, the team have established a reputable stake in the lucrative market. Casey and the team bring their exceptional and specialist knowledge to the heart of

Newcastle with the new opening on Shakespeare Street.

Casey Lane, Founder and Managing Director at Lanes & Co said: "I'm absolutely delighted to introduce Lanes & Co to the North East, bringing with me elements I have picked up throughout my work in regions including Hatton Garden in London.

"The response from the North East B2B community in particular has been amazing. Building relationships is a key ethos at Lanes & Co and we are really looking forward to further developing our network and working on a host of exciting collaborations across the region."

## New chief commercial officer at Assetz Capital

SME housebuilder funder Assetz Capital has appointed a new chief commercial officer to help drive its growth strategy to reach £2bn in total lending.

Andrew Fraser brings more than 20 years of experience to the team, funder to SME housebuilders. Assetz Capital recently announced its institutionally funded lending strategy and its move away from retail funding of its lending.

The ten-year old alternative lending platform recently completed its largest deal to date, a £13.3m PBSA scheme in Nottingham. Having provided more than £1.7bn of funding to UK Developers and SMEs, it has the £2bn milestone in its sights and has recently widened its lending appetite to include property backed loans from £1m to £50m.

Andrew Charnley, managing director of Assetz Capital, said:

"With the £2bn milestone now rapidly approaching and our model focusing on larger loans, we have now appointed Andrew Fraser as our chief commercial officer.

He added: "Andrew brings the technical expertise that we need to drive forward and to ensure that Assetz becomes the preferred development lender of choice for both finance brokers, advisors, and developers alike."

Andrew Fraser added: "Now we want to hear directly from regional housebuilders wanting to fund their next site and also experienced property advisers/brokers wanting certainty of delivery of funding for their clients. Our absolute focus is customer delivery with a common-sense approach to lending."





## Experienced businessman takes the helm at leading North East college

Experienced entrepreneur and solicitor Michael Wood Williams has been appointed as the new chair of Gateshead College.

He brings a wealth of business experience to the role, including a successful record of working in the computer software industry, and expertise in business planning, corporate finance, company law and the implementation of software and systems. Over recent years, he has also held a number of non-executive director positions.

Michael, who has been vice-chair at

Gateshead College since 2021, said: "I am delighted to take up this important post. I'll be focused on supporting colleagues so that everyone feels empowered in the boardroom, working together to make sure it feels like the safest space possible to explore ideas so we can continue to challenge ourselves to deliver on the college's ambitious vision."

He succeeds North East business leader, Sarah Stewart OBE DL, who has held numerous board positions in private, public and third sectors. Sarah, a former High Sheriff of Tyne and Wear, and former

CEO of NewcastleGateshead Initiative, had been in post for over three years.

Working with the board and executive team, Sarah oversaw the successful transition Gateshead College has undergone in recent years - which included delivering a financial recovery plan and building a new leadership team, including the recruitment of a chief executive and financial director, along with refreshing the board membership and, most recently securing a strong Ofsted inspection outcome.

## Buy-to-let landlords: file the paperwork on disposals or incur tax fines

Buy-to-let landlords in the North East are being warned that they face hefty tax penalties unless they personally fill in a capital gains tax return within 60 days of selling a property.

The advice to the UK's 2.74 million landlords, from a tax specialist at UK top 10 accountancy firm Azets, comes as record interest rate rises triggered a wave of property disposals from investors cashing in due to increased borrowing costs.

Tax partner Alastair Wilson at Azets in the North East said: "We have seen cases involving a number of buy-to-let landlords who have cashed in because they cannot afford to service higher mortgage debt; the rents aren't covering the increases.

"They were caught off-guard by the Bank of England's consecutive interest rate rises, which have gone up at the fastest pace in a generation and, at 4.5% currently, are now at a level last seen nearly 15 years ago.

"With the monetary war on stubbornly high inflation now the only game in town, and further rate rises a possibility unless the cost of living trends downwards, apprehensive buy-to-let landlords with high loan-to-values on their portfolios are getting out before repossessions become a nightmare reality.

"But what some exiting landlords don't realise is that there is a capital gains tax return they must personally submit to HMRC upon disposal of a letting property.

"That particular gateway form and process is not particularly well known amongst landlords. If you don't submit the form within the 60 days, there is a £100 penalty. If the matter is still outstanding three months after that, it's £300 or 5% of the capital gains tax.

"If you have a string of disposals amounting to £3 million, and the landlords have not submitted the form in time, then that's £150,000 HMRC can collect."







# maker



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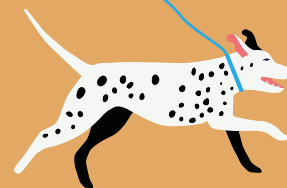
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# A Perfect Match

Local North East business Host & Stay, one of the UK's fastest-growing, family owned, holiday home management businesses, has partnered with Durham Cricket in a multi-year deal.

The SDDE Smith Group and Host & Stay are now the Durham Cricket's Principal Partner and Principal Staycation Partner. This exciting partnership between Host & Stay and Durham Cricket aims to celebrate the appeal of both cricket and staycations, bringing people together to enjoy the excitement of the sport and the pleasures of UK holidays. With this collaboration, Host & Stay hopes to continue its growth and expand its reach to cricket fans and holiday-goers alike, providing them with the best possible experience.

Starting at the beginning of the 2023 season, the partnership will showcase the Host & Stay branding throughout the Seat Unique Riverside ground. The collaboration also includes various matchday branding and activities that will enhance the overall experience for fans.

As a company currently managing over 750 holiday homes, Host & Stay understands the significant role that Durham Cricket plays in the local area. With many of its employees supporting the club, Host & Stay was eager to form a partnership that could make a real impact. Host & Stay is part of The SDDE Smith Group and is committed to pushing boundaries to create better places to live, work, and stay.

Owner and group CEO Dale Smith said: "Durham Cricket is at the heart of the Durham community, and we know as a local business they share the same community-based values as we do. This is core to our partnership, and we look forward to delivering our objectives together to the benefit of our local community with some industry-leading innovations."

Tom Seymour, Durham Cricket Commercial Director, said: "We are delighted to have partnered with Host & Stay as our Principal Staycation Partner. It is fantastic to have partnered with a business that is prominent in the North, and the family themed nature of the business aligns with what we are about at Durham Cricket."

Host & Stay are here to elevate the game!

Visit their website to find your perfect stay or see how they can help your property earn its full potential via their hands free, hassle free holiday home management service: [www.hostandstay.co.uk](http://www.hostandstay.co.uk)







# Fitness entrepreneurs to serve time in The Yard

**A gym business set up by three successful fitness entrepreneurs has agreed to take up space at one of the region's newest office developments.**

The Cell, set up by fitness entrepreneurs Jennie Moyse, Brent Gilpin and Holly McBride Donaldson, has agreed to take space at The Yard at Riverside Sunderland.

The deal would see the gym move into the basement of the former Gilbridge Police Station in the heart of Sunderland city centre, just a stone's throw from City Hall. The Cell will be Jennie and Holly's second business venture together, having taken over the award-winning female-only gym, Club Zest, on Fulwell's Sea Road seven years ago.

It will be the pair's first foray into the city centre, and while it will be inclusive for all genders, it will offer the same fully equipped offering and classes that have seen Club Zest win multiple awards.

Brent Gilpin, joining Jennie and Holly on their latest venture, has already worked with the pair in the past through his successful physio business, Finding Function, which is based within the Club Zest gym. He will be teaching sessions at The Cell and creating a 'Restore' facility offering physio treatments, sports massages and wellness support.

Holly said: "We are so delighted to have agreed terms to open a new studio here at The Yard alongside Brent. When we took over Zest, we did so with the ambition of creating a successful business model that we could go on to expand so to see

this dream beginning to come to life is such a proud moment for us."

The trio had been contemplating the idea of launching a new venture for some time but it wasn't until they were given a tour of The Yard that they decided to make The Cell a reality.

She added: "We immediately knew The Yard was the perfect base for us as it will offer a safe space for people of all genders to come together in a supportive and motivating environment where people feel empowered to reach their health and wellness goals.

"It's also slap bang in the heart of the city centre and just a stone's throw from bus and Metro routes, so it just made perfect sense."

Based on the edge of the ever-transforming Riverside Sunderland site, The Yard is the result of a £3.5million investment by local developer Hanro Group to lovingly restore the Brutalist building.

Laura Lloyd, who is leading development on behalf of Hanro, said: "The Yard is more than just a building - it's a symbol of Sunderland's history and identity.

"We're proud to have invested in its restoration and to have created a modern, vibrant space that will serve as a hub for the community, and we are delighted that The Cell will hopefully be joining us on this

journey. Jennie and Holly are two fantastic entrepreneurs who have built a really successful, community business and we are thrilled that they have chosen to join us at The Yard. We can't wait until they are up and running."

Suites in The Yard are being marketed by leading northern property expert Bradley Hall and are available from 500sq ft - 20,000sq ft and the agency is excited to announce there will be more businesses to follow in The Cell's footsteps over the coming weeks and months.

Helen Wall, Sunderland director at Bradley Hall, said: "The Cell is a fantastic business which I'm sure will really add to the community the Hanro team are hoping to establish at The Yard.

"The fitness studio will be a perfect offering for neighbouring occupiers within Riverside Sunderland and the wider community with memberships open to all. With its central location, excellent transport links, and range of amenities, it really is the perfect location for businesses seeking to grow and thrive."

For more information on The Yard, visit: [www.bradleyhall.co.uk/commercial-properties/yard-keel-square-sunderland-City/](http://www.bradleyhall.co.uk/commercial-properties/yard-keel-square-sunderland-City/)





# Sunderland food and drink festival – the perfect recipe for a fun weekend...

Music, family fun and food from every corner of the globe will be headed to the North East this month as Sunderland Food and Drink Festival returns.

From 23 to 25 June Keel Square, High Street West and Market Square will play host to a galaxy of stalls and pop-ups with cuisines from as far afield as the Caribbean, Europe and Afghanistan, as well as showcasing a range of local producers. And when everyone has had their fill - if that's even possible - there're numerous other treats for visitors to get their teeth into, with a feast of live music and entertainment also on offer.

Across the weekend attendees will be able to enjoy performances from renowned Take That cover group, Re-Take That and former X-Factor star turned Capital Drive Time DJ, Sam Lavery, as well as Ibiza Soul Duo.

The festival has always taken pride in the fact that it's a family friendly event and this year is no exception, with giant games, kids' craft sessions and walkabout characters keeping everyone entertained. Street acts including stilt walking chefs and the ever-popular Dinner Ladies will be making a welcome return, out and about the city streets throughout the duration of the festival.

And at the centre of it all is - not surprisingly - the opportunity to enjoy food from across the globe, as well as from local heroes who operate closer to home.

More than 50 traders have already signed up to take part, bringing a variety of produce, from German bratwurst and Singaporean noodles to Polish kielbasa and Greek gyros.

Spanish favourites will help evoke holiday memories of barmy days on the Costa del Sol, with dishes from Patatas bravas and paella among the tasty offerings. Add into the mix street food from France, India and Afghanistan along with carvery meats, gourmet burgers and vegan loaded fries and there really is something for everyone.

Those with a sweet tooth can tuck into crêpes, bubble waffles, fudge and coconut macaroons, while a fiery range of fresh and dried chillies will be turning up the heat.

And to wash it all down there are a number of drinks stalls, including cocktails from Cocktail Bay and a Polish beer garden will serve a range of ales. The festival will also include a number of arts and crafts stalls, again drawing their inspiration from across the world. Everything from South American handicrafts to colourful lamps from Turkey, from wooden ornaments from North Africa to elegant jewellery will be on sale. The festival has been created by Sunderland BID and Sunderland City Council, and Sharon Appleby, Chief

Executive at Sunderland BID, believes it is going to be the most exciting festival to date.

"We got some amazing stall holders who will be showcasing food from across the world as well as a packed programme of entertainment," she said.

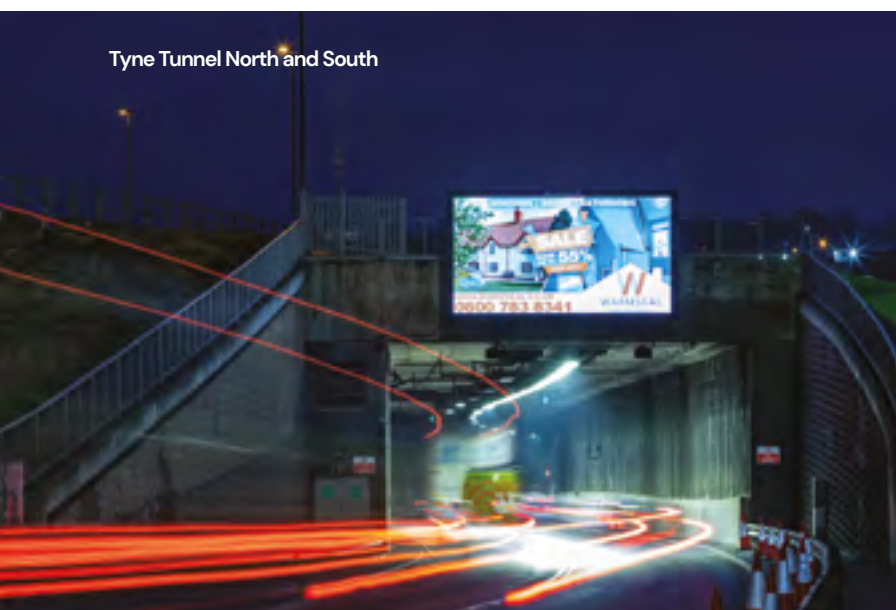
"It's going to be a really family friendly weekend with something for absolutely everyone. Sunderland has a growing and very well-deserved reputation when it comes to food and restaurants" she said. "And this festival will be a riot of new flavours and dishes - with a side dish of superb entertainment," she said.

Sunderland City Council's Cabinet Member for Vibrant City, Councillor John Price, added: "There's plenty to look forward to in Sunderland this summer, and the Food Festival at Keel Square promises to be another highlight. With such a wide variety of traders taking part there will be something for everyone to enjoy and some great musical entertainment to add to the buzzing atmosphere."

For more information about the Food and Drink Festival visit [www.sunderlandfooddrinkfest.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandfooddrinkfest.co.uk)



# The biggest operator of large format digital billboards in the North East



Tyne Tunnel North and South

With a prominent position in the North East, and with smart screens strategically placed on the most used routes in the North East and at leisure sites across the UK, Smart Outdoor is a digital network group with a lot to offer.



Tyne Bridge



Great North Screen

Stack Seaburn

The group, made up of Smart Media, Smart Vision Screens, Smart Fabrication and Smart Communication, provides an end-to-end service for advertising to millions of people per week.

With over 300 screens across the UK, the group provides digital screen space for advertising businesses and products. Seen by over 22million people per week, their advertising space allows businesses to target large groups of people on some of the most visited roads, shopping centres and leisure facilities in the North East and across the UK.

Smart Vision Screens also has a team of designers and installers for those wishing to have custom screens installed at their leisure or sport ground. With specialist installers and maintenance teams, companies wishing to invest in their own digital screen, which are custom made to their space, can do so with ease.

Smart Outdoor is the biggest operator of large format digital billboards in the North East and was founded in 2019. Since then, the firm has built an outstanding trading reputation which saw the business more than double in revenue in the years since.

Smart Outdoor has an impressive headcount of over 30 with specialists in all aspects of digital screen installation, advertising design and partnerships.

The firm has recently expanded its network of screens to some prominent locations outside of the North East including London's Leicester Square, Liverpool's Merseyside, and three prominent locations across Edinburgh including Edinburgh Waverly Station.

As the biggest operator of large format digital billboards in the North East, and now with impressive expansions across the UK, the advertising reach for customers is vast.

Sport venues such as cricket grounds and football stadiums also benefit from their banner screens, allowing sponsors to advertise at live sporting events and music performances to crowds of thousands. Clients can choose from a range of screen or choose to be included on all of its digital billboards for a fully comprehensive brand building campaign to reach across the UK.

For more information on Smart Outdoor, visit [www.smartoutdoor.co.uk](http://www.smartoutdoor.co.uk)



# The Social Co. Academy host TikTok masterclass



## North East based social media academy, The Social Co. Academy, hosted a successful TikTok masterclass and networking event at Acklam Hall in Middlesbrough on June 15th.

With over one billion active users, TikTok has fast become one of the most popular social media platforms world-wide.

But how can it aid your business?

The Social Co. Academy, the educational arm of the successful social media company The Social Co., work with businesses on bespoke courses and content creator programmes to help companies gain a better understanding of just how beneficial social media can be for reaching the right customers.

Their TikTok masterclass at the stunning Acklam Hall in the Tees Valley region proved popular, with a sell-out crowd of keen individuals looking to enhance their companies social media offering.

The aim of the event was to assist guests with navigating TikTok and teaching attendees how to utilise their marketing strategy across TikTok, as well as other platforms.

The Social Co. and its Academy have a strong partnership with the UK branch of TikTok and frequently host events and masterclasses at their London office.

The North East event featured a live Q&A with a TikTok UK account manager who answered questions regarding the popular app, and how businesses can utilise its algorithm and trending sounds to reach the right customer.

Attendees were able to have all their burning questions answered, including when the ideal time for joining a trending sound or video idea is, what tone of voice and level of professionalism to use for different kinds of businesses, and the best ways to increase engagement on the app.

The Social Co. Academy director, Zoe Pouton, also gave a talk on the theory of TikTok, working from the basics and helping attendees to understand how best to make the platform work for businesses and ensuring guests could be self-sufficient in their marketing strategies. Zoe said: "We want to turn assumptions about TikTok on their head. It is not just an app for children, and we are keen to blow these misconceptions out of the water and highlight to businesses how utilising TikTok in a smart way can help

their company maximise its reach and engagement and can help to modernise their social media strategy.

"With over one billion users, it is really an ideal time to be utilising TikTok frequently in order to reach the right demographic for your business. We have seen through our courses just how beneficial it can be to a companies' social media portfolio and we are really keen to help as many people as possible navigate the platform.

"The event was well attended and guests commented how it was a very useful morning that helped them to better understand the second-largest social media platform in the world.

"Acklam Hall is a stunning venue and the ideal place for such a fantastic networking event. The team at Acklam are incredibly helpful and ensured the event ran smoothly."

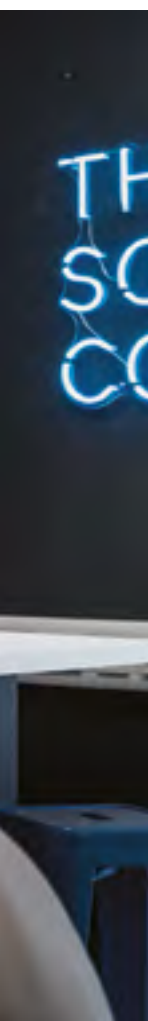
The Social Co. was created in 2017 as a multi disciplinary agency with over 300 clients, managing everything from paid social ads, photography, adverts and weekly social media content.

With in-house photographers, videographers and graphic designers, as well as a team of social media managers, and their increasingly popular Academy, the team at The Social Co. is equipped to deal with all aspects of social media management and work with some of the most popular companies in the North East and across the UK, including Newcastle United and Sunderland AFC, Specsavers, Citroen and Hotel Indigo.

As well as masterclasses, the event included an opportunity to network with other businesses at the event and enjoy a delicious breakfast courtesy of the team at Acklam Hall.

Due to the popularity of the event, The Social Co Academy has received requests for masterclasses in other social platforms and is looking to host a LinkedIn masterclass at Wynyard Hall in July.

To keep up to date with the next events, follow The Social Co. Academy on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.





# Trio of promotions at Mincoffs Solicitors

A prominent North East law firm has increased its number of partners to 13 and welcomed two associate solicitors as it announces its 2023 promotions.

Lydia McCaslin, head of wills, trusts and probate, has been promoted to partner at Newcastle-based Mincoffs Solicitors, with the appointment reinforcing the firm's partner led service offering in every practice area at the firm.

Mincoffs has also welcomed promotions across two other departments, with Max Gilchrist accepting the position of associate solicitor in the corporate team, and Rachel Smith progressing to associate solicitor in the family team.

Lydia worked at a number of Newcastle firms before joining Mincoffs in 2018 and has more than 18 years' of experience working in wills, trusts and probate.

Along with being a full member of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP), she was also one of the first in the country to become a full accredited member of legal organisation, Solicitors for the Elderly. Max joined the firm in 2020 and advises on a wide

range of corporate matters including debt and equity investments, company group reorganisations and sales and acquisitions, while Rachel has more than 18 years' experience in all areas of matrimonial law, with particular expertise in private law children matters.

The moves come during a time of prolonged growth and expansion for the business, which now employs more than 100 staff and is ranked one of the region's top three dealmakers in the Experian 2022 M&A Review.

Earlier this year, the firm announced a raft of appointments across its IT, commercial and private client offering – bringing the number of fee earners in the wills, trust and probate team to six – and has plans to expand further in the coming months.

Senior partner and head of corporate, Paul Hughes, said: "Lydia, Rachel and Max are assets to Mincoffs and we are delighted to see them progress in their careers at the firm.

"The wills, trust and probate team has gone from strength to strength since Lydia took on the role of head of department and she has grown the team substantially over the last few years, so it is fantastic to welcome her to the partnership.

"All three promotions are incredibly well deserved and a testament to the trio's hard work and dedication to providing the highest standard of service for our clients."

Mincoffs Solicitors has provided expert legal services and advice across the North East and beyond for 75 years.

Alongside corporate and commercial services, the firm's offering includes real estate, dispute resolution, employment law, licensing and gaming, residential conveyancing, family law and wills, probate and trusts.

For more information visit [www.mincoffs.co.uk](http://www.mincoffs.co.uk)



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SOLICITORS



# A breakthrough season for Newcastle Falcons' Mateo Carreras.

## Newcastle Falcons have a new fan favourite with winger Mateo Carreras showcasing his excellence throughout the 2022-23 season.

Carreras joined the Gallagher Premiership outfit back in 2020, signing from then Super Rugby side Jaguares. Since, the hot stepper has gone on to make 36 appearances in Falcons colours, returning an impressive 16 tries, with 14 of them coming this campaign.

Lighting up the domestic league with his skill and pace, the Argentine international has enjoyed an incredible year with outstanding performances week in, week out. He finished runner up to Harlequins' Cadan Murley in the top try-scorer charts with 13 to his name and collected an extensive list of deserved personal accolades and awards throughout the season.

The high-flying winger claimed the opening two Premiership Try of the Month awards for September and October. His September effort came against Bristol Bears and his incredible score in October against Northampton Saints saw some excellent individual skill to step his way through the opposition and run in a try from his own half.

The latter would also earn the try-scoring machine the crown for Premiership Rugby's Try of the Season, as well as the club's own award, voted for by supporters. Throughout the year, Carreras was included in three Premiership Rugby

Teams of the Week for rounds five, six and 15. Round 15 was a stand-out fixture not only for Carreras but the club as a whole. The Falcons put on an emphatic display to emerge 45-26 victors over the 2021-22 champions Leicester Tigers, with the winger scoring a hat-trick of tries and being named Gallagher Premiership player of the round.

Carreras' breakthrough season was further acknowledged at the league's end-of-season awards where he was included in the BT Sport Dream Team. Recognition from his peers soon followed with Carreras also earning a clean sweep at the club's own end-of-season awards, taking home the coaches' player, players' player and the fans' try of the season as mentioned before.

Also enjoying Mateo Carreras' meteoric rise throughout the rugby world throughout the 2022-23 campaign was his player sponsor, Ward Hadaway. The longstanding club partner is an independent law firm that has been offering quality legal advisory services across businesses, the public sector and individuals for the last 34 years.

Speaking on Carreras' stellar season, Ward Hadaway's senior partner Colin Hewitt said:

"As proud player sponsors, we are

absolutely thrilled to see Mateo get the recognition he deserves for an outstanding season." Player sponsorship is a unique way to advertise your business and offers great value for companies like Ward Hadaway, who gain exposure to a whole new audience through the celebration of a player's achievements.

With Carreras' rise to stardom and an abundance of tries and personal awards to his name, Ward Hadaway has been thrown into the spotlight, featuring on his player announcements throughout the year. In Carreras' example, his try of the season score went viral across all social media platforms with over 600,000 views on Twitter alone. With the extended eyes on the brand, Ward Hadaway also enjoyed another key benefit of the packages at Newcastle Falcons by attending the club's end-of-season sponsor's event earlier in the month.

The law-firm enjoyed the annual quiz night and spent the evening alongside the main man himself - an experience like no other.

If you are interested in a player sponsorship at Newcastle Falcons, please contact [corporatesales@newcastlefalcons.co.uk](mailto:corporatesales@newcastlefalcons.co.uk).

# BE PART OF THE TEAM



**2023-24  
PLAYER SPONSOR  
OPPORTUNITIES**  
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:  
[CORPERATESALES@NEWCASTLE-FALCONS.CO.UK](mailto:CORPERATESALES@NEWCASTLE-FALCONS.CO.UK)



# Tyne Housing recognised for improving health and wellbeing of workforce

A North East housing and support provider has been recognised for its continued commitment to the health and wellbeing of its workforce.



Tyne Housing has been awarded Continuing Excellence in the Better Health at Work Awards after four years of involvement with the programme, having successfully progressed from the bronze standard to silver and gold.

The organisation has many initiatives already in place to support the health and wellbeing of staff, and during 2022, launched a new scheme to empower employees to take an even more active role in developing and delivering better health projects, with the aim of benefiting more than just a single employee or team.

Project proposals were assessed by the Better Health at Work working group - which is made up of health advocate volunteers and champions from within the organisation - and two projects moved forward.

The first project was a cycling club, which continues to benefit staff and residents by providing access to bikes, safety equipment and training via a local cycling social enterprise.

Tyne has also worked on the renovation of a disused roof space at its main housing office, creating a decked roof garden for staff to enjoy, with furniture created by visitors at Tyne's wood workshop.

With five levels to the award - Bronze, Silver, Gold, Continuing Excellence and Maintaining Excellence - the Better Health at Work Award recognises the efforts of employers in the North East and Cumbria in addressing health issues within the workplace.

Assessors from Better Health at Work commended Tyne for its clear commitment and acknowledgement from senior leaders that staff and organisational wellbeing are key to delivering good quality services and outcomes.

Louise Wilson, Head of Business Development at Tyne, said: "We're delighted to receive the Continuing Excellence Award to recognise the hard work of all our health advocates within Tyne.

"As a housing and support provider, it's important that we take care of our staff and support their health and wellbeing, so they can deliver the best possible service to our residents and people within the community.

"From our new cycling club and outdoor space to our Employee Assistance Programme, which provides all staff with 24/7 confidential access to counselling and advice, we are committed to working with staff to make our workplace healthier and continue being an employer that is receptive to positive change."

To find out more about working at Tyne Housing, visit: [www.tynehousing.org.uk/work-with-us/](http://www.tynehousing.org.uk/work-with-us/)



# Creo Comms continues to grow with new hire

**Sunderland-based creative marketing agency Creo Comms has appointed a new team member to serve its growing client base.**

Ellen Dixon has joined the city centre agency as a Junior Client Partner, to support Creo's expanding roster of clients. The company, which was founded in 2014, delivers comms, creative and content support to a wide range of organisations across the North of England.

Ellen graduated from Newcastle University in 2021 with a BA in Combined Honours Media, Communications, Culture and Film. After graduating, she decided to further her studies at the University by completing her master's degree in International Multimedia Journalism, graduating in December 2022 with a distinction.

She joined Creo Comms as part of a work placement in November 2022 before going on to secure a two-month internship with the agency through Creative Fuse, a collaborative project delivered by all five North East Universities. Throughout the work placement and internship, Ellen quickly became a valuable member of the team and became fully immersed within the fast-paced and exciting environment of working within a creative marketing agency.

Following the completion of the internship, Ellen was offered a full-time

position as a junior client partner to work collaboratively with both the comms and creative team, as the business continues to steadily grow. Speaking about the role, she said: "I am so excited to officially be part of the team. I have learned so much through my placement and internship, working with a wide range of clients in an agency setting and working alongside the Creo team has really been a dream.

"I am so appreciative of the support the team at Creo have given me as a fresh graduate. I found it extremely difficult when I graduated to find a full-time position, especially after Covid, but Louise [Bradford] has opened so many doors for me. It really means so much to see businesses invest in young, local talent.

"I know I will continue to grow my skills and experience here at Creo and I am so excited to see what the future has in store."

Ellen is the second new recruit for Creo Comms in the last six months, adding to their ever-growing team working on projects for clients including Legal & General, Sunderland City Council, Zenzic, National Grid, UK Land Estates, Age UK, and a host of others. The agency has continued to thrive and has seen an increased demand for its services, offering PR, communications support, design,

social media marketing, web design and video production.

"As well as being trusted with working on some pretty key client projects, I've also been learning a whole host of new skills which, prior to joining, I would never have realised were even part of the job," she added.

"From conducting video interviews and editing them to writing briefs for the design for corporate animations and logos and getting to grips with SEO, I've absolutely loved the opportunities put my way so far and am looking forward to learning even more as we continue to grow."

Louise Bradford, managing director of Creo Comms, added: "We're thrilled to welcome Ellen to the team, it's really lovely to have another member on board.

"She really impressed us during her time on placement with Creo, fitting in brilliantly with the team and bringing such enthusiasm to the role. She is a real talent and we're excited to support her to grow her skills as a permanent part of the team."

To find out more about Creo Comms and the services it offers, visit [www.creocomms.co.uk](http://www.creocomms.co.uk)





# UNW triumphs at national tax awards

North East independent chartered accountancy and business advisory firm UNW is celebrating after its Employment Taxes Team was named 'Best Specialist Team in a Law or Accounting Firm' at the national Tolley's Taxation Awards 2023.

Considered a marker of excellence in the UK tax profession, the annual Tolley's Taxation Awards recognise the outstanding achievements of individuals and firms across the industry. Award categories at this year's highly prestigious ceremony, which was held on Thursday the 18th of May at the Royal Lancaster London, covered a broad spectrum of the profession, with prizes on offer to professional practices of all sizes, specialist firms, and those working in-house or in the public sector.

Newcastle-based UNW fought off strong competition from other specialist teams from firms throughout the UK to take home the trophy in what was a highly contested category. The judging panel commented that UNW's submission clearly demonstrated how the regional firm 'is operating at the highest level and attracting a client base which would be the envy of many larger firms.'

Forming part of the firm's wider tax offering, UNW's specialist Employment Taxes Team delivers comprehensive advice and support on all aspects of

employment tax, from both a compliance and advisory perspective. Operating primarily out of its office base in Newcastle upon Tyne city centre, but with strong networks across the Midlands and the South West, the team guides its clients through a range of matters including salary sacrifice and employee benefits and expenses, termination pay, employment status, share options as well as overseas and expatriate advice.

The team is led by Lee Muter, the only employment taxes partner based in the North East and a former 'Big 4' Human Capital Director. Working alongside Lee is Paul Tucker, the current Vice-Chair of the CIOT Employment Tax subcommittee, David Paul, a former 'Big 4' Associate Partner, and Becky Hood, a First Class Accounting and Finance graduate who is currently enrolled on a ground-breaking employment tax apprenticeship at UNW.

Lee Muter, Employment Taxes Partner at UNW, said: "We were delighted to represent the firm at this national award ceremony and were absolutely thrilled to be announced as winners of the 'best

specialist team' category.

"At UNW, we always set ourselves the highest standards and take great pride in the excellent feedback we regularly receive from clients. For our efforts to also be recognised on a national level by fellow tax professionals really does demonstrate the quality of the team and the expertise they possess. I count myself very fortunate to work alongside Paul, David and Becky who all inspire me to continue to look for ways to provide outstanding service to clients.

"We certainly have no appetite to stand still and have started to extend our reach beyond our traditional North East market. It is our belief that geography should not be a barrier to delivering the very best service to clients, and we now work with several businesses across the UK. It is our ambition to increase this number further, which in turn will enable us to open more opportunities to our existing people and continue to grow the team."





# RIBA Award Success for Building Design Northern

Northern architecture and engineering firm, Building Design Northern, are celebrating double success at the 2023 RIBA North East Awards.

Building Design Northern (BDN) scooped up two prestigious accolades for designing a bespoke extension to a listed Georgian property in County Durham, with David Hunt, BDN's Director of Conservation and Design, awarded the Project Architect of the Year award, for his delivery of the project.

With offices in both Sunderland and Ulverston, Building Design Northern offers architecture, structural engineering and civil engineering services to clients across the UK. The extension project in Gilesgate, which won the RIBA North East Regional Award, consisted of remodelling the existing dwelling and the creation of an open plan, age-appropriate, dementia-friendly extension and detached workshop. Situated within the Durham City Conservation Area, the designs to the grade II listed property reinstate lost views of the Georgian host elevation previously hidden by low-quality 20th century extensions.

Reflecting the client's own experience caring for elderly parents, the project was designed to adapt to later life, with living spaces capable of adaptation into bedroom and carer accommodation.

The prestigious annual ceremony, led by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), celebrates projects for their regional importance as a piece of architecture. The judges celebrated the clarity, originality and elegance of the project, with the highly sustainable design representing a great example of how to extend listed buildings sensitively yet confidently.

David Hunt, Director of Conservation and Design at BDN, and the award-winning project architect for Gilesgate said, "It is an honour to receive a RIBA North East Regional Award for my services to our Gilesgate project.

"The ceremony celebrated the excellence of architecture across our region and it is an honour and a privilege to have been recognised against an array of high-quality projects and talented architects. I'd like to extend my thanks to all that were involved in this project, for their hard-work and collaboration, which resulted in an exceptional outcome for our clients.

"The design consists of two simple pitched roof forms, which are orientated to reflect the historic burgage plot

arrangement at the rear of the site. The two buildings are clad in weathered zinc and sit quietly beneath a mature beech and oak - these trees being key design influences: providing shade, dappled light, and ever changing views and reflections across the large areas of glazing. Large glazed sliding doors and a cantilevered corner opening maximise views and connection to the historic rear garden, and towards Durham Cathedral and beyond.

Commenting on BDN's efforts to fulfil their specific client brief, the owners of the County Durham dwelling said, "You have created a truly wonderful home, taking an old, dilapidated, yet historic residence, and giving us a comfortable, practical house bathed in spectacular and ever changing vistas and reflections."

BDN's win follows a period of rapid growth for the Northern firm, growing from 14 to 26 employees in just 18 months, establishing themselves as one of the region's most ambitious and dynamic professional services businesses.

To find out more about BDN, visit [www.bdnltd.com](http://www.bdnltd.com)

# Tees Valley – PR and promises or an area of transformation?



## Bradley Hall chief executive Neil Hart dives into the data on Tees Valley's transforming built environment.

There's been much news from Tees Valley in the last year, largely in support of the huge ambitions from the Combined Authority, including plans to create 25,000 jobs and add £2.8bn to the economy by 2026, with over £1.7bn of private sector investment made in 2022.

We've seen and supported Sunderland City Council and its transformation project, and it seems as though Tees Valley is certainly following suit. But does the data back up all of the PR and promises? We recently dove into data and analysis produced by CoStar - the leading international independent commercial property information platform- to see if progress was really being made in the area.

A range of major infrastructure projects are taking place; including Teesworks - the UK's largest and most connected industrial zone and the heart of the Teesside Freeport, all indicate that there is a long-term dedication to transforming Tees Valley. Thanks to its central location and improving transport infrastructure, Tees Valley offers an opportunity for its occupiers to effectively service clients across the UK.

Amazon, Venator, Sabic UK and Mammoet are among the market's largest industrial occupiers. Huge new facilities of around 1 million sq ft are also set to be built for South Korean offshore wind turbine manufacturer SeAH Wind (1.1 million sq ft) and lithium refinery Green





Lithium. Tees Advanced Manufacturing Park (TeesAMP) is perhaps the most noteworthy recent multi-tenant project. All but one of the 15 units in the 180,000 sq ft first phase were occupied in early 2023.

Amazon's expansion provided a flagship project, which no doubt will act as a catalyst to attract surrounding occupiers. The online giant's third fulfilment centre will open soon, taking its Tees Valley and Durham distribution footprint above 6 million sq ft. Plans for a fourth regional hub at Teesside International Airport are on hold, however, following the firm's decision to scale back its expansion. The e-commerce giant has been drawn to the area by its road and port connections as well as comparatively affordable rents, labour, and government incentives.

Vacancies in Stockton-on-Tees, Hartlepool and Darlington remain low at 0.8%, while rents have grown between 12%- 15% in each town over the past 12 months, easily exceeding the 6.6% and 5.5% average annual change over the past decade.

With multiple towns in the Tees Valley area, retail is a vital lifeline for residents and visitors. With rent prices for retail spaces falling by around 2.6% a year across the region and market pricing at around £114 per sq ft, the Tees Valley area is an affordable place to invest in shops along the towns' high streets and out of town retail parks.

Our recent report found that office vacancies in Tees Valley are trending broadly in line with the national average, with a relative lack of speculative development helping to offset subdued occupier demand. Local authorities have set out to encourage inward investment through funding new developments and signing head leases on building to remove leasing risk for private developers. Darlington in particular looks set to benefit from its successful bid to host the HM Treasury's Northern Economic Campus.

Stockton-on-Tees has over 3.2 million sq ft of office space, the largest submarket in the region. Middlesbrough, Darlington and Redcar & Cleveland all have over one million sq ft of office space, providing a variety of workspaces for new businesses to move into within thriving business areas.

There is about 110,000sq ft also underway in Stockton-on-Tees, the most space under construction in more than a decade. This represents a continuation of new development in the submarket, which has already seen 42,000sq ft delivered over the past three years.

Tees Valley's main economic drivers include advanced manufacturing, offshore oil and gas and petrochemicals. It is also a significant multimodal logistics hub with access to

major ports, rail freight terminals and the A1 (M), providing direct access to both Edinburgh and London. These economic drivers support the industrial property market, and activity within these industries has impacted demand for such space across the area.

While there is limited public data available for licensed and leisure transactions across the Tees Valley, the growth of the economy and in particular the increase in housebuilding, as well as new office and industrial developments, will encourage further investment into this particular sector moving forward. Our own experience has shown that there is certainly heightened interest in Tees Valley's hospitality sector, and we are confident we will see new venues take shape in the near future.

Of course, all of the changes to the built environment, infrastructure changes and making Tees Valley a better place to create jobs will have a positive impact on the housing market. We've already seen areas such as Wynyard rise in popularity for those looking for modern and luxury homes. Larger housebuilding firms as well as local housebuilders have begun building or announced plans to build in the immediate future, including; Duchy Homes, Taylor Wimpey, Bellway, Port Homes, Persimmon, Charles Church, Robertson Homes, Barratt Homes and Miller Homes to name a few.

Bradley Hall is one of the businesses which are now focussing on the Tees Valley market. After over 30 years of operating a range of commercial and residential property services from eight offices across Newcastle, Northumberland and Durham and servicing the North from various branches, we made the strategic decision to launch a Tees Valley office in 2021 as part of our northern growth plans.

Our over-arching mission as a business is to work with organisations in creating a better place to live, work and play. It's clear that Tees Valley has the same ambition, which is why we chose to set up a base in the area, working with a variety of businesses, developers, and the local authority teams to improve the built environment with the aim of helping attract businesses to the area and market homes for local people.

There's no arguing that Tees Valley is steadily and significantly moving forward in its transformation. The numbers prove it too, its industrial sector is performing, its travel infrastructure is seeing investment, new high-quality homes are being built and good jobs are being created.

For your copy of Bradley Hall's Tees Valley Commercial Property Review please join the mailing list [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/bfxmbhw](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/bfxmbhw)







# Kirtley Co.'s Mackie's Corner welcomes new creative tenant

Kirtley Co., owners and landlords of the historic Mackie's Corner in Sunderland has announced its latest exciting tenant.



Kirtley Co., which has recently renovated two of the three upper floors of the building into workspaces, has welcomed beauty company Skullen Commune. In an expansion of their current locations, Skullen have opted to take up space at Mackie's Corner in the heart of Sunderland's rapidly developing city centre.

Once Sunderland's iconic hat shop, Mackie's Corner is now home to businesses including cafes, men's outfitters, delis and florists. It is a recognisable symbol in Sunderland's centre and is often used a meeting spot for visitors shopping or eating in the city.

Skullen Commune is currently based on Newcastle's Quayside, and

this expansion will see them travel to Wearside to provide nail art, an aesthetics clinic, piercings, workshops and tarot readings to customers from Sunderland and beyond.

Opening in the city centre location from July, Skullen Commune will incorporate their ethos of inclusivity and diversity into their newest salon.

Nicole Gutierrez-Lock, founder of Skullen Commune, explained the company's origins: "Starting out in 2003 as a single desk operation in our spare room in Heaton, Newcastle, Skullen is now about so much more than just nail art. From our Quayside studio we pierce, tattoo and apply tooth gems. We offer aesthetics, read tarot and retail our own



range of gel supplies. We train, nurture and incubate the next generation of nail artists.

"Before anything else we're a safe space for women. We believe we play an essential role in helping women reclaim their right to safety and security & to live their lives as they see fit. We empower & are empowered by our clients regardless of age or gender.

"We support young women, working women & young mothers & we have been proud to bring together such an incredibly diverse client base from across the North East."

Working with local colleges, Skullen has helped to shape nail art education programmes and ensure they are fit for the ever-changing market.

Delivering in-house workshops to the next generation of nail talent is a focal point of Skullen's business and they hope to establish similar links with education providers in Sunderland.

Nicole commented: "We are very keen to play an active role in the local community & ensure that Skullen becomes a positive development within the city.

"There are a number of established independent nail artists working in Newcastle who learned their craft at Skullen and we are determined to bring the same to Sunderland. Offering people opportunities to establish their own business with our guidance and support is a big part of our philosophy and we look

forward to seeing what we can achieve with the people of Sunderland."

Kirtley Co. is led by sisters Alex and Toni Kirtley, who resonated with Skullen's mission and brand identity.

Alex Kirtley, managing director, said: "We are thrilled to welcome such an inclusive and positive company to Mackie's Corner.

"Sunderland is a vibrant city and we are proud to deliver workspaces that are accessible and welcoming for everyone."

Speaking on their decision to expand to Sunderland, Nicole said: "For some time Skullen has been keen to expand within the North East with our neighbouring city of Sunderland being the obvious next step but the right property was never available until we found the incredible new development of Mackie's Corner.

"The opportunity to be a part of a significant regeneration of such a beautiful historic building was one that we didn't want to pass up. Since the Vaux site has been unlocked the city has taken a huge leap forward and we have enjoyed witnessing from afar the improvements to Roker and Seaburn, the renewal of Sunnyside and Sheepfolds and the stunning plans taking shape along the banks of the Wear. The timing of this new development couldn't be better and as an organisation we are thrilled to be involved in the ongoing renaissance of the city and wider area.

"Our confidence in the development at Mackie's Corner has been significantly bolstered by the team at Kirtley Co. who have been incredibly accommodating and supportive throughout the process.

"Alex in particular deserves special praise for her commitment to the project & it is clear that this isn't a simple development but an investment in the city and its inhabitants which is really encouraging and a big reason for our decision to work with Kirtley Co."

The upper floor workspaces at the historic Mackie's Corner have been renovated to a high standard and are now available to lease.

Alex said: "We are delighted to welcome Skullen Commune to The Collective- 17 individually designed workspaces based in the upper levels of Mackie's Corner.

"To be attracting established businesses like this from Newcastle shows just how much Sunderland is changing. There is nothing like Skullen Commune in the city and we can't wait to see the partnerships unfold & help upskill young nail artists from July.

"Sunderland City Council's Business Investment team are very proactive in attracting new businesses and we are pleased to offer the spaces in such an iconic building in Sunderland's history."

With spaces from 90sqft to 6000sqft available to rent, contact [info@kirtleyco.uk](mailto:info@kirtleyco.uk) for more information.



# Networking means business!

Lowes Financial Management hosted their regular “Long Term Views” business dining event at the contemporary art gallery, the Biscuit Factory.

The private dining event was a unique opportunity for North East professionals to listen to Gareth Harrison, Bank of England’s deputy agent for the North East.

Gareth is known as the ‘eyes and ears’ of the Bank of England in the region and he provided a thought provoking and interesting commentary on headline topics and invited discussion around the key areas being discussed- making for a lively discussion!







## Hotel for sale

# Coquetvale, Station Road, Rothbury, Morpeth

## Freehold offers invited

- 14 bedroom Victorian hotel
- Bar, restaurant and 2 function rooms
- Garden terrace with spectacular views
- Car parking on site
- Well presented and maintained
- Popular, Northumberland town location



Alnwick

01665 605 605

[alnwick@bradleyhall.co.uk](mailto:alnwick@bradleyhall.co.uk)

## Modern industrial style office space with communal facilities

# Unit 25 The Pantry, Bakers Yard, Gosforth, Newcastle

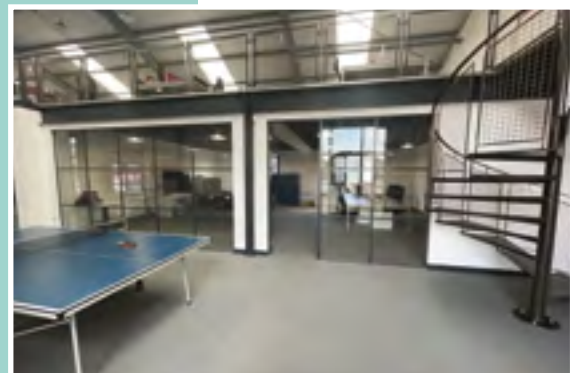
## Annual rent of £15,000

- Total size of 71.3m<sup>2</sup> (767ft<sup>2</sup>)
- Well presented internally and externally
- Car parking available

Newcastle

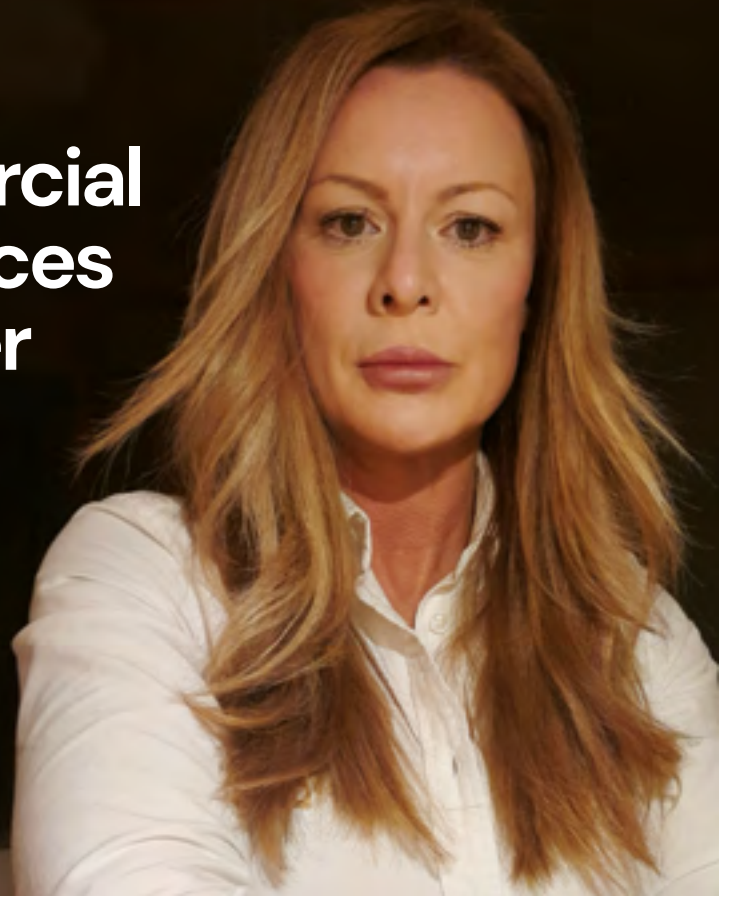
0191 232 8080

[newcastle@bradleyhall.co.uk](mailto:newcastle@bradleyhall.co.uk)



# Belvedere Commercial & Residential Services celebrates turnover and staff growth

Belvedere Commercial & Residential Services is celebrating a 125% increase in turnover and creating 13 new permanent roles following a year of significant contract wins.



The firm has also launched a new gardening service, welcoming Regents Plaza as a gardening client.

The firm, which was established in 2020 by Katie Owens, is an independent commercial cleaning company covering commercial, industrial and domestic cleaning, boasting some of the region's leading businesses as clients. Katie said: "Since launching we've seen a significant and heightened demand for our services across a range of sectors, working with an array of the region's leading businesses, as well as taking on projects on a national and even international scale.

"The launch of our gardening services arm was a natural next step for us. Our clients need an efficient service which provides an all-round solution. Now we are able to maintain both the internal and external areas, providing the same personable and high-quality service across multiple projects.

"The growth of the business has created 28 permanent and 25 flexible jobs and I am incredibly proud of the team which we have grown. Each of our team members are dedicated and professional, delivering a high-quality service which our clients have been delighted with. We have found that most companies currently have a cleaning contract in place but are not satisfied with the standard of service currently being delivered. At Belvedere, we pride ourselves on delivering excellence and a far superior service to anything currently on the market.

"We understand that we are not

the cheapest cleaning contractor on the market, and nor do we want to be. We are however the best cleaning contractor on market. We take cleaning very seriously and have a proven track record of delivering excellence. We have discovered that most clients aren't looking for cheap, what they're looking for is value for money, and a service provider that works with them, for them and understands their individual bespoke requirements.

"All of our team are CRB checked and fully qualified in infection control and we provide all material which are of the highest standard. The company has the manpower, plant, tools, equipment and cleaning consumables required to be able to deliver a top-quality job of the highest standards & specification, along with all the risk assessments, method statements and associated insurance policies to be HS&E compliant.

"Our staff are all very presentable, well trained, conscientious, well mannered, well-spoken and are also most importantly well paid. We pay our staff way above the minimum wage as I expect a lot more than the minimum out of them. If you pay the minimum, like sadly so many cleaning companies do, then you can only expect the minimum, and that no way near good enough for Belvedere or any of my clients."

Katie and the team have also been appointed by AMB Paul Pringle & the Team at PCN LTD, Brett Oil, Overbury Group, Bowmer & Kirkland, Collection Group, BoConcept York, Burnard

Accountants, Harrison Construction, Cussins Homes, Fat Hippo Restaurants, Waterworks Bathrooms, Callerton Kitchens & Interiors, N1 Golf & Maldec Property, Aston Martin Silverlink, Fentimans, AMB Packaging, G K C Interiors, Your Move LTD, Buxton Group, Esh Group and Bradley Hall Chartered Surveyors. Belvedere's services include bespoke cleaning, after build initial clean and a deep clean and sparkle service prior to the keys being handed over to the client, new owners or tenants. Along with ongoing routine maintenance cleaning of communal areas, industrial compounds, factories, offices and more, the firm has also been appointed to support various religious centres including community centres, schools and churches.

Grant Watson, Contracts Manager at Esh Group said: "Belvedere successfully completed the builders and sparkle clean works on our recently completed Seaburn Inn project. The programme was tight but standards did not slip and Katie and her team completed their works to a very high standard, going the extra mile to ensure they met our programme. I would highly recommend Belvedere for future works."

For more information please don't hesitate to call Katie on 07947453398 or email [info@belvedereservices.co.uk](mailto:info@belvedereservices.co.uk) if you would like to discuss your requirements in more detail, we are here to help and provide you with the best service and a cleaning solution & schedule that works best for your business and operational requirements.

# Sunderland HQ'd firm pushing for North West expansion

Award-winning architects and engineers have made an ambitious step towards expansion, as visionary plans are unveiled to breathe new life into the former Ulverston Police Station and Courthouse.

Sunderland and Ulverston based architectural and engineering practice Building Design Northern (BDN) has exchanged contracts on the former constabulary buildings and submitted a planning application with the intention of creating a brand-new multi use destination for Ulverston.

Computer generated images of the transformed space show how the firm will transform the damaged, disused buildings into a mixed-use venue of commercial space, offices, boutique serviced accommodation and new homes, with a tasteful and sympathetic programme of restoration.

If the plans are approved, BDN will relocate its Ulverston office to the Police Station, with a communal kitchen, meeting room and desk space proposed for the expanding practice. BDN established an Ulverston office in 2018 and has recently embarked on ambitious North West growth plans, appointing two new local employees.

BDN, an award-winning architectural, civil and structural engineering firm, are now one of the region's most ambitious and dynamic professional services businesses. The company is the driving force behind Sheepfolds' Stables, a £2million project which will see the Grade II listed building - which stands in the shadow of Sunderland AFC's Stadium of Light - converted into a mixed-use leisure venue comprising retail, food and drink and entertainment space. The Police Station will be the third heritage building the company has taken on, having purchased and transformed the Old Simpson Street School, making the prominent Sunderland building its North East head office. The £1m renovation project reimagined the 1800s, Grade II listed, former Victorian school building into a sustainably stylish working environment and eight luxury loft apartments.

The former Police Station will house commercial office space, with jail cells reimagined as boutique accommodation. The superintendent's quarters - the west wing - which was demolished prior to BDN's acquisition of the site, will house further serviced accommodation, each apartment with its own en-suite and kitchenette space.



The Courthouse will incorporate a new restaurant pavilion, with a surrounding courtyard of former garages converted into independent commercial space that is expected to attract a range of retail businesses.

Three one and two-bedroom dwellings are also detailed in plans, replacing former MOT garages, and they will be centred around a communal amenity space with a large central green space, designed to foster a sense of community among residents.

The buildings fell out of use since it was vacated by the police in 2015, and despite being privately sold, has remained unoccupied since.

Managing Director of BDN, Richard Marsden, said, "BDN's ethos is to design stunning spaces to create incredible opportunities for those around us, making a mark on the North of England for generations to come. We are excited to embark on a new chapter, investing in our secondary base in Ulverston, breathing life into a building with deep heritage."

BDN's visionary plans for the development look to provide a unique offering of high-quality accommodation and visitor experiences to Ulverston, at a site that has been neglected since

its closure. Historic buildings will be restored with modern proposals, while being respectful to their historic context, through preserving original features of the former constabulary buildings.

Director of architecture and head of BDN's Ulverston office, Joe Warner, said, "As a local business, we are proud to be playing a part in the transformation of a historic Ulverston landmark and investing back into the area we care deeply about.

"Our investment in the former Police Station demonstrates our commitment to deliver fantastic developments which will bring more people into the area, as our business establishes a larger base in Ulverston.

"We can't wait to share more, if our plans to transform the buildings are granted approval."

The plans are expected to go before Westmorland and Furness Council's planning committee in summer 2023, and if permission is granted, work will quickly start on the redevelopment of the site.

Businesses interested in taking space within the development should contact BDN, at [hello@bdnltd.com](mailto:hello@bdnltd.com) or by calling 0191 535 6189.





**Retail/ Leisure Space to let**

# East Boldon Station Approach, Tyne and Wear, NE36

**Rent on application**

- Situated in an affluent area of East Boldon
- Close proximity to established leisure circuit
- Suitable for food and retail operators
- Exciting new development
- Next to East Boldon Metro Station
- Various unit sizes available

**Sunderland**

**0191 563 4242**

**sunderland@bradleyhall.co.uk**

**Office for sale or to let**

# Sandy View Buildings, Front Street, Burnopfield, NE16 6PU

**Freehold £325,000**

- Office Net Internal Area of 144.54 m<sup>2</sup> (1,555 ft<sup>2</sup>)
- 4 x Garages Net Internal Area 48.60 m<sup>2</sup> (523 ft<sup>2</sup>)
- 12 Car parking spaces
- Would suit a variety of uses/potential development
- Available Immediately



**Durham**

**0191 383 9999**

**durham@bradleyhall.co.uk**



# WHO WE ARE

We're a commercial landlord, property developer, business owner and above all a family run business with proud roots in the North East of England.

- Mackie's Corner
- Middlesbrough
- Peterlee
- Sunderland
- Leechmere
- Deptford
- Southwick











# Portland Easter Reception 2023

Gateshead based Civil & Structural engineering consultancy Portland Consulting Engineers (Portland) recently celebrated its 19th year of trading with their annual landmark Easter Reception celebration.



A record number of guests attended this years' Easter Reception - including clients, colleagues, project partners and Portland staff. All catching up over cocktails and delicious canapes in Newcastle's atmospheric Alchemist creative cocktail bar and restaurant.

Held every year on Maundy Thursday, Portland's Easter Reception is now a prominent date in the diary for the regions construction industry social calendar, one to which invitations are highly sought. The event provides a fantastic opportunity for Portland to express their gratitude to all involved for their continued support throughout the year, alongside being the very best way to enter the long Easter weekend!

Lee Barr, managing director commented, "A great time was had by all, this is undoubtedly down to the wonderful team that we have and the really great clients and project partners that we work with".

For more information on Portland Consulting Engineers, visit [www.portlandconsulting.co.uk](http://www.portlandconsulting.co.uk) or follow on Instagram @portlandconsult or on LinkedIn.

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**The value of investments can fall and you may get back less than you invested.**

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# Rehearse your future: How much is enough?

## Running your own business can be an all encompassing endeavour.

**You might occasionally think about a potential 'exit' but not know what this really looks like for you and your family.**

*What about your personal aspirations? Why are you doing what you're doing? What end does it serve?*

For all but the most extreme serial entrepreneur, there will likely be an end goal; a point at which you can get away from the coal face and do the things that truly motivate and excite you.

Running a business is an exhilarating and often exhausting undertaking. You influence not only your own destiny, but that of your staff too, as well as possibly the sector you operate within. It's a heady cocktail, but we find that many business owners would like to get to a point where, if they're working at all, they're doing so out of choice rather than necessity.

But how do you know when you've reached that point? How do you know when you've made enough to live your dream life? More importantly, what are you not doing by staying involved in the business? What are you missing out on while you're still young enough to enjoy it? If you've unwittingly already reached the point where you can live your dream life, why are you ploughing on?

We understand that taking your foot off the gas may not come naturally; indeed, to get to where you are today, you'll have taken risks and no doubt have suffered sleepless nights.

Your self-reliance, determination and resilience are likely what have led to your success. Thinking about exiting your business is understandably a difficult topic.

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2. how much that dream life costs,
3. when you can live that dream life, and
4. whether that dream life is already within your grasp.  
If not, the strategy needed to get you there.

When we know these things, we can help give you clarity on when you can step away from the business. In conjunction with your other professional advisers, we can then help implement an exit strategy that maximises your chances of living life on your terms.

We've worked with thousands of business owners like you, who have benefitted from the clarity we can bring to the conundrum of "how much is enough?" We do so without bamboozling you with jargon and, often, we end up showing you that your 'magic number' is smaller than you think it needs to be.

If you would like to speak to someone about financial planning or investments, or to arrange an initial meeting with one of our advisers from RBC Brewin Dolphin, please call Tom Solly on 0191 279 7576 or contact us via the website: [www.brewin.co.uk/newcastle](http://www.brewin.co.uk/newcastle)

The value of investments, and any income from them, can fall and you may get back less than you invested.

Wayne Spriggs Interview | Portfolio North

# How Wayne Spriggs took Lusso from a £10k overdraft to a multi-million-pound business



Wayne Spriggs is the CEO and founder of Lusso, one of the UK's fastest-growing and leading consumer businesses. The North East-born entrepreneur has taken his business from a £10k overdraft to a multi-million-pound international company in just eight years of trading.

The Teesside-born businessman opened his doors into the luxury world of design in 2014, moving fast from a property developer to an entrepreneur. Now, Wayne Spriggs heads up the design as well as being CEO and founder, remaining heavily involved in all aspects of his family-owned business.

### How and why was Lusso founded?

In 2014, I founded Lusso, the leading manufacturer of luxury bathroom products. I was working as a property developer at the time and I continually struggled to source luxurious products without an astronomical price tag. This gap in the market gave me the opportunity to draw inspiration for my own brand, then known as Milano Stone in its early stages, now known as Lusso. I found my niche and travelled all over the world visiting multiple trade shows, learning the trade and most importantly building relationships. All of this helped me to build my vision and create Lusso, which has seen phenomenal success in just eight years.

### How did you first get involved in product design?

As a property developer for over two decades, it was challenging to source luxury bathroom ranges without compromising on quality, settling for basic designs, or completely blowing the budget. I knew exactly what I was looking for in terms of style and finish, so after a lot of planning and research, I bridged the market gap and created Lusso. Designing and developing my first line of freestanding baths and basins was a steep learning curve, but with the support of a fantastic team, I'm incredibly proud of the results and it's allowed me to grow the company into what it is today.

### What have been the key milestones of your growth?

After building a strong reputation and extensive client base, we've been able to expand the business into all areas of homeware, which is one of the greatest milestones for the business so far. In keeping with my long term vision to become the UK's leading and only single-brand, luxury department store, this expansion began in 2021 and has continued with the launch of Lusso tiles, hardware and side tables.

Another key achievement includes securing a three-storey office space for the Lusso team, which provides a luxury working environment in-keeping with our signature aesthetic.

I wanted the HQ to be an enjoyable workspace for the team, which is why Lusso House includes a fully licensed bar, spacious hotdesking facilities, comfortable breakout areas, an espresso station, and a fully equipped gym.

### Luxury brands are being created all the time. What's your secret to really achieving longevity in a very competitive market?

Lusso began as a retailer of attainable luxury bathroom products, created to fill the gap in a very competitive market. Our renowned bathroomware, particularly our stone baths, have become core pieces, however I believe that the longevity really comes down to being so dynamic and up to speed with current trends, and never compromising on quality or design.

All of our pieces are designed in-house, and this is one of the main areas that differentiates us from our competitors. I didn't create a brand for the short term, which is why I'm always using data and trends to produce fresh ideas and concepts for new collections and designs.

### It's rare to find luxury design brands retailing exclusively via e-commerce and without a showroom. How have you earned the trust of your customers to do so?

Since the early days of the brand, we've secured a huge number of commercial appointments with high-profile brands and businesses, and our collections are featured in some of the world's most luxurious destinations including Claridges, The Connaught, and the Equinox Hotel in New York. Other recent commercial clients include Tiffany & Co, Facebook, Harrods and LVMH.

This has played a big part in strengthening our reputation, and not only raises brand awareness within the industry, but also enables the customers and clients of high end locations to experience our products firsthand, which then encourages them to purchase from us directly.

### What are the future plans for Lusso?

I never settle for the current stage, I always remain focused on what I can do next. I want to grow the brand to its full potential and become the world's leading single-brand department store, offering everything for the home all under the Lusso brand. I also want to remain a family-run business which is why I've recently turned down major investment offers. The decision comes after two years of exploring private equity options, but after garnering a great deal of interest, I have stepped away from these options. The investment experience has been intense but incredibly rewarding, and it's helped me to hone the business in key areas, however ultimately I'm very confident that we can achieve our ambitious goals as an independent British brand. This hasn't been an easy decision, but it's the right one for Lusso, and for me personally.

I'm completely committed to the brand - I live and breathe it - and from this experience, I can say with certainty that no matter how high the investment offer, I can't imagine walking away from my incredible team and what we've achieved so far. We've turned a start-up business into a global brand that's received over £120 million in sales in just eight years of trading, and we've built a reputation for service and quality that I'm incredibly proud of.



# Portfolio North launches events across the region.

## Tees Valley Property Lunch

Portfolio North's first Business Lunch event was launched with the Tees Valley Property Lunch – which was held at Acklam Hall in Middlesbrough and included a three-course meal from Tomahawk Steakhouse.

The event was attended by 80 businesspeople from across the North East and was sponsored by The SDDE Smith Group, Bradley Hall and Kirtley Co., and focused on the Tees Valley area as a place to invest, live and work.

The speakers were Mayor of Tees Valley Combined Authority Ben Houchen, CEO of Tees Valley based SDDE Smith Group Dale Smith, and Neil Hart, CEO of full-service property firm Bradley Hall.

The speakers discussed their company's recent successes, the future of the Tees Valley area and investment opportunities.



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## Newcastle Business Lunch

Portfolio North's second Business Lunch took place at Jesmond Dene House in Newcastle and was sponsored by The SDDE Smith Group, Bradley Hall and JAM Prints and Marketing.

The sold-out event brought together businesspeople from across Newcastle to network and hear from the speakers which included Peter Bartley from Bradley Hall, Ryan McKnight from The SDDE Smith Group, Jacob Palmer from Gosforth Family Chiropractic and Juliet Sanders from Feeding Families.

The event focused on the forecast of commercial and residential property in Newcastle upon Tyne, current economic issues, and health and well-being.



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# Best Places To Work recognition for The Inn Collection Group

The Inn Collection Group (ICG) is celebrating being officially named as one of the UK's best places to work after the Newcastle-based pubco was named on the 2023 list compiled by The Sunday Times.

Recognising companies that create happier working environments by fostering engagement from their teams, ICG's listing comes following a recent survey of employees where 78% of respondents declared themselves "happy" at work.

ICG's listing comes in the big organisation category and puts them in the company of organisations such as Alzheimer's Society Bella Italia, and Octopus Energy.

With more than 1,000 employees across the group, The Inn Collection Group's mission statement of "making people happy" has been directed internally as it aims to support its people in their personal and professional development.

During the past year, this has seen the establishment of a seven-strong People Team at its central support offices in Benton, who work tirelessly to attract, nurture and support talented individuals across the company. This has resulted in the creation of engaging ways to partner

with local communities, educational groups and establishments and the development of exciting new training programmes, including a recent focus on preventing workplace stress and supporting mental health for managers.

In addition to the support and development offered to colleagues, ICG also offers an attractive benefits package to achieve its enviable total of happy respondents, with discounted food and stays for colleagues, their family and friends among the perks.

Offering their Inn Safe Hands support programme through respected independent provider Hospitality Action allows the group to also support colleagues in their lives away from work too, whatever the challenge being faced.

With 2023 a year of significant growth for the company and its estate across the north of England and North Wales, with 1,000 new hires expected to be made by the end of the year, people director Liz Robertson is eager to build on ICG's entry onto the list.

Robertson said: "We're delighted that our people are enjoying their time with ICG and that we have been officially recognised as a great place to work as a result.

"Supporting our teams is incredibly important for us, be that with our exciting development programmes, our Inn Safe Hands initiative or even just our excellent benefits package.

"Making people happy is what we are about and that extends to our own too.

"As a group, we are steadfast in our belief that hospitality can be an industry in which people can enjoy long, fulfilling and rewarding careers and making the Sunday Time Best Places to Work list underlines our commitment.

"Making sure that our people can progress both within the business and as individuals is incredibly important to us and we are further developing how we can do that.

"Particular areas of focus recently have been a significant investment in our accommodation provision to our live-in





colleagues and in attracting brand-new culinary talent into the company with our new Chef Academy.

"With our headcount set to rise to 2,000 people by the end of this year, we are going to need to develop too so we can continue to make people happy and I am really excited by what we have planned."

One recent programme of enrichment came as part of the Hospitality.Innovation.Tourism.Supply (HITS) Expo, where five of the group's chefs under the age of 24 took part in a competitive cook off to determine the title of Young Chef of the Year.

A member of the kitchen team at Blyth's The Commissioners Quay Inn, Sam Eke wowed a judging panel of professional chefs with a roast lamb rump served with a celeriac puree, red wine jus and chantenay carrots.

Cooked to perfection and elegantly presented following an hour's cooking time the youngster was praised for the flavour of his dish, which The Inn Collection Group customers will get to sample themselves later in the year.

Winning out against four fellow talented gastronomes from Alnwick's The Hog's Head Inn, Durham's The Kingslodge Inn and Sunderland's The Seaburn Inn, Eke will now see his dish grace an upcoming specials menu across ICG's 28 site strong estate.

It is quite the fillip for the budding chef who

began his journey as a kitchen porter aged 16, joined The Commissioners Quay Inn brigade back in September 2020 and was promoted to chef in April of last year.

Reacting to winning in his first-ever competition, Eke said: "It was my first ever competition and once the competition got started, I was OK. The build-up was a bit nerve-wracking, but I had a few dry runs, so I knew what I needed to do.

"I came up with my dish because I knew the meat is quite tender and has a lot of flavour and thought that something sweet would go very well with it. It needed a bit of richness so thought red wine jus and the carrots, it just needed some vegetables! "I'm looking forward to seeing my dish out there across the inns and seeing the other chefs cooking it, I think they are probably going to do it a lot better than me!"

Taking place for the first time in 2023, The Inn Collection Group's Young Chef of the Year competition is part of its ongoing efforts to inspire young talent in its kitchens as it attempts to provide an environment in which they are nurtured.

The HITExpo cook off, which ran as part of the NECTA Hospitality Salon section of the event, was a result of The Inn Collection Group's sponsorship and gave the five finalists an experience beyond their day-to-day cheffing.

It is part of a wider programme to develop new talent by The Inn Collection

Group, who are about to launch a brand-new initiative in conjunction with Chef Benson-Smith Academy, which will train individuals completely new to the industry to be the newest talents to join the company.

Whilst Chef Eke's dish took the overall prize, the standards also delivered by Scott Anderson, Hanna Hope, Chris Prescott and Jack Stewart were incredible high, with ICG's head of food Tom Adlam hailing the efforts of all five finalists.

He said: "All the contestants did themselves proud and they represented The Inn Collection Group fantastically. Every plate of food that we saw today would be appropriate to go on the menu at one of our Inns and they should be extremely satisfied with what they have done. They all hit the brief.

"The competition is all part of a learning process for them, they will get some good, honest feedback from the judges and hopefully, doing something like this will encourage them to put themselves out of their comfort zones and come back to do other competitions moving forward. "This competition was all about showcasing and encouraging young chefs in our business to push themselves to learn. An environment like this is not easy and some of them it was their first competition, and it is just going to help their development as people and as chefs."

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# Lifestyle

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# CleanTok: Inspiring Minimalism in Interior Design

CleanTok, an online community, dedicated to sharing cleaning tips, organising hacks, and minimalistic home makeovers, has gained a massive following, captivating individuals across the UK.

The desire for clean, clutter-free spaces has inspired a new wave of interior design that focuses on simplicity, functionality, and a sense of calm.





Welcome to the world of minimalist homes, where less truly is more. In recent years, a cultural shift has taken place, transforming the way we perceive our living spaces. With the rise of social media platforms like TikTok, the platform where CleanTok originated, we've been invited into more homes than ever before, each seemingly cleaner, tidier, and trendier than the last. Whilst there is some reprieve, with many influencers showing 'real life' with dishes piled up and unmade beds, the reality is that the peaceful, minimalist, immaculately clean aesthetic is still winning the fight for views.

With clean lines, open spaces, and a limited colour palette, minimalist interiors allow the eye to rest and the mind to unwind. For many, a decluttered home promotes mental clarity and a feeling of rejuvenation. Achieving a minimalist aesthetic goes beyond simply removing clutter, it requires careful consideration of every element in the space, from furniture and lighting to colour schemes and textures.

Through their videos, cleaning accounts on TikTok highlight the principles of minimalism. They emphasize the importance of letting go of excess possessions, keeping only what truly sparks joy or serves a practical purpose. Witnessing the before-and-after shots of cluttered spaces transformed into serene, minimalist sanctuaries motivates viewers to reevaluate their own surroundings.

Styled Interior Design, a leading interior design company have seen this trend themselves ramp up in recent times. Their team of skilled designers possesses a keen eye for detail and an intuitive understanding of how to create a sense of balance and harmony within minimalist interiors.

TikTok creators go beyond the surface-level aesthetics by sharing valuable tips and techniques. They teach viewers how to categorize and sort belongings, create functional storage systems, and adopt sustainable practices. By emphasizing the importance of thoughtful consumption and reducing waste, cleaning accounts on TikTok promote a more mindful approach to material possessions.

One of the key appeals of these cleaning accounts is their ability to make minimalism relatable and accessible. They break down the overwhelming task of decluttering into small, manageable steps. Viewers witness the process of sorting through possessions, evaluating their usefulness and emotional attachment, and ultimately deciding what truly brings joy and value to their lives. This gradual approach empowers individuals to embark on their own minimalist journeys, eliminating the fear of letting go and encouraging them to appreciate the beauty of simplicity.

Furthermore, minimalist homes have practical advantages that go beyond aesthetics. The emphasis on simplicity and functionality leads to clever storage solutions and streamlined organisation systems. This mindful curation makes cleaning and maintenance easier and by consciously selecting items that bring joy or serve a functional role, homeowners can reduce waste and live more sustainably.

While minimalism advocates for simplicity, Styled Interior Design are against sacrificing individuality and warmth in your home. Instead they suggest combining minimalism with personal touches; incorporating art, family heirlooms, and meaningful mementos into your interiors. Their approach is about finding the sweet spot where simplicity meets personal style, creating a harmonious balance that reflects the unique personalities of the inhabitants. So whether you've been inspired by CleanTok or simply seeking a more intentional lifestyle, embracing minimalism in your interior design can be a transformative experience. All property images are projects completed by Styled Interior Design.

To start maximising the potential of your property or to find out more about Styled Interior Design's services visit [www.styledinteriors.co.uk](http://www.styledinteriors.co.uk) or contact [info@styledinteriors.co.uk](mailto:info@styledinteriors.co.uk)

# Garath paves the way for Oltco Durham & Sunderland

**Garath Archer, manager of Oltco Durham & Sunderland, works with a specialist team to deliver high quality resin bound gravel driveways, paths and patios.**

Garath is a prominent figure in the North East and works across the region.

Oltco is the UK's leading sustainable resin driveway specialist, renowned for its outstanding installations and excellent customer service.

With its passion for sustainability and innovation, Oltco offers customers the world's first sustainable resin bound driveway solution, 'Recycle Bound'.

'Recycle Bound' is made utilising a mixture of stone, resin and waste plastic already in circulation. Each square metre of a Recycle Bound surface utilises the equivalent of 3,000 plastic straws.

Oltco's premium resin bound blends have not only been thoroughly tried and tested but also come with a 20-year guarantee to ensure that every outside space will continue to look stunning for years to come.

The benefits of Oltco's resin bound gravel blends include Sustainable Urban Drainage System compliance. It is a hard-wearing material with porous properties.

The surface is very low maintenance and will minimise the growth of weeds. Each installation comes with anti-slip surface treatment and is available in a wide range of colour blends to suit every taste.

Recycle Bound and resin bound are available to customers across the region who are looking for a sustainable solution for their outdoor transformation.

Portfolio North spoke to Oltco Durham & Sunderland manager Garath about what he most enjoys about the region and his role.







**What is your favourite part about your Oltco role?**

I love getting to meet new people and feel good about presenting and installing an appealing product like Recycle Bound. I enjoy helping to make our customers happy.

**Some of Oltco's range is named after beaches in Cornwall, where is your favourite beach?**

I'd have to say in Cornwall (sorry), I love Sennen Cove in Cornwall, its right on the south west tip of our island and I like the feeling that I'm sat at the end of the world looking out into 280 degrees of Atlantic Ocean vastness. It keeps it all in perspective.

**What is your favourite colour blend from the Oltco range?**

Personally, I love the soft edged stones of the 'natural range'. I often think less is more with resin bound installations. The gravel is naturally beautiful, I like to let it speak for itself. So I'd choose to keep it simple and go for the beachy vibes of the Sennen, blend, I think that will be the choice for my home.

**Describe yourself in three words?**

Big, comfy and reliable.

**If you were a superhero what would your super power be?**

I would choose speed and as my old school rugby coach used to say, "There's only one thing in this game that there is no answer to and that is pace." What fun!

**What is your party trick or hidden talent?**

I can wiggle my big ears like the BFG.

**What is your greatest achievement?**

Lifelong friendships.

**What is your favourite thing about the North East?**

For me it's my friends and family being close by as I love spending time with my people. The access to quiet hills and beaches are a definite bonus.







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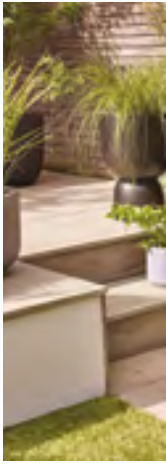




# Dobbies highlights Summer 2023 gardening trends

As the days get longer, gardeners across the country are preparing themselves and their gardens for the warmer seasons ahead.

With plenty of new and emerging plant and gardening trends for 2023, Dobbies' Horticultural Director, Marcus Eyles, has outlined what he expects will be popular in the world of gardening as we approach spring. Marcus advises that good quality and value are expected to be at the forefront of gardeners' minds as the cost of living forces us to take a closer look at our spending. Sustainable gardening also remains of the upmost importance, which is expected to cause an increase in more people growing their own produce.







These gardening trends complement Dobbies' five new outdoor living themes for Spring Summer 2023, which focus on the flexibility and diversity of our outdoor spaces. From Scandi-inspired looks to rustic themes that celebrate biodiversity and encourage you to welcome nature, there's something to suit gardens of all shapes and sizes.

## Coastal Calm

Inspired by the calming tones and textures found by the coast, this nostalgic theme has a nod to Scandi minimalism for a picturesque look. Coastal Calm embraces both traditional and modern styles for a peaceful collection that's reminiscent of soothing shorelines, easily created with a palette of blue, white and neutral pots and accessories. Texture is key and introducing weathered wooden accessories alongside smooth metallic surfaces, such as watering cans and lanterns, will transform your garden space with beach vibes.

Marcus notes that on-trend grasses including Festuca and Pampas fit in with this style, in borders, raised beds as well as in pots. This style is great for those working with small outdoor spaces as Dobbies has a wide selection of grasses available in different sizes. Marcus anticipates more people will be looking for quality in what they buy to get the most out of their products and will be looking for long-lasting ways to improve their garden in 2023.

Top plants to achieve the Coastal Calm look include Mangave, Eucalyptus, and grasses including variegated grass, Phalaris, Festuca and Pampas.

## Tranquil Nature

A stylish French look with Japanese influences and touches, Tranquil Nature is both beautifully balanced and effortlessly chic. This modern theme blends soft flowing shapes with a natural colour palette, enriched by vivid green and purple foliage for a contemporary look that still feels organic. Create a raw, earthy colour palette in the garden utilising stoney neutral tones to build upon with climbing plants and screening shrubs.

Ferns for both indoors and outside fit well with this theme, and after an increase in the sale of indoor and outdoor ferns in 2022, Marcus expects this will continue in 2023. Also fitting with this theme are Acers, Bamboo, grasses as well as Buxus topiary.

## Earth and Soul

An organic blend of calming nature and maximalist style, this Mediterranean sunset inspired theme brings together natural tones of ornamental grasses complemented by brown and taupe plant pots. Recreate your own earthy look with succulents and citrus plants, arranged together in textured pots for an ultra rustic feel.

Earth and Soul lends itself well to sustainable planting practices, a trend that Marcus predicts will continue to rise in popularity this year as more people become aware of their carbon footprint

and set out to find eco-friendly ways to enjoy their outdoor space. Marcus suggests reusing containers where possible and investing in good-quality pots in weather proof materials like terracotta, that will last for years, as this is an easy way to create less waste in the garden.

Earth and Soul offers an exotic vibe, with grasses, citrus, Cordyline and succulents.

## Wild Heritage

A theme that embraces nature and all it has to offer, from the established allotment to the windowsill herb garden, Wild Heritage is a nod to quintessential British gardens and the gorgeous produce they are famed for growing - the deep, leafy greens of vegetables against pastel pops of flowers.

Tying into the theme of sustainability, Marcus predicts more customers will be looking to grow their own produce in 2023, to not only reduce food waste but keep food costs down. To meet this demand, Dobbies has hundreds of types of seeds, ranging from traditional varieties like potatoes, to versatile carrots, to herbs and soft fruits, with a focus on seeds that will produce a generous crop and give maximum flavour and nutrition.

In keeping with the Wild Heritage theme, Marcus says that pollinating plants and wildflower areas are also set to be popular for 2023, as we look to welcome more wildlife into our gardens and create a safe habitat for them to live.

Key outdoor plants include flowering perennials, Delphinium, Echinacea, Digiplexis and Nepeta; as well as grasses such as Pennisetum, and herbs for grow your own.

## Summer Colour

Summer Colour celebrates the beauty and fun of bold colour, combining the rich saturation of flowering plants with high impact colours for a burst of vibrancy. Rich reds and dusty pink accessories are the perfect underscore for the intense, velvet green of cacti that can be displayed outside over the warm summer days. This is a high summer collection that embraces colour and texture to instantly transform outdoor spaces of all shapes and sizes.

Tying into the trend of low-cost gardening, Marcus says that gardeners can transform their space for less by restyling their existing containers and adding some of Dobbies' great value bedding plants for an instant splash of colour.

For those looking to take their small space gardening to the next level, Marcus anticipates more city dwellers will be looking for convenient options, for example dried compost blocks made from coconut fibre that are compact and easy to carry so great for balconies and small spaces.

Top plants to achieve the Summer Colour look include Salvia 'Roman Red', Cacti, Palm, Maranta and Heuchera.

For more 2023 gardening inspiration and advice, visit [www.dobbies.com](http://www.dobbies.com)





# Senior appointment for Northumberland luxury housebuilders

**Independent Northumberland-based housebuilder Ida Homes has made a key senior appointment to accelerate its growth plans and deliver luxury homes across the county.**

Ross Stoddart has been appointed construction manager at the Northumberland-based luxury homebuilder which is currently creating two developments of high-end homes in Morpeth and Belford.

Ross, who is from Morpeth, oversees construction at King Edward's Place in Morpeth, where Ida Homes is delivering a collection of 18 luxury apartments. The company has also applied for detailed planning to build 37 new homes on land at South Meadows in Belford.

Ross said: "I am born and bred in Northumberland and jumped at the chance to work for a locally-based company whose values of integrity and transparency very much reflect my own professional ethos.

"We want to build high-quality homes for happy customers, on sustainable developments which make a positive impact on the lives of local people."

Ross returned to his hometown of Morpeth and started to work for a local housebuilding company as an assistant manager. The quality of his work caught the attention of Ida Homes, who offered Ross a position as construction manager.

Ross, who lives in Morpeth with his wife and daughter, said: "My role is very varied but essentially, I am responsible for making sure that the site operates safely, on schedule and produces the top-quality

luxury homes that Ida Homes is already becoming known for.

"I liaise with every department - sales, finance, construction and planning - and enjoy establishing a close relationship with customers. It is incredibly satisfying to help guide buyers through the whole home-buying journey and to see the look of joy on their face when we hand them the keys to the 'dream' home we have created for them. That is a very special part of the job.

"It is exciting to be offered the opportunity to help build the future for Ida Homes, which is still a very young company. I feel that I have been brought in at the start and can help shape the direction of this homebuilder that offers luxury homes that are a bit different in terms of quality and style.

"I want to push myself and learn new skills and this role is offering me the chance to do just that."

When he is not at work, Ross loves to unwind by riding one of his four motorbikes along the country lanes and coastal roads of Northumberland.

"It's a fantastic way of getting out and enjoying the beauty of the Northumbrian countryside," he said. "It is a beautiful part of the world and it never ceases to fill me with a sense of wonder. I feel lucky to be able to live and work in such an inspirational place."

The firm, which was formally launched last year, is operated by a team with a track record of building high-quality homes at bespoke developments across Northumberland.

The developments are on a smaller scale and Ida has a real focus on delivering luxury housing in some of the most scenic areas of the North East. With rolling hills, country towns and coastal castles and coves only ever a short drive away from their developments, Ida Homes is promoting Northumberland as an opulent place to live and work.

There is also a focus on community living, with open, landscaped gardens for residents to enjoy, as well as private outdoor space.

As a Premier Guarantee accredited company, all of Ida Homes' developments benefit from specialist warranties, ensuring their high-quality homes remain just that.

Ida Homes is currently building 18 luxury apartments at King Edward's Place in Morpeth. A planning application for 37 homes at South Meadows in Belford is awaiting consent. The first homes are due to be released for sale in Morpeth, with local estate agents Bradley Hall marketing the properties.

To find out more about Ida Homes developments, visit [idahomes.co.uk](http://idahomes.co.uk)





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# Asparagus and Spring Vegetable Salad with Feta

By Martin Malinowski, head chef  
at St Vincent, Newcastle

Since reopening earlier this year, Quayside restaurant St Vincent has proved popular with diners, either for a pre-theatre dinner before visiting neighbouring Live Theatre, or simply for a delicious meal.

With Spring very firmly here, there is no better dish than a fresh and nourishing

asparagus and spring vegetable salad, topped with feta cheese.

St Vincent's head chef, Martin Malinowski, has shared his recipe for a delicious raw vegetable salad, exclusively with Portfolio North.



## Serves 4

This is a wonderful fresh raw vegetable salad to enjoy on a hot summers day while dining al fresco. It would work well as a sharing side dish with some simply grilled meats off the BBQ, or even in a picnic box, as the raw vegetables are quite robust, even after being dressed.

If you do not own a mandolin, then a very sharp knife will be fine for slicing the kohlrabi and fennel but mind your fingers.

## For the dressing

- 150ml extra virgin olive oil
- 30mls good quality white wine or chardonnay vinegar
- Squeeze of lemon juice
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

## For the salad

- 100g good quality pesto
- 8 spears of asparagus, woody base removed and then shaved using a vegetable peeler
- 1 Kohlrabi, peeled halved and thinly sliced on a mandolin
- Half a head of fennel, halved and thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 150g Feta cheese
- 1 dessert spoon of poppy seeds
- 1 dessert spoon of sunflower seeds
- A few leaves of watercress
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

Plunge the shaved fennel, watercress, and asparagus into iced water for 30 minutes. Remove and pat as dry as possible.

Transfer into a large bowl and season with salt and pepper.

Add the pesto and add enough dressing to taste and coat all the vegetables.

Add half of the poppy seeds, sunflower seeds, and feta, toss gently, and then finally add the watercress leaves for a gentle final mix.

Transfer to 4 plates and finish with a crumbling of the remaining feta and a sprinkling of the remaining seeds.





 x 7

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## Durham Fairway House

**£1,950,000**

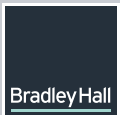
Fairway House is truly exceptional with the added advantage of being accessed via private electronic gates and boasts driveway parking for a number of vehicles as well as access to the double garage.

The property itself occupies a large plot extending to around 0.35 acre of formal grounds. The raised location offers superb views over the adjoining golf course, towards Durham City and beyond over the Durham countryside and hills.

The facilities within the Ramside complex are close by where you can enjoy two 18-hole golf courses, driving range, superb club house facilities, a spa, gym and swimming pool complex as well as the 4-star hotel with its range of restaurants.

The estate has, in effect, established itself with a 'country club' feel and the future plans for Ramside Hotel and Spa will create even bigger and better facilities for the use of the hotel residents and residential owners alike.

**Durham**  
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**durham@bradleyhall.co.uk**



## Warkworth Hermitage Drive

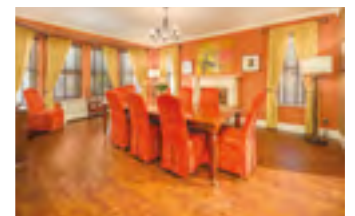
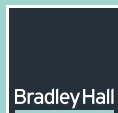
**£1,600,000**

Located to the northern edge of Warkworth, Hermitage Drive is within easy walking distance of the beach, golf club and the historic centre of the village, famed for its medieval castle and the meandering River Coquet.

Warkworth is a bustling village with a good range of amenities for its size including pubs, restaurants, shops and art galleries whilst the picturesque cricket pitch sits in front of the castle. Alnmouth is a short drive to the north whilst the ever-improving food scene in neighbouring fishing town of Amble is approximately 1.5 miles to the south at the mouth of the River.

Alnmouth train station provides fantastic access to Edinburgh and Newcastle in under an hour for commuters whilst London Kings Cross is accessible in 3 hours 18 minutes. Newcastle International Airport is a 40 minute car drive to the south west.

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 x 4

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# Superyacht Sports Escapes

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No destination is off limits, simply name your sport and West Nautical's experienced team of yachting experts will handle the rest.

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### GOLF

Superyacht marinas are found in the most beautiful locations in the world, from the Mediterranean to the Caribbean and beyond. It is no surprise therefore that some of the world's best golf courses can often be found in close proximity.

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Enjoy the event in all its glory as a one-off static charter, or, if you don't want the fun to end, why not opt to include it as part of a week-long charter of the French Riviera or beyond?



### SURFING

Surfing and yacht charters are a match made in heaven. There is no better way to see the world than aboard a private superyacht, it allows you to discover unique destinations and surfing hotspots, some of which are only accessible by boat.

In addition to facilities that would rival that of a five-star hotel, you will also have a dedicated captain, crew and chef who will ensure an unforgettable holiday for you and your closest friends and family. Yachts always carry plenty of water toys and amenities for the whole family to enjoy, so everyone can get involved in the adventure, regardless of their aptitude for surfing.



### DIVING

When it comes to spectacular diving locations, a superyacht gives you the freedom to access multiple sites and wrecks with ease. Many superyachts come complete with all the equipment you will need, with some larger yachts even featuring dive decompression chambers or mini submarines for serious explorers of the deep.

Whether you want to explore historic wrecks in Croatia, coral reefs in Australia or the multitude of marine life in the many tolls of the Maldives, a yachting holiday provides seamless access and the ultimate place to come together after an exhilarating day of discovery.



### HELISKIING

Looking to upgrade your annual skiing holiday? If you enjoy skiing and adrenaline sports, then this might just be the high-octane experience you've been searching for. Heliskiing is the perfect addition to an action-packed itinerary around regions such as Patagonia, Greenland and Iceland.

Take to the slopes in some of the world's most remote destinations to access untouched trails, powder fresh snow and steep lines. Heliskiing can be arranged prior to your holiday, with some larger yachts even coming equipped with a helicopter of their own. After a day on the slopes, retreat to your luxury yacht for delicious food prepared by your onboard chef and enjoy drinks under the stars as you swap tales of your adventures.

Whatever your sporting passion, West Nautical would be delighted to tailor a trip bespoke to you and your party's individual requirements to ensure it exceeds all your expectations and more.

# Spring into action: sprucing up your home to help you sell

**As the weather warms up and flowers start to bloom, it's the perfect time to spruce up your home for sale.**

Spring is not only a season of renewal in nature, but it's also a prime time to sell your house and find a new home. Buyers are more active, and you can get the best price for your home with some simple yet effective improvements. So, if you're looking to sell your house quickly this spring, here are some tips to help you spruce it up and make it more appealing to potential buyers.



## 1. Curb Appeal

First impressions matter, and the exterior of your home is the first thing potential buyers will see. Enhance your home's curb appeal by giving your front yard some TLC. Mow the lawn, trim hedges and bushes, and plant colourful flowers to add a pop of colour. Repair or replace any damaged walkways or fences, and make sure the front door and porch are clean and inviting. A fresh coat of paint on the front door can also make a big impact.



## 2. Declutter and Clean

A cluttered and dirty home can be a major turnoff for potential buyers. Take the time to declutter your home by getting rid of unnecessary items, packing away personal belongings, and organizing storage spaces. Clean every nook and cranny, including windows, carpets, and countertops. A clean and well-organized home will make it easier for buyers to visualize themselves living there.



## 3. Freshen Up with Paint

Painting is one of the most cost-effective ways to freshen up your home and make it more appealing to buyers. Repaint walls in neutral colours to create a clean and blank canvas that allows buyers to imagine their own style. Don't forget to touch up paint on doors, trims, and baseboards as well. A fresh coat of paint can make a big difference in how your home looks and feels.





#### 4. Update Lighting

Good lighting can make a home feel warm, inviting, and more spacious. Replace outdated light fixtures with modern ones to brighten up your home. Add accent lighting in key areas to highlight features such as artwork or architectural details. Make sure all bulbs are working and replace any burnt-out ones. Adequate lighting can create a positive impression and enhance the overall ambiance of your home.



#### 5. Stage Your Home

Staging is a proven technique to help sell homes faster and for a higher price. Hire a professional stager or do it yourself by rearranging furniture, adding tasteful decor, and creating inviting spaces. Consider removing personal items such as family photos and personalized decorations to allow buyers to envision themselves living in the space. Proper staging can make your home feel more spacious, welcoming, and appealing to potential buyers.



#### 6. Boost Outdoor Spaces

Outdoor living spaces are highly sought after by many buyers, especially during the spring season. Clean and declutter your patio, deck, or backyard, and add some outdoor furniture or accessories to create an inviting outdoor oasis. Consider adding some potted plants, a fire pit, or some string lights to make the space feel cosy and perfect for outdoor entertaining.



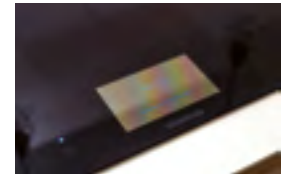
#### 7. Fix Minor Repairs

Small repairs can add up and detract from the overall impression of your home. Fix any leaky faucets, squeaky doors, or cracked tiles. Replace broken or outdated hardware on cabinets, doors, and drawers. Make sure all switches and outlets are functioning properly. Taking care of these minor repairs shows potential buyers that your home has been well-maintained and is ready for them to move in.



#### 8. Highlight Energy-Efficient Features

Energy-efficient features are becoming increasingly important to homebuyers. Showcase any green upgrades your home has, such as energy-efficient windows, insulation, or appliances. Highlighting these features will reassure buyers that your home will save them money on their energy bills.



# This is Green Lane, Yarm

Set on Green Lane in Yarm, this development is ideally placed within walking distance to Yarm Train Station as well as, Conyers School located opposite providing secondary and sixth form education facilities.

## About Green Lane

An exclusive and luxury development of six new homes in the sought-after village of Yarm. The detached properties on Green Lane, Yarm will be contemporary designed, high specification, luxury homes in the heart of the sought after area of Yarm.

Green Lane is brought to you by Acland Homes who are experts in their field. Acland Homes have previously built developments across Backworth, Medburn, Cotherstone Village and Hartlepool, with hundreds of direct employment opportunities also created for local people.

The Acland Homes development of Green Lane is due to be completed for Autumn 2023.

## Exteriors

Externally a generous sized driveway provides ample parking for several cars and leads to the integral double garage with electric doors, with subtle fenced boundaries to the front and small lawned area, as well as a boundary fenced rear garden.

The development offers a contemporary feel owing to its mixed use of modern materials including glass and aluminium to create bright open spaces, while encourages modernity and luxury throughout. The wow factor is certainly provided owing to the modern glass and aluminium auditorium with ceiling height glass panels allowing an abundance of light to fill the area.

The luxury detached homes will be erected with grey brick-built construction

and will be finished with modern bifold doors offering access to the rear garden spaces, and the opportunity to flood the Kitchen/dining area with natural light. All homes at Green Lane will come with a Buildzone 10 year structural warranty.

## Interiors

At Green Lane, modern day living is catered for with a 38ft open plan kitchen/diner with bi-fold doors opening on to the rear garden, perfect for those summer nights and alfresco dining. Each property is complete with a formal lounge, kitchen/diner, cloak room, utility room, master bedroom with ensuite and dressing room, double bedroom with ensuite, two more double bedrooms, and a family bathroom.

Underfloor heating will be installed





as standard to the ground floor. Oak and iron spindled staircase will provide access to the first floor, comprising of the master bedroom with full length panoramic window, featuring ensuite facilities and a dedicated dressing area, the second bedroom also providing ensuite facilities and views of the rear garden, a further two double bedrooms and family bathroom.

One of the key features is the recess downlighters in all internal rooms. TV points to the living room and data points, will have mains connected smoke and heat detectors, as well as external safety lighting to the front and rear of each home. The Green Lane development aims to put practicality first without compromising on style.

### Kitchens

The kitchen is the heart of every home. All kitchens in the Green Lane development will be fitted with design and flexibility to suit family living- ensuring the space is hard wearing and functional, as well as stylish.

Our kitchens will be contemporary with fitted units and Dekton worktops, feature island, integrated Siemens Wifi controlled appliances, including hob with

childproof locking system, extractor fan, double oven and grill and an integrated fridge freezer. A handy utility room will house an additional sink, worktops, space for a washing machine, tumble dryer and an external door.

### Bathrooms

The bathrooms in each property at Green Lane will combine luxury and function at every turn. The bathrooms and en-suites will be created with modern white suites with functionality at heart.

Each bathroom will be fitted with modern wall-hung WC's, vanity style wash basins and a bath. Whilst the en-suite will offer an added feature of a walk-in waterfall shower with a glass screen. The tiling of each bathroom and en-suite will also be included to ensure a stylish finish.

### Contact

#### Bradley Hall

Wynyard Business Park House  
Fulthorpe Suite, Wynyard Avenue,  
Wynyard, TS22 5TB  
01642 265 300  
[wynyard@bradleyhall.co.uk](mailto:wynyard@bradleyhall.co.uk)

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- Live in a high specification home built to suit modern lifestyles.
- Buildzone 10 year structural warranty.

# Supercar specialists announce expansion of North East site.

North East based supercar specialists, Performance28, has announced the expansion of its Chester-le-Street site in order to meet growing demand for its services.

The independent dealership was founded by local entrepreneurs Aidan Sunter and Tony Thomson, who noticed a gap in the Northern market for the sales, purchasing modifications and servicing of luxury and specialist vehicles. The six-figure investment and works on Performance28's second site is now underway, with plans to be open late summer.

Based on Drum Industrial Estate, Performance28 has taken over an additional unit of 3,500sq ft to enable the team to meet growing demand for the expert servicing and modifications arm of the business, whilst maintaining its unique showroom which was launched in 2019.

The current site will remain as a showroom for some of the most specialist and luxury cars available in the UK. Frequently selling, importing and improving luxury and collectable vehicles from companies such as Tesla, Porsche, Ford Mustang, Bentley, Lamborghini,

Audi, Mercedes-Benz and Dodge, Performance28's showroom is stocked with exclusive vehicles ranging from collectibles and supercars to luxury pick-up trucks.

Co-founder and director Aidan Sunter said: "When Tony and I started the business, our vision was to create a luxury dealership that was accessible and welcoming for customers. The showroom has a clubhouse feel and design and is a site curated for those who are interested in cars and car culture.

"The team has a real focus on the end-to-end buying experience of a luxury vehicle, from initial viewings all the way through to post-purchase services and modifications. Our focus is not about what the car does, but more about how it makes customers feel and experience it provides."

When discussing the expansion and investment, Aidan continued;

"This will be a very well-equipped and capable facility which will allow us to assist even more clients with all types of specialist servicing and modifications, and with a team which has so much experience and knowledge, I am confident this new site will be incredibly beneficial for our company and our valued customers."

Tony Thompson joined forces with Aidan to create Performance28 after many years working in luxury car dealerships including Bentley and Porsche. He and Aidan identified the need to modernise luxury car dealerships and developed a business model which was better suited to those who wanted to purchase and maintain luxury vehicles with the same trusted partner.

Tony said: "The team at Performance28 is skilled in servicing and maintaining high-end vehicles and is the ideal place for car enthusiasts





who need specialist professional work to ensure their vehicles are maintained to the highest quality, protecting their investments.

Our customers are passionate about their vehicles, so want to ensure that they are well-kept and performing to their highest standard, which is why we do what we do. Unlike other dealerships, Performance28 offers a one-stop-shop for all elements of purchasing and maintaining the high quality of specialist vehicles.

"The servicing team has a wealth of knowledge and have a combined experience of 25 years in the industry, meaning luxury vehicles are in the best hands possible.

"We're also one of the only businesses of our kind in the North East to offer a pick up and drop off service to ensure the process is as quick and easy as possible for our clients. We appreciate how busy

our clients are and that it is paramount when making an investment into a luxury or collectable vehicle that it is well maintained. Our service is designed to ensure that our client's investments are protected while offering them the perfect comprehensive service."

Aidan also explained that the offering at the showroom has expanded significantly alongside demand for commercial trucks thanks to businesses tax benefits, such as the ability for companies to reclaim 100% of the VAT for any commercial vehicle.

Performance28's end-to-end service also includes modifications, which will be located within the new unit and means that any servicing and changes clients wish to make to their vehicles can all be done in the same custom space. The team value and care for their clients' cars and provide consistent support to ensure they are at their very best. Modifications mean

that luxury cars are unique to customers and their needs. From a new full body kit to spoilers or lowering springs, there are endless options for upgrading luxury vehicles even further.

Having recently announced plans to become Dodge Ram suppliers, Performance28 is proving that its stock is amongst the most exclusive in both the North East and the UK. Dodge is a brand with one-off designs that appeal to a niche market of car lovers and are consistently popular in America, where the company was born.

With the expansion of the servicing arm of the business, modifications, cosmetic upgrades and servicing for Dodge vehicles- as well as the variety of other luxury vehicles available at Performance28- will be easier than ever and will ensure clients have a positive experience during every visit to the new custom site.

# Investing in art



Art is a timeless piece of beauty and creativity. In an exclusive interview, Georgina Llewelyn from Whitewall Galleries Newcastle explained why art is such a good investment.

#### Who are some artists to look out for?

Mr Brainwash is a really interesting one. He has created work for Madonna, Michelle Obama and Rick Ross. His first celebrity collector was Michael Jackson so he is very popular. He was discovered by and worked with Banksy and filmed a documentary with him in 2010. There is speculation on who he really is and whether he is really Banksy, but he's a good character and great fun and his work generates lots of sales as originals, hand signed limited edition prints or at auction. He has a museum in LA, where he lives, where the Grammy's after party was held so he is firmly in the celebrity sphere. His pieces sell at auction for three times the set price so there is high demand for his work and is definitely someone to invest in as give it a couple of years and he will be commanding the same prices in auction here in the UK.

Local artists are a good idea too. We have a lot of the 20th century and blue chip artists on the portfolio like Warhol, Lowry, Dali and Hirst, but there are some fantastic artists from our region who are worthy of investment too.

Twin brothers Chris and Steve Rocks have 20 years of artistic experience and they work together to paint the same piece. One does the base layer and one does the details and together they create these beautiful abstract landscapes. They have a really good following and are two of our featured artists.

Husband and wife Alison Britton-Paterson and James Paterson create vastly different pieces of work. Alison makes abstract muted work and is a fantastic self-taught artist. Her husband James creates pop art posters with circus rings, pin-up girls and working lights and arrows. Their work is so different and unique but they are both wonderful artists and they're from just down the road in Darlington.

#### What have you noticed about those buying art?

There's been a huge shift in buying patterns. We have a broad spectrum of pieces and prices from £295 to £1.1million and we have noticed that smaller sales have dropped off due to the cost of living. For those wanting to invest in artwork, it's a good time to do so as putting money in a tangible asset is a safe option.

Art is a low maintenance investment that's quite niche. There is no big cost after investment, apart from insurance, and it's a beautiful item that provides enjoyment for everyone who sees it.

The art market is independent of the stock market and is often known as 'currency neutral' meaning that its resell value, even when the economy is performing poorly, tends to remain high. Before Covid, a lot of art was bought in person, but now nearly two-thirds of art buyers had bought art or collectibles online.

#### Can you tell us a bit more about the company?

Our CEO Helen Swaby set up the business over 30 years ago after a bad experience at a gallery and felt galleries should be more accessible and break down the stigma and elitism of art buying. We are now the largest gallery group in the world with around 87 galleries and a the largest art publishing house in Europe. We have 3-400 artists on the portfolio across the company that we can access and showcase from anywhere.

We are able to do home approvals so that customers can see the art in the space and we can help with positioning and framework. It's a really emotive job and we get to know our customers really well. Every time they look at their piece of art, they will remember their experience with us so it's important that it's always a good one.







## Berwick

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# Ponteland The Manor House

**£1,800,000**

Set in just over 6 acres of private grass land, The Manor House is a stone-built detached house offering over 5,500 square feet of floor space over three levels.

Shilvington is a hamlet in rural Northumberland, 5 miles south west of Morpeth. Prospective purchasers looking for a peaceful and private setting with the amenities of a large town just a short drive away need look no further. Built by the current owners, this is the first time the property has ever been marketed.

It truly offers the 'best of both worlds' with Newcastle City Centre just a 13 mile drive away, the amenities of Morpeth & Ponteland within 5 & 6 miles respectively, and the peace & quiet of the countryside, with land for rural pursuits on your doorstep.

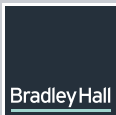


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**Gosforth**  
0191 284 2255  
gosforth@bradleyhall.co.uk



# Sunderland Cavalier Way, Silksworth

**£364,950**

This modern and uniquely designed split level 4/5 bedroom detached family residence is situated in Cavalier Way. The property occupies an extremely private position on this exclusive cul de sac development, which contains six individually designed properties.

The property briefly comprises ground floor, entrance hall, two double bedrooms, sitting room/bedroom five, family bathroom/wc, first floor, landing, master bedroom and en suite shower room, additional bedroom, separate wc, large fully fitted kitchen/breakfast room providing excellent family living space, separate lounge with vaulted ceiling and French doors leading to a balcony.

There is an integral garage, patio style split level gardens and extensive lawned gardens to the side with trees. Early inspection of this unique family home is highly recommended.

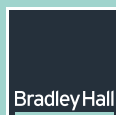


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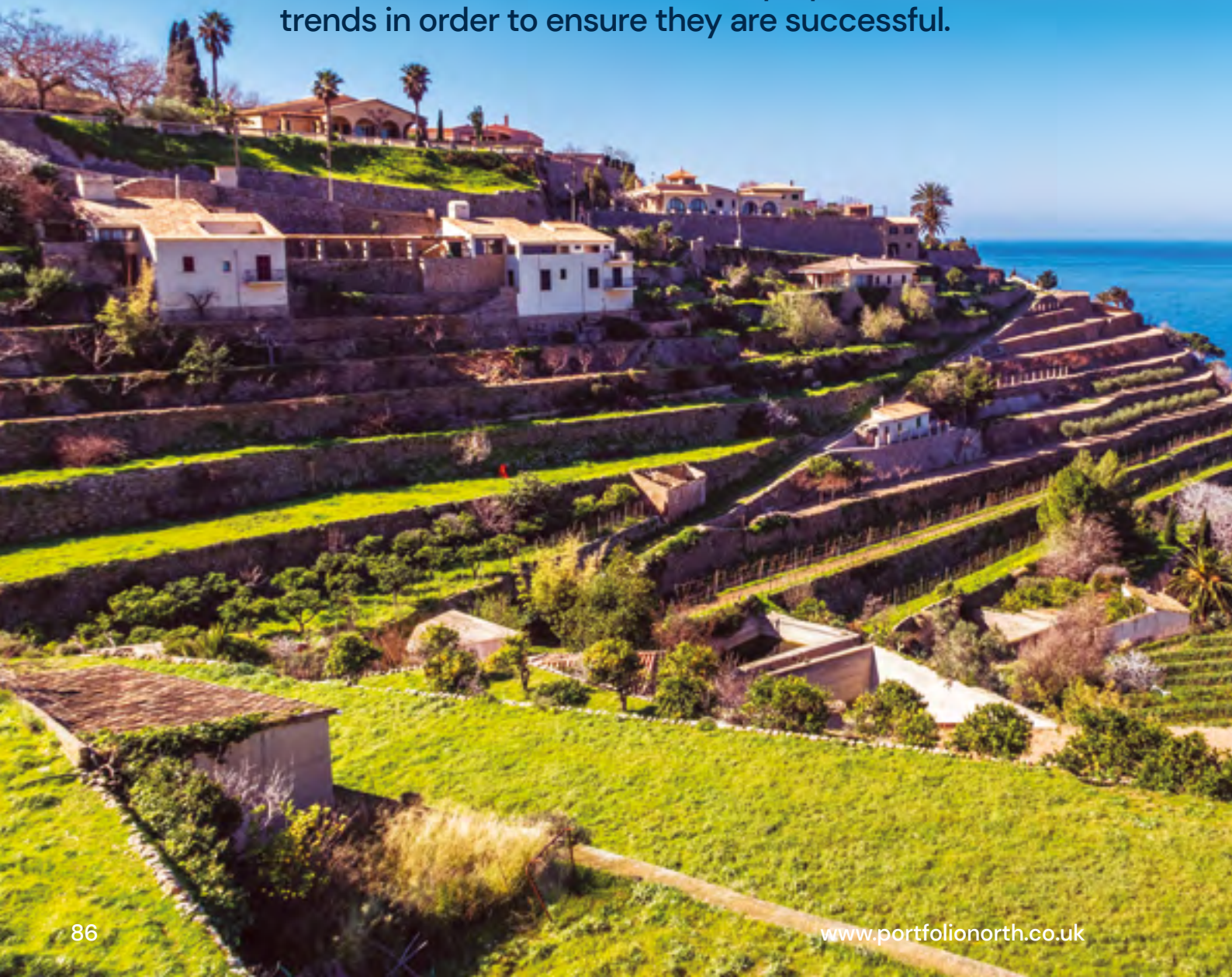
**Sunderland**  
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# Wine Trends for 2023

Wine is one of the most popular drinks in the world. A competitive market, with over 1,300 varieties, businesses have to keep up with trends in order to ensure they are successful.







With a constantly changing world of technology and new regions emerging in the wine sector, trends for 2023 onwards within the alcohol industry will prove vital to businesses as new ideas take hold.

Consumers are beginning to seek wines that align with their values, such as sustainability, organic farming, and social responsibility. Farm-to-table restaurants are ensuring their wine options are sustainable and come from small companies, often local to the restaurant.

Winemakers are responding to this demand by adopting environmentally friendly practices, including biodynamic and regenerative agriculture, water conservation, and minimal intervention winemaking. This shift towards values-based winemaking results in unique and expressive wines that truly reflect their heritage.

Traditional wine regions in France, Italy, and Spain have long dominated the wine industry. However, in 2023, wine enthusiasts are expanding their horizons by exploring lesser-known, emerging wine regions. French regions such as Beaujolais, Macon and Chinon are seeing a growth in vineyards and wine production. Greece is proving popular for creating crisp white wines, while Eastern European countries such as Albania and Hungary are home to innovative producers modernising the wine production system. Islands such as the Canaries, Sardinia and Majorca are producing fruitful, summery wines ideal for people wanting to enjoy a 'holiday in a glass'.

Consumers are beginning to look for something different when choosing which grapes and wines they wish to try and winemakers can offer this through embracing the diversity of grape varieties in 2023. Hybrid grapes, which are the result of crossbreeding different species, offer unique flavours, resilience to diseases, and adaptability to changing climates. Indigenous

grapes, on the other hand, showcase the authenticity and heritage of a specific region. By working with these lesser-known varieties, winemakers are crafting intriguing wines that celebrate the distinct character of their origin.

High-end wines remain popular with consumers drinking less, but better, wine. Ultra-premium wines have had a consistent market since 2016 and show no signs of losing their customers.

Since the pandemic, many consumers began drinking at home and had more disposable income due to not being able to travel, and could therefore invest in high-quality wine to enjoy whilst in lockdown.

Improved vineyard management and warmer temperatures have created a consistency in ripening and better wines overall than in the past.

The wine industry is embracing technology in 2023 to enhance sales and provide consumers with new ways to discover and purchase wines. Online platforms, wine apps, and virtual tastings have become essential tools for wineries to reach a wider audience and engage with customers directly. Artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms are being employed to personalize wine recommendations based on individual preferences. Additionally, blockchain technology is gaining traction, enabling transparent and secure transactions, and ensuring the authenticity and provenance of wines.

QR codes on labels, consistent social media strategies and apps with exclusive subscriptions to wine deliveries are all allowing the wine industry to expand and grow as technology improves.

For more Wine Club content, sign up to our mailing list.







# Blackfriars review

Nestled within the heart of Newcastle's Chinatown is an historic building full of character, charm and delicious food.



Blackfriars is a restaurant with a difference. With multiple spaces for private dining including a banquet hall for weddings and parties, wine tasting rooms and a cookery school, there is something for everyone. Portfolio North was invited along to taste their latest menu within a beautiful venue. Blackfriars is believed to be the oldest purpose built dining room in the UK and dates back to 1239 when the restaurant was the refectory for the 'Black Friars' of Newcastle.

We were welcomed into the restaurant by friendly and knowledgeable staff who recommended drinks that we might enjoy. The room is across two levels and has dark wooden tables and chairs and large windows to provide plenty of light. At the entrance are beautiful stained glass windows which provided a lovely glow and depicted the history of the restaurant. There is a real focus on local produce and locally sourced drinks and the menu included information about different breweries, farms and suppliers. This ensured we knew exactly where the food was coming from and that it was fresh and from not too far away.

We were served warm sourdough and hand-churned butter to start and enjoyed a lager from Allendale Brew Co., near Hexham. The waitress gave us plenty of information on the beer and the brewery itself and the bottle was delicious.

To start, we had the young goats cheese, candied walnut, roast beetroots and honey dressing. It was beautifully presented on speckled crockery and tasted really fresh. The cheese was complemented well by the roast beetroots and you could tell a lot of thought went into each ingredient and how they would pair together. The honey dressing that provided a bed for the start was the right amount of sweet and took away from any tanginess in the cheese.

The main course was nothing short of spectacular. With pork from Wilde Farm near Ponteland, the pork ballotine, miso-glazed carrots, wild garlic potato puree and brown shrimp created a deconstructed roast dinner with a difference.

The subtle mixture of land and sea combined with uniquely cooked vegetables was fantastic and the presentation was impressive, with so many vibrant colours on the plate.

The portion was a good size and ensured we were just full enough for dessert.

We also ordered a side of cauliflower cheese which was the perfect size for a side dish and was well-cooked and the right amount of cauliflower to cheese. For dessert, we had the sticky toffee pudding and the toasted hot cross bun. The sticky toffee pudding came with salted caramel sauce and banana ice cream, which was an unusual- but welcome- addition. The flavours paired well together and the portion was a good size.

The hot cross bun came with vanilla creme patisserie and rum and raisin ice cream and was perfectly constructed and delicious.

The venue was well-cared for and a beautiful spot for a spring lunch. The staff were friendly and the food was fantastic and really worth the money. This would make an ideal meal for a celebration or business lunch, and with so many dining spaces on offer, Blackfriars cater for every kind of event and party size.

Blackfriars has also opened an outdoor dining and cooking area opening in the courtyard the restaurant surrounds which will be ideal for a summer evening meal or drinks with colleagues.

For more information on Blackfriars, visit: [www.blackfriarsrestaurant.co.uk](http://www.blackfriarsrestaurant.co.uk)





# Coarse – Another restaurant on the scene with a bright future.

With the emergence of Spring, and the hint of warmer weather, we headed to Coarse, a bright and sunny restaurant in Durham that has recently taken its place in what is fast becoming a bit of a foodie destination.

Located down a short, urban wynd in Reform Place, just off North Road, Coarse sits somewhat surprisingly alongside The Head of Steam. It perhaps seems incongruous at first glance, but actually lends itself brilliantly to a long evening of excellent food and drink, particularly in good weather. The courtyard between the two venues comes alive with the hustle and bustle of people whiling away the hours, but it is a polite sort of hustle and bustle tucked just a little away from Durham's host of bars.

For a pre-dinner drink, The Head of Steam is excellent, particularly if you're into Belgian brews and cocktails, though there is plenty of choice for all. We spent 45 minutes perched comfortably on kegs just outside in the courtyard watching the Saturday night crowd come and go.

Coarse sits quietly alongside and looks incredibly inviting. We arrived to see diners in the window, chatting and laughing, clearly enjoying a relaxed atmosphere. We were warmly welcomed and quickly offered arrival drinks including a morish Elderflower Sour.

The staff are very friendly, knowledgeable and palpably passionate

about the restaurant. They made time for a chat and a laugh and arrived at our table to deliver each course armed with details about the chef's concept and the provenance of the ingredients.

Coarse offers a very reasonably priced six course tasting menu at £40 with the option to add on a bonus dish, which of course we did, never ones to turndown the opportunity to try a chef's special. The wine list is also very well priced with bottles available from around £25. It's a brilliantly accessible way to enjoy such a restaurant, without any compromise on style, creativity and quality.

First-up, we were each served a miniature cheese and chive scone with a chive-led whipped butter. They were nostalgic but also set the scene for what was clearly going to be a fine-dining meal. Crab arancini followed which were punchy, fresh and comforting.

The starter courses included a creamy yet incredibly light and fresh Pasta Primavera followed by crispy sea bass with the most delicate lemony miniature asparagus tips and romesco sauce - our firm favourite of the evening. We have committed to trying to re-create

this one at home, though how close we will get remains to be seen! A rich and decadent dish of scallop, chicken oyster and chicken butter sauce followed as our bonus course before the savoury courses were brought to a worth-waiting-for close with lamb three ways.

All courses were very different, showcasing talent, seasonality and breadth, but never did they feel out of place or distractingly unusual which we have seen happen with creative menus. There is a bit of genius in effortlessly moving between styles, whilst bringing the crowd along with you.

The two dessert courses were light and felt very much on brand for this warm, sunny, and cosy restaurant with a distinct Mediterranean feel, though without the clichés. The first was a beautiful chocolate and honeycomb concoction, the second was a take on tea and cake. Both were sincerely enjoyed.

We left happy in the knowledge that there's yet another excellent restaurant on the scene with a bright future. It is absolutely worth travelling to if you aren't already located in Durham and worth making a regular if you are.



# Skipton Building Society launches 100% loan-to-value mortgage product: a game-changer for homebuyers

In an exciting development for aspiring homeowners, Skipton Building Society has recently introduced a ground-breaking mortgage product that offers a 100% loan-to-value (LTV) ratio.

This bold move aims to empower individuals who struggle to save for a substantial deposit, opening doors to homeownership that were previously out of reach for many. The product comes with a free standard valuation, no lender product fee and allows overpayments of up to 10% per annum of the original loan amount, without incurring an Early Repayment Charge. Skipton's innovative approach signifies a significant step towards making the dream of owning a home a reality for a wider range of individuals.

The 100% LTV mortgage product from Skipton Building Society is a game-changer in the mortgage industry. By eliminating the requirement for a deposit, this mortgage option addresses one of the most significant barriers to homeownership - the struggle to save for a substantial down payment. Skipton's decision to introduce this product demonstrates its commitment to making homeownership more accessible and inclusive, particularly for first-time buyers and those with limited savings.

For many first-time buyers, saving a sizable deposit can feel like an insurmountable challenge. Skipton's

100% LTV mortgage offers an excellent opportunity for this demographic to enter the property market earlier than anticipated. By removing the need for a deposit, Skipton is providing aspiring homeowners the ability to secure a mortgage and start building equity sooner. This can have a significant positive impact on the financial future of first-time buyers, enabling them to enter the property ladder and potentially benefit from future property price appreciation.

Here are the basic criteria to be eligible for 100% loan-to-value product:

- Each applicant is a first time buyer
- Each applicant is aged 21 or over
- If they have a deposit, it must be less than 5% of the purchase price
- Each applicant has no missed payments on debts / credit commitments in the last 6 months
- Maximum borrowing of £600,000
- They meet the household-to-household criteria
- Proof of having paid rent for at least 12 months in a row, within the last 18 months

- Proof of 12 months experience paying all household bills within the last 18 months
- Not available on a new build flats

Full eligibility criteria will apply, and mortgage is subject to satisfactory credit scoring and affordability checks.

Skipton Building Society's launch of a 100% loan-to-value mortgage product marks a significant milestone in the mortgage industry. By removing the requirement for a deposit, Skipton is breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for aspiring homeowners.

However, borrowers must approach this opportunity with careful consideration and responsible financial planning.

With its customer-centric approach, Skipton Building Society is empowering individuals to turn their homeownership dreams into reality, further solidifying its position as a leader in the financial sector.

For more information about mortgages contact the team via [mortgages@bradleyhall.co.uk](mailto:mortgages@bradleyhall.co.uk) or 0191 260 2000.

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The logo for Bradley Hall, featuring the company name in a white serif font on a dark blue square background.

Bradley Hall









# Regenerative skin repair at Skin & Soul Medical

The skin is the body's largest organ and goes through many changes within different environments. Internal factors such as genetics, ageing and hormones can also affect your skin.

When the skin is healthy, its layers work to protect itself, but external factors such as sun damage and high air conditioning can compromise the skin and impair its ability to rejuvenate.

One solution is pHformula, a treatment system based on the technology of regenerative medicine and combined with the concept of creating controlled chemical skin resurfacing.

Controlled chemical skin resurfacing differs from a traditional facial peel which cause skin exfoliation. pHformula's treatment actively provokes an accelerated form of cell regeneration in the skin, whilst also reducing trauma and irritation.

With more than 30 years' combined experience in the medical and pharmaceutical markets, the team at pHformula have perfected their product and have set a precedent for scientific backed skin resurfacing technology.

Their skin resurfacing system is targeted to the needs of different skin types, from anti-ageing, hyperpigmentation, chronic redness, acne, wrinkles or just for an instant boost,

Different treatments in the range can be collated in a specific treatment

programme to treat the skin with different strength and depth levels for different skin sensitivities.

The treatments are self-neutralising and can be left on the skin. Take-home products can be used to continue skin maintenance and achieve the best results post-appointment.

Skin & Soul Medical, a holistic, private clinic based in Sunderland and Newcastle has recently added pHformula to their extensive list of treatments in order to resurface and repair the upper layers of the skin.

The advanced skin resurfacing programme of treatments is proving popular with clients looking to improve the quality of their skin. The team at Skin & Soul Medical guarantee this product will be popular with their clients and for those looking to improve the look and feel of the skin without the need for harsh chemical peels.

Whether you are looking to improve redness and ageing or simply to reduce pores and acne, pHformula is the perfect solution.

With pHformula now available at Skin & Soul Medical, contact the team to book your appointment via [skinandsoulmedical.com](https://www.skinandsoulmedical.com)



# New Executive Head Chef takes over at Jesmond Dene House

**Chef, Eddie Saint, former senior sous chef at Jesmond Dene House has taken over from Danny Parker as executive head chef at the famous eatery, overseeing all events at the house as well as Fern Dining Room & Bar with immediate effect.**

Father of two, Eddie, 33, from Tynemouth has worked in various hotels throughout the North East, starting with 2AA Rosette's Hotel du Vin in 2009 as a commis chef, and sous chef before embarking on a new challenge at Close House and then Eslington Villa.

Eddie then went on to work as a lecturer at Newcastle College, where he taught kitchen larder and patisserie to levels #1 and #3 and empowering his students to achieve gold awards at NECTA competitions. Previous positions include Riley's Fish Shack as head chef, where his passion for developing his knowledge in fish first emerged.

From joining Jesmond Dene House in 2021 as senior sous chef, Eddie has played an integral part of the operation and has for the past two years been running the Fern restaurant side of the business operation.

Talking about his promotion, Eddie told us:

"I am thoroughly delighted with the position of Executive Head Chef and am looking forward to using my experience to create some exciting dishes for the guests of Jesmond Dene House and

Fern Dining Room & Bar. I am fortunate to have worked alongside Danny Parker, who has moved onto pastures new, and I wish him all the very best, but I really look forward to the challenges ahead in my new position."

Eddie intends to plan some fun events and bring some excitement to Jesmond Dene House utilising the Secret Garden Kitchen for outdoor BBQ's and make the most of the heritage that Jesmond has to offer. The appointment of Eddie also coincides with the launch of their brand-new Summer seasonal menu at Fern restaurant, of which Eddie and his team created.

Events and marketing manager, Christina Stephenson concluded:

"We're pleased to be able to promote one of our very own chefs into the position of Executive Head Chef at Jesmond Dene House and Fern restaurant. Eddie beat off stiff competition to gain the position and his determination to succeed to the top in such a tough industry is to be applauded. We are delighted he has taken the position and are excited for the future plans he has for our very special venue."



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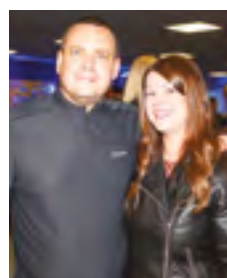




# Lookers Premium one year anniversary

Lookers Premium hosted their one-year anniversary party at their Portland Road showroom in April.

With a focus on buying and selling prestige vehicles and providing a premium service, the dealership celebrated their first year of trading. The Lookers Premium team, customers, influencers and stakeholders enjoyed an evening of live entertainment, networking, canapes and a stunning display of supercars from the North East super car club. It was an evening of celebration to congratulate the team for a successful first year and to thank the individuals who have supported the business. Lookers Premium have lots of exciting plans for the future and are optimistic for many more opportunities to celebrate accomplishments!







# Morpeth Kings Avenue

£700,000

This is a fantastic opportunity to acquire this traditional six bedroom semi-detached family home situated in Kings Avenue, one of Morpeth's most sought after residential districts.

This charming home was built in the 1930's and offers well planned extended accommodation spread over two floors.

Offering an array of traditional features throughout to include original panel doors with 'Bakelite' handles, cast iron column radiators, 'AGA' double oven stove, feature fireplaces and coving in most rooms, and bespoke double glazed leaded light windows to the front.

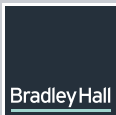


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Morpeth  
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## Wynyard

# Burn Avenue

£599,000

Bradley Hall Wynyard & Tees Valley are delighted to bring to the market this stunning family property in turn-key condition located within Wynyard.

Burn Avenue completed by Robertson Homes in 2021 is a beautifully designed home with over 2,100 square feet providing larger than average living space, private parking, generous rear garden and upgraded extras included as standard.

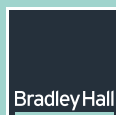


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