



**BRITISH CHAMBERS  
OF COMMERCE  
BUSINESS AWARDS**

**UK Chamber of the Year**

# Annual Report

**2021/2022**

To enhance **East Midlands**  
businesses and communities

# President and chief executive's welcome

Wow – sitting down to look back at the year can sometimes be both fun and thought-provoking! Life is so fast-paced and change so relentless that sometimes everything goes past in a bit of a blur. Nonetheless, I do think it's important to pause and reflect to acknowledge our achievements, and to thank those who have contributed to them.

I was absolutely thrilled to learn recently we had been named UK Chamber of the Year at the British Chamber of Commerce's annual Chamber Business Awards. So much as I might like to wax lyrical about how great our Chamber is, we now have objective proof from our national body. Huge congratulations to the entire team on this well-deserved accolade.

But I'm not surprised we won – look at some of what we achieved during the year. We have helped more than 12,000 businesses from start-up to large firms, and everything in between. We continue to grow and improve our services to our members with things like a free environmental, social and governance (ESG) self-assessment tool.

In Derbyshire, we worked with local partners on the Festival of Business to showcase local business; in Nottingham, we continued our work with employers on Kickstart, providing placements for 16 to 24-year-olds; and in Leicestershire, Scope Construction showed the region what it means to grow successfully while recognising innovation, green growth and entrepreneurship, by winning both the Outstanding Growth Award and Business of Year Award.

Thinking about my own journey this year, I set out with two priorities: to support the Chamber's objective of strengthening links

between businesses and communities to create a "Sustainable East Midlands", and to support the wider region in attracting, developing and retaining great talent via the young professionals' network Generation Next.

I'm also passionate about people having choice – something that is limited by poverty and a lack of opportunity – so I wanted to do all I could to ensure our region has equity of investment compared to the rest of the country and, specifically, to promote how any company can have an impact on the local community.

So how did 2022 stack up against all that? At a personal level, one of my greatest pleasures of the year was in seizing the opportunity to get out and about after the pandemic to see first-hand how the Chamber is linking business and communities. I've witnessed the huge creativity, passion and energy that some of our youngest business leaders are bringing to the region via the amazing Generation Next network.

It's been truly inspiring. I've been thankful too for how our members have reached out to support the three charities at the heart of this year's appeal. If that doesn't illustrate how our businesses connect with communities, I'm not sure what does.

Looking ahead, I know we will continue

to go from strength to strength. This month, we have launched *A Centre of Trading Excellence: A Business Manifesto for Growth in the East Midlands and Beyond*, which sets out a bold vision for the region and will shape the Chamber's work for the coming years. I hope you will both embrace and support what it sets out to achieve.

I also know the presidency will be in safe hands with my successor Stuart Dawkins. My thanks to him for taking on the chains of office and I wish him well, but more than anything hope he finds the experience as rewarding as it has been for me.

**Lindsey Williams, president**



2021/22 was again a year of transition and diversification for the Chamber's services, due to the continued impact of Covid-19 on our members, customers and the wider business community.

Since pandemic restrictions were removed in early 2022, we have adopted a hybrid delivery model between virtual and face-to-face services and engagement to meet evolving business support needs. Moving forward, this will continue as many of you have shared how the increased productivity resulting from this way of working is welcome, complemented by traditional face-to-face meetings and events. More than ever, we all now recognise the value of coming together and the importance of collaboration.

The Chamber acquired several new publicly-funded business support contracts across the financial year that broadened our portfolio of services and employment support.

Furthermore, a number of existing projects were extended, including our Growth Hub services that put us at the heart of providing support to our diverse business community; a new D2N2 Peer Networks programme supporting senior leaders via action learning methodology; and a new Innovate UK Edge-funded contract supporting innovation in SMEs.

We continue to help those furthest away from the job market into sustainable employment via DWP-funded Work & Health Programme and Job Entry Targeted Support

projects in addition to the ESF-funded Way to Work project.

## Supporting skills and the next generation

We know that getting access to the right skills to enable sustainable business growth is essential to you. Our initiatives to support members' people needs included the Kickstart programme, in which we placed 2,092 young people with businesses to help them gain sustainable employment. There was an astonishing appetite from businesses to support this initiative and your Chamber is the UK's leading Kickstart gateway provider.

A significant amount of work remains to be done to ensure future skills are compatible with employers' needs. We were delighted to be one of only eight Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) 'trailblazers' across the country and will work with the Department for Education in 2022/23 as it commences a national rollout of LSIPs, developing an alternative approach to the way in which skills are commissioned by bringing the worlds of education and employment closer together.

The Chamber's Generation Next network, established in 2020 to develop the business leaders of tomorrow and retain future leadership talent in our three counties, continues to grow at pace with 325 members. I'd encourage all Chamber members to explore the benefits this network can bring to the development of your organisation's young talent.

Partway through the year, the Chamber's shareholding in EMB Group Ltd changed when components of this business were subject to a trade sale, specifically the cyber and quality assurance aspects of the business.

## Levelling up and East Midlands devolution

We continue to work with influencers and decision-makers on a local, national and international scale, demonstrating the three

counties' and three cities' potential for economic growth and need for public investment.

The Chamber has supported the rapid emergence of the East Midlands Devolution Deal for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and continues to work with decision-makers in Leicester and Leicestershire to determine how it maximises investment from the centre.

We are also supporting the development of macro-economic regeneration schemes such as the East Midlands Freeport and East Midlands Development Company, both leading examples of investment development that will have a transformative effect on the region over the next few years.

Our new Business Manifesto for Growth, launched in Westminster in November, calls on Government to maximise the impact of these initiatives by further developing the East Midlands as a Centre of Trading Excellence. Its four broad themes are reflected in the headings within this Annual Report.

So far, 2022/23 has been a year of further evolution. We have launched new products and services that meet the support our members tell us you want to see. This includes a free-to-members online self-assessment tool to provide a baseline report to determine an environmental, social and governance (ESG) roadmap.

Our own digital transformation programme will continue to progress in the coming months to provide you with new ways of accessing our services. This will culminate in the launch of a new website and brand at the 2022 Annual General Meeting.

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

**Scott Knowles, chief executive**

# The year in facts and figures

**210**

Decarbonisation Plans developed in supported businesses

**2,786**

Customs Declarations completed

**#20**

in 'Best Companies to Work for in the business services sector'

**11,899**

businesses supported

**£1.8m**

digital grant funding processed

**80%**

members accessed a Chamber service

**2,092**

Kickstart placements filled

**39**

specialist business advisers

**46**

patrons & strategic partners

**1,429**

people supported into employment

**21,599**

social media followers

**100%**

managed workspace occupancy



# Getting the basics right

## East Midlands Accelerator

We have been at the forefront of delivering business, innovation and employment support programmes to help pave the way for replacing exhausted EU funding streams in communities.

The East Midlands Accelerator was backed with £5.27m of funding from the Government via its UK Community Renewal Fund, the forerunner to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund that will eventually replace EU structural funds. The project was delivered in partnership with the region's universities and a range of specialist support organisations, including Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire, NBV Enterprise Solutions and the Food & Drink Forum, and provided more than £1m of match funding.

Support has been delivered in areas identified by Government as being in particular need – Derbyshire Dales and High Peak, Mansfield, Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood, Nottingham city, and Leicester city. It has supported 11,899 businesses across five strands:

- Net Zero Accelerator to help businesses gain green business skills and invest in net zero business practices
- Digital Transformation Accelerator to help businesses implement digital and e-commerce solutions
- Start Up to Scale Up Accelerator to help with launching a business, or for existing businesses to scale up by developing new processes, products or services
- Kickstart Accelerator to offer training and mentoring support to improve job retention, as well as a wage subsidy to convert a Kickstart or graduate placement into a sustained job
- Financial Accelerator to offer grants of up to

£8,000 and growth vouchers of up to £2,000.

The project delivered more than 200 events, peer networks and training courses, and subsidised 93 senior executive places on 12-week Help to Grow Management programmes run by university business schools.

The Chamber managed a £2.8m growth grant and wage subsidy programme, which helped 180 people into employment, created 172 new products and over 400 new jobs.

We also created the East Midlands Manufacturing Network, which now has over 200 members sharing best practice, and supported businesses in the development of 210 decarbonisation plans.

## Continuing EU funded delivery

While preparing for the future, the Chamber continues to play a central role in delivering EU-funded programmes with partner organisations across the D2N2 (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) and LLEP (Leicester and Leicestershire) regions.

The D2N2 Digital Growth Programme ended in March 2022 after supporting 1,888 businesses to access free digital support, including workshops and one-to-one advice, since 2016. More than £2.2m of grant funding was invested into 211 SMEs, helping to unlock £3.8m of private sector investment.

Ongoing projects include the D2N2 Growth Hub and Business Gateway Growth Hub, which provide a single point of access to business support. In the year to October 2022, 5,924 enquiries were handled by our frontline team and 1,617 businesses received one-to-one support from an adviser.

Also progressing is the Digital Upscaler, which provides one-to-one digital adviser support and capital technology grants to help

high-growth companies invest in technology.

## Digitising the high street

With the pandemic accelerating online shopping trends, the Chamber responded with dedicated support packages to help retailers transition into the digital world.

Funded by local authorities, the Chesterfield Digital High Street, Derby Business Resilience Programme and Bassetlaw High Street Enhancement Support Programme have together engaged 340 small and microbusinesses to build an online offering for customers and improve their social media profile.

Some 168 companies either benefitted from having a new website built or accessed £2,000 grants to develop existing websites with new payment systems and “click and collect” shopping options.

## Supporting employment

The Chamber's employment services team plays a vital role in supporting a range of participants remote from the labour market with coaching, mentoring, employability skills and work experience to secure work via several Department of Work and Pensions and European Social Fund-backed schemes.

In the past year, our team has provided support and guidance to 1,638 people across the D2N2 area, with 1,056 of those finding work through the Better Working Futures and Job Entry: Targeted Support projects led by Reed in Partnership, and the Way2Work and Nottingham Works for You schemes led by Nottingham City Council.

## Blue Stamp Travel



## East Midlands Accelerator

Natalie Fraser is one of 160-plus young people in the East Midlands to find long-term employment via the Chamber's East Midlands Accelerator project.

The 22-year-old, from Radcliffe-on-Trent, initially joined education tour operator Blue Stamp Travel Ltd on the Kickstart Scheme, a Government-backed scheme to help 16 to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit or at risk of long-term employment to develop their employability skills with a six-month funded placement.

After impressing in her work developing targeted, and regular, social media and marketing campaigns, she secured a permanent job with the Nottingham-based company, which received a wage subsidy grant through the Chamber.

“Not only have I developed many new skills and abilities, but I've gained valuable knowledge about the industry.”

Natalie Fraser

## Saucy Pizza Company



## Bassetlaw High Street Enhancement Programme

Husband-and-wife owners Brian and Lubka Smailes established Saucy Pizza Company in November 2019 to offer a high-quality pizza takeaway service with homemade fresh and sustainable products.

With spiralling costs for energy, ingredients and raw materials adding to the usual challenges facing a start-up in terms of building a presence and loyal customer base, it turned to the Bassetlaw High Street Enhancement Programme to help it appeal to new audiences.

A grant helped it to buy a new laptop to aid the fulfilment of online orders, which account for 95% of the business, while one-to-one digital marketing support led to the introduction of new ways of engaging customers, including via email newsletters and a “Friday Night Takeaway” Facebook Live campaign.

“Support from the programme means we have the tools and expertise needed to build brand engagement, and ultimately revenue, in ways which would not have been possible on our own.”

Brian Smailes, owner

## Codel International



## Commercial training

As a small business, Codel International – a manufacturer of emission monitoring equipment for power generating plants – is keen to grow and develop young members of its team.

It has taken part in various training with the Chamber, from bespoke team-building sessions and help with sales direction to enrolling individuals in the Director Development Programme, which equips senior leaders with the skills and confidence needed to drive their business forward.

The Bakewell-based company has found staff development to be vital to maintaining staff engagement, allowing the organisation to embed its objectives while helping people to grow with the business.

“Bespoke training has proven very useful and successful for Codel, as having the ability to tailor sessions allows the team to relate specific sessions directly to their own role. This seems to keep our team members more engaged and keener to do more.”

Richard Hallam, operations director

## Datalink Electronics



## Digital Upscaler

Loughborough-based Datalink Electronics approached the Digital Upscaler project after recognising its IT infrastructure was outdated, lacked the capacity to host and manage remote working, and servers were unable to integrate with other business application systems – posing potential security risks.

The electronics designer and manufacturer has now accelerated its digital transformation strategy after receiving one-to-one support from digital technology adviser Prashant Gandabhai and a £23,000 grant, covering 30% of the costs to buy a new high-spec operational server and upgrade a key part of the production process.

The resulting cost and time efficiencies will drive increased orders and growth, while improved connectivity and server responsiveness means employees can work remotely more productively.

“Prashant was brilliant – he really simplified the process for us and helped me personally to fill any gaps in knowledge and process.”

Mariam Smith, finance director



# East Midlands as a Centre of Trading Excellence

## The East Midlands and beyond

During the pandemic, the East Midlands cemented its reputation as an expert in making things, moving things and innovating in how we do this.

In flying the flag for the region, the Chamber has published *A Centre of Trading Excellence: A Business Manifesto for Growth in the East Midlands and Beyond*, which it launched during a special event at Westminster in November 2022. It features key asks to Government, covering:

- The Big Opportunity: Helping to further develop the East Midlands as a Centre of Trading Excellence by focusing on four Is – investment, innovation, infrastructure and international trade
- Getting the basics right: Developing a long-term approach to business taxation and regulation, improving digital and physical connectivity, and backing firms to invest in people
- Growing our competitiveness in the right way: Supporting businesses to create the products and processes that will help us achieve net zero, and on their wider environmental, social and governance (ESG) journeys.

## Voice of the regional economy

This is just one example of how the Chamber plays a key role in representing the region's businesses across the bigger picture.

Over the past year, we have joined the British Chambers of Commerce network in fiercely lobbying Government to address the cost-of-doing-business crisis, arguing it is two sides of the same coin with the cost-of-living crisis that has dominated headlines and helping to secure support via the Energy Bill

Relief Scheme.

Feeding into this work is our Quarterly Economic Survey, which represents the views of hundreds of members and is a useful tool in illustrating economic trends. It has shown over the past year how indicators such as business confidence and investment intentions have dropped, as well as the recruitment struggles faced by many firms.

At local level, we have been a key supporter in Nottingham's Levelling Up Fund application for the Broad Marsh regeneration scheme, Derby's bid to become the home of Great British Railways, the completion of the Space Park Leicester research institute and the East Midlands devolution deal.

## Addressing skills gaps

A very tight labour market means skills remain high on the business agenda. The Chamber aims to be part of the solution after leading the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan, one of eight pilot projects for the Government's Skills Accelerator initiative.

Between September 2021 and March 2022, data was collected from employers to create a collective intelligence skills observatory – a dashboard that can be used by employers and education providers to gain an understanding of local skills availability. The Government will build on lessons learned from these trailblazers when rolling out the scheme nationally over the next three years.

Our People & Skills Summit was one of 77 conferences, forums and policy representation events held in the year to October 2022, attracting 2,192 attendees in total.

Other major events included the East

Midlands Manufacturing and Engineering Conference, Sustainability Summit and Energy Summit as we sought to educate members about industry trends, emerging challenges and future opportunities, while members also had regular opportunities to engage with MPs and the Bank of England.

## International trade support

The Chamber's international trade team helps our region's exporters and importers safely deliver goods across borders. In the year to October, we supported 658 businesses, issued 14,212 customs documents and completed 2,786 customs entries.

We deliver the BCC's ChamberCustoms service – the only customs agent in the country with direct links to all sea, air and road ports and terminals in the UK – in the East Midlands and have overseen more than £25m in imported goods during this period.

Your Export Office was introduced this year to provide a unique consultancy service covering all aspects of export administration. Designed to allow businesses to fill any staffing or skills gaps by utilising members of the Chamber team on a retained basis, it accounted for a large proportion of the 190 hours of advice provided over the past 12 months.

In addition, the Chamber's international trade training team welcomed 421 delegates to 67 workshops on 17 topics including import procedures, understanding commodity coding and Incoterms 2020 rules. We introduced a new course to guide administrators through the new customs declaration service (CDS), which replaces the former customs handling of import and export freight (CHIEF) electronic system.

## Metalfacture



### Global Player

Sheet metal manufacturing business Metalfacture won the Global Player Export Business of the Year at the British Chamber of Commerce Awards 2022.

The Wigston-based company was commended by judges for developing a "smart and brave business strategy" that led to 8,000% growth in one year, with exports to 52 countries comprising almost half the business.

It followed success at the East Midlands Chamber Business Awards 2021, in which it won the Excellence in International Trade, Outstanding Growth Award and Leicestershire Business of the Year categories.

Having began life 25 years ago as a subcontractor, Metalfacture has diversified to also develop its own Vertical Vendor innovative display stands used in shops to increase awareness for brands including Heineken, Molston Coors, Asda and Sainsbury's.

"The beauty of manufacturing is having the ability to change the wind in your sails to suit a new requirement. Creating our own product range has been a huge success and instantly evened out the peaks and troughs."

Ben Jones-Fenleigh, commercial director

## Ward



### Queen's Awards for Enterprise

Family-run national recycling business Ward, headquartered in Ilkeston, was recognised with a Queen's Award for Enterprise in International Trade in April.

Almost three-quarters of the scrap metal collected and processed across the fourth-generation firm's 11 UK sites is sold to steel mills across the world.

It also offers a complete waste recycling package to customers on a national basis, processing one million tonnes of materials annually – including products such as metals, plastics, glass, cardboard, wood, textiles, soils and hardcore.

In 2018, the company opened a deep-sea dock in Immingham, Lincolnshire, to expand its capabilities for exporting metals via cargo ship as well as containers. Overseas sales grew by 84% in the three years to March 2019.

"Exporting grants us stability, opportunities in the global market and is central to sustainable growth. The Chamber has always been supportive of the Ward business in our growth locally, nationally and overseas. It's a useful resource where we are able to share knowledge and information with other members, and access help as required."

Donald Ward, operations director

## Harsh Shah



### Future Leader

Data engineer Harsh Shah, a knowledge transfer associate based at the Chamber, beat competition from 20 other finalists to be crowned with the Future Leader Award at the Innovate UK KTP Awards in October 2022.

He has led a new regional business research and intelligence unit providing data-driven insights about the East Midlands economy. It aims to improve the region's competitiveness, productivity and ability to attract investment.

Harsh is employed by the Chamber as part of a two-year knowledge transfer partnership (KTP) with De Montfort University (DMU).

In addition to the KTP Awards success, Harsh has presented at a national data strategy event hosted by Experian and taken part in the Alan Turing Institute's Data Study Group to resolve challenges for Siemens and Rolls-Royce, where he won the Data Driven Approach award.

"This award highlights the work we are doing, which aims to equip business leaders and policymakers with data-driven insights that will improve decision-making and ultimately drive more investment to the region."

Harsh Shah, knowledge transfer associate

## Business Manifesto for Growth



### Representing the East Midlands

"Back the East Midlands to back the UK" was the message at a reception to launch the Chamber's new manifesto for the region.

About 40 people, including Chamber representatives, members and MPs, turned out at a reception in the House of Commons Jubilee Room for the launch of *A Centre of Trading Excellence: A Business Manifesto for Growth in the East Midlands and Beyond*.

The manifesto calls on the Government to harness the East Midlands' key assets in its industrial heritage, leading-edge universities, central location, and the country's largest pure freight airport, to create a blueprint for what a successful economy looks like across the country. Its policy asks will be used by MPs to state the region's priorities during engagements with policymakers.

"It's great to have this manifesto and the scale of the potential we have in the East Midlands is clear to anyone reading it. It's vital the Government continues to have confidence in growing businesses within our region to be that Centre of Trading Excellence."

Darren Henry, Broxtowe MP



# Growing our competitiveness the right way

## ESG rising up the agenda

Environmental, social and governance – or ESG – captures a wide range of issues, but together they are rapidly rising up the priority list for businesses. Many members now recognise how customers, employees and other stakeholders want to understand their broader purpose beyond profit, and the Chamber in turn is shining a spotlight on what they are doing to support others on their ESG journey.

Our CSR Summit in June aimed to unravel the confusion between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ESG via a series of presentations and discussions, while the Chamber has a stated aim to grow the proportion of members that engage in community activities from 66% to 70%.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is another important strand. Research conducted with strategic partner emh group found that 48% of members have a dedicated EDI policy in place and 68% believe it plays an important role in supporting the achievement of business plans.

Benefits cited by businesses – both in the research and a follow-up roundtable discussion – included improvements in workplace environments, decision-making and innovation. In October, we once again ran a joint social media campaign with emh to celebrate Black History Month based on the theme of “Time for Change: Action not Words”.

Elsewhere, the East Midlands’ diversity and inclusion story was told via the medium of dance, music and food as our Celebration of Culture and Communities event returned in March, with more than 350 people in attendance at Leicester Tigers’ Mattioli Woods

Welford Road stadium.

In partnership with emh, Morningside Pharmaceuticals and HSBC, we also acknowledged the work that is making a difference to the region, with three special awards given to Cosy Foundation for Excellence in Equality, Autism East Midlands for Excellence in Inclusion, and De Montfort University for Excellence in Diversity.

## Sustainable East Midlands

Further unique research in partnership with the University of Derby has illustrated the extent to which East Midlands businesses have embraced the low-carbon agenda over the past seven years.

The *Green Growth Trends in the East Midlands 2022* report, published in August, showed the proportion of companies deriving turnover from supplying environmentally-friendly goods and services had grown from 16% in 2015 to 45% in 2022.

Other findings included an increased rising diversification into green markets, the gap between large and small firms in integrating green growth within their business strategies, and more than a third of businesses are still not being engaged with the agenda – with reasons cited including gaps in information, skills and access to finance.

These barriers were discussed during the Sustainability Summit, held in September, and the Chamber’s Sustainable East Midlands initiative continues to highlight business support opportunities and examples of best practice for members. This includes the Zellar sustainability-as-a-service platform, and the Chamber has subsidised the cost of 400 one-year licences as part of the East Midlands Accelerator.

We have also collaborated with strategic partner RSM UK to launch a free ESG self-assessment tool for members to establish which elements of ESG matter most to their organisation and stakeholders.

## Generation Next

Since launching in 2020, our network for young professionals and future business leaders continues to grow, with 325 people now in membership.

Over the past year, they have had access to 30 events, including workshops on topics ranging from public speaking to building a personal brand, delivered by Chamber partners, as well as social networking events featuring everything from a walk in the Peak District to cocktail-making.

The first in-person Generation Next Awards took place in July, with 200 people attending an awards ceremony with a twist – featuring craft beer, street food and doughnuts – at Derby’s Bustler Market. We received more than 70 entries and 10 awards were handed out in categories including The Volunteer Award, Excellence in Innovation and Technology, and Generation Next Future Leader.

An exciting addition in 2022 was the Generation Next mentoring scheme, which enables members to tap into the experience and expertise of senior leaders to help their own career journeys. There are now 12 mentors signed up.

## Green Tomato (Midlands)



### East Midlands Accelerator

Established in 2020, Green Tomato (Midlands) is Leicester’s first emission-free, mobile greengrocery, featuring a nostalgic 1970s milk float.

Granting residents access to high-quality fruit and vegetables at the kerbside and through online orders is helping the city’s households reduce their supermarket trips and carbon footprint.

The business benefitted from a range of support including attendance at the digital marketing and carbon literacy training courses, a 12-week sustainability student placement and audit that confirmed the business is officially carbon-positive, a wage subsidy grant to employ a greengrocer and driver, and an £8,000 growth grant to improve business performance.

“The time I’ve invested in every aspect of the project is already starting to pay dividends – in terms of how we’ve digitised our processes, developed personal confidence, become more active on social media, and all the training we’ve received on profit and loss, and analysing markets.”

Nisha Ravat, owner

## JG Pears



### Green growth

The circular economy is embedded in the DNA of JG Pears, which over the past 50 years has pioneered environmentally-friendly practices in processing animal by-products and food waste.

It uses modern technology to turn material that would otherwise be sent to incinerators or landfill into products such as animal feed, biofuels and fertiliser.

The Chamber’s 2021 Nottinghamshire Business of the Year, which renders a third of chicken by-products in the UK, has taken its sustainability approach further by diverting high-risk meat and bone meal produced at its North Yorkshire plant to a 47MW biomass combined heat and power (CHP) plant at Low Marnham, near Newark. Here, it is turned into a renewable energy source that powers the rendering facility on the same site.

“Winning Business of the Year has definitely raised our profile as a company. We also hope it will increase visibility for the whole industry and showcase how we’re at the leading edge of what it’s doing.”

Brian Smailes, owner

## Cosy Foundation



### ESG

Set up in 2011 by Derbyshire-based business Cosy Direct, which supplies outdoor educational resources for young children, the Cosy Foundation distributes more than 10% of the company’s profits to community projects that help to reduce inequality for adults and improve children’s life chances.

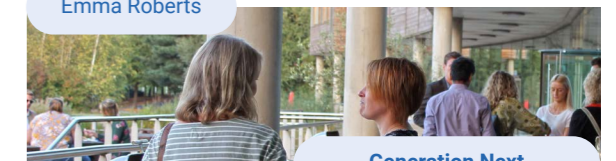
To date, it has provided £250,000 funding to more than 80 projects, ranging from camping trips for 5,000 Derby children to building classrooms in three African countries that have enabled almost 50,000 student days in its first decade.

This resulted in the organisation being honoured with the Excellence in Equality award by the Chamber at the Celebration of Culture and Communities event in March, as well as a Queen’s Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development.

“ESG should work within the machinery and, if it’s done well, at the tip of the tongue for senior leaders. It shouldn’t be viewed as a cost but very much part of what you’re already doing.”

Peter Ellse DL, founder and CEO

## Emma Roberts



### Generation Next

Emma Roberts, who went from being a volunteer at Derby Community Parent Programme CIC to managing director, became the second winner of the Generation Next Future Leader Award at July’s showpiece event for the Chamber’s young professionals’ network.

She led the not-for-profit – which provides essential, and sometimes life-changing, support for expectant and new parents facing a range of challenges in their transition to parenthood – through a challenging pandemic period to secure long-term funding.

Emma also broadened its engagement work to include the impact of maternal mental health, loss and trauma.

“It means everything to have won this award and I feel so proud of our team. Over the past few years, I’ve personally been through quite a lot and kindness goes a long way, which is something that hopefully goes throughout our organisation.”

Emma Roberts, managing director

# Annual Accounts 2021/2022

Consolidated Profit and Loss Account *Year ended 31 March 2022*

	2022 £	2021 £
Turnover	14,792,236	8,958,801
Cost of sales	(3,634,439)	-
<b>Gross profit</b>	<b>11,157,797</b>	<b>8,958,801</b>
Administrative expenses	(11,130,898)	(9,267,573)
Other operating income	92,959	269,673
Surplus on revaluation of investment properties	238,944	-
<b>Operating profit/(loss)</b>	<b>358,802</b>	<b>(39,099)</b>
Share of profit of associates	182,391	252,637
Share of associates exceptional profit on disposal of subsidiaries	2,516,232	-
<b>Total operating profit</b>	<b>3,057,425</b>	<b>213,538</b>
Income from fixed assets investments	-	22,200
Interest receivable and similar income	6,311	2,314
Interest payable and similar expenses	(20,162)	(15,444)
<b>Profit before taxation</b>	<b>3,043,574</b>	<b>222,608</b>
Tax on profit	(3,304)	(87,936)
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>3,040,270</b>	<b>134,672</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>3,040,270</b>	<b>134,672</b>
<b>Profit for the year attributable to:</b>		
Non-controlling interests	31,216	-
Owners of the parent Company	3,009,054	134,672
	<b>3,040,270</b>	<b>134,672</b>

Consolidated Balance Sheet *Year ended 31 March 2022*

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Intangible assets	1,017,194	318,770
Tangible assets	2,402,264	2,271,370
Investments	420,248	2,136,998
Investment property	2,677,559	2,008,329
	<b>6,517,265</b>	<b>6,735,467</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	3,834,366	2,889,341
Cash at bank and in hand	13,910,420	3,814,298
	<b>17,744,786</b>	<b>6,703,639</b>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(8,407,777)	(2,479,878)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>9,337,009</b>	<b>4,223,761</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>15,854,274</b>	<b>10,959,228</b>
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	(914,929)	(921,622)
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>14,939,345</b>	<b>10,037,606</b>
<b>Capital and reserves</b>		
Profit and loss account	13,565,178	10,037,606
Non-controlling interests	1,374,167	-

Signed on behalf of the directors:



**R I Morgan**, director



# Enterprising Women

The Chamber's Enterprising Women network celebrated its 25th anniversary in style throughout 2022.

It was back in 1997 when Jean Mountain, who at the time ran a factory for Huthwaite-based manufacturing firm Supreme Rubber Company, co-founded the group at Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce alongside Sue Natrass of the membership team.

It became a place for female professionals and business owners within the Chamber network to learn from each other and speakers, as well as celebrate their achievements via the Enterprising Women Awards, which began in 2007.

The network grew when Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chambers merged in 2005, and again in 2013 when they amalgamated with Leicestershire to become East Midlands Chamber.

Eileen Perry MBE DL, founder and managing director of Leicester-based ER Recruitment, ran Leicestershire's own

network for women in business Integra, which joined forces with Enterprising Women on International Women's Day in 2013.

Eileen and Jean have been co-chairs ever since and developed a close friendship – earning the nickname Ant & Dec for their on-stage personas during their many years of hosting networking lunches, inspirational speaker workshops and the Enterprising Women Awards, which are now one of the most popular events in the Chamber calendar.

This year, three categories were added – Diversity Champion, Rising Star and Lifetime Achievement – to take the number of awards to 11, in the biggest event yet for the network.

Rosemary Conley CBE DL, the Leicester-based businesswoman best known for developing low-fat diet and exercise programme The Hip and Thigh Diet, was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement award.



“Enterprising Women is about helping people to understand their purpose – what they want out of a role, whether it's in the short or long term. Thinking about what they aspire to be and then gaining an understanding from successful businesswomen how they have got to their level. Enterprising Women isn't about the fall of men, it's about the rise of women.”

Eileen Perry MBE DL and Jean Mountain, co-chairs

# UK Chamber of the Year

We were delighted to secure one of the most significant accolades in business after being named the UK Chamber of the Year at the British Chamber of Commerce's (BCC) annual Chamber Business Awards.

Judges said we succeeded in striking a good geographical balance across our membership base, serving more than 4,000 businesses across the three counties and working with 11,899 businesses in total.

Our strength in the areas of diversity and environmental sustainability were also highlighted, with BCC chair Sarah Howard saying we are “paving the way for other chambers to follow in the fight against the climate crisis”.

Other key achievements included:

- Growing cash reserves by 45% to £6.5m, with a projected operating surplus of £800,000
- Providing a £100,000 membership relief fund during the pandemic and helping 982 businesses to access Covid-19

funds valued at £1.4m

- Supporting 902 businesses to fill 2,092 placements in the Kickstart Scheme, which created work placements for 16 to 24-year-olds, with 81% of participants securing a job, or returning to further or higher education
- Ranking 18th nationally in the Business Services 25 Best Companies to Work For listing, along with 43rd of all organisations in the East Midlands
- Evolving our membership offer with an ESG self-assessment tool, Zellar sustainability-as-a-service product and Your Export Office international trade consultancy service
- Being an exemplar to businesses in developing a diverse and inclusive workforce by achieving Disability Confident Leader status, leading a prison employment advisory board, signing a menopause workplace pledge and “Time to Change” pledge, and supporting the Midlands Mental Health Productivity Pilot.

“We are delighted to receive such recognition and this award is testament to the hard work of the whole Chamber team over the past few years in supporting businesses through one of the most challenging periods in memory.”

Scott Knowles, chief executive

# Who we are



**Scott Knowles**  
Chief Executive



**Diane Beresford**  
Deputy Chief Executive



**David Pearson**  
Director of Partnerships



**Lucy Robinson**  
Director of Resources



**Chris Hobson**  
Director of Policy and External Affairs

# Board of Directors (as of 13 December 2022)



**Ian Morgan OBE**  
Chair of the Board  
Wellglade



**Stuart Dawkins**  
President



**Lindsey Williams**  
Immediate Past President  
Futures Housing Group



**Dawn Whitmore**  
Vice President  
SMB College Group



**Kevin Harris**  
RSM UK Audit LLP



**Mark Deakin**  
Turner & Townsend



**Jaffer Kapasi OBE**  
J A Kapasi & Co



**Martin Rigley MBE**  
Lindhurst Engineering



**John Robinson**  
The Institute of Export & International Trade



**Neil Williams**  
Amazon UK



**Craig Brothers**  
Affari Media



**Eileen Richards MBE**  
Eileen Richards Recruitment



**Dr Peter Dewhurst**  
University of Derby



**David Williams**  
Geldards LLP



**Dr Cham Kang**  
Qinesis



**Emma Baumback**  
Immediate Past Chair of Generation Next Board  
Future Life Wealth Management



## Strategic Partners



## Patrons



## Our Offices

### Glossop

The Old Co-Op Building, Railway Street, Glossop, SK13 7AG

### Derby

Room GF-1, Enterprise Centre, Bridge Street, Derby, DE1 3LD

### Mansfield

Clerkson House, St.Peters Way, Mansfield, NG18 1BQ

### Leicester

Unit 1 Bath Lane Mill, Friars Mill, Bath Lane, Leicester, LE3 5BJ

### Chesterfield

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

### The Brian Clough Business Centre

200-222 Cotton Lane, Derby, DE24 8GJ

### Nottingham

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

### Leicester Food Park

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



**BRITISH  
CHAMBERS  
OF COMMERCE**  
BUSINESS AWARDS

**UK Chamber of the Year**

**East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire)**

0333 320 0333 [info@emc-dnl.co.uk](mailto:info@emc-dnl.co.uk) [www.emc-dnl.co.uk](http://www.emc-dnl.co.uk)