

# DELIVERING FOR STRATFORD DISTRICT IMPACT REPORT



## THE POWER OF BUSINESS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



# 120 YEARS OF DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH

## COVENTRY & WARWICKSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chambers of Commerce are modern, dynamic, and vibrant champions of business communities all across the UK. They are the voice of Britain's civic businesses, helping companies, places, and people to achieve their full potential. Together, our work focuses on creating real change and influencing the agenda to ensure the region remains a great place to trade, locate and grow a business.

1982

The Chamber became a major training provider, with the launch of Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber Training (CWCT)

2008

The Chamber moves to its present home at the Innovation Village on Coventry University's Technology Park

2020

The Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce continues to grow, with over 1500 members from across the region

2023

Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce celebrates its 120-year anniversary



### MEMBERSHIP

**1,500+**  
Member  
Businesses

Representing  
**65,000+**  
Employees



### OUR REACH

**20,000+**  
followers across  
social media platforms

**30,000**  
readership of C&W  
in Business magazine



**120+**  
events delivered per year



### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**£91.2M**  
in exports facilitated in  
Coventry & Warwickshire

**3,500**  
export documents  
annually

### BUSINESS REPRESENTATION

**5** Branch Districts addressing the challenges which matter, on a local level

Our campaigns help to create the policies and conditions to help

**38,000**  
business succeed in  
Coventry & Warwickshire

**830**  
Apprenticeships delivered  
each year

**WE ARE PLACE MAKERS,  
TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE  
IN DEVELOPING OUR  
REGIONAL ECONOMIES**

### GLOBAL NETWORK

**62** Overseas Chambers of Commerce in our Global Network

Enabling  
**£20BN+**  
of export goods to reach  
every country worldwide

**CHAMBER  
MEMBERSHIP HELPS  
YOU DO BUSINESS  
TODAY AND DO  
BETTER BUSINESS  
TOMORROW**

### BUSINESS SUPPORT



**185**  
Business supported through intensive 1:1 Coaching annually through our Business Support Programmes

**177**  
Start Ups supported each year

**80**  
new jobs created each year as a result of Businesses accessing Chamber's support

### PART OF A POWERFUL NETWORK

**53**  
Accredited UK  
Chambers of Commerce

**70,000+**  
Member Businesses  
representing 5.8m  
employees





# DELIVERING FOR STRATFORD DISTRICT: THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

We strongly believe in the power of public and private partnerships. We know from experience that decisions made at a local level by the region's councils, allied with the support provided by the Chamber of Commerce, can have an incredible impact – delivering inclusive growth, helping businesses innovate and grow, creating jobs and building a strong and resilient economy.

Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce has delivered a plethora of business support for many years. This report, however, will focus on Business Support programmes delivered since January 2019. These programmes have been part funded by European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and part funded by our City, County and District

and Borough Councils. They have offered exceptional value for money, encouraging business owners to think strategically, and work on, rather than in, their business. All programmes offer blended support, combining 1:1 support with workshops and masterclasses. Thereby allowing support to be tailored to individual need, facilitating strategic learning and empowering business owners to identify opportunities.

Nothing compares with practical experience; indeed many of the Chamber's Business Advisors have run their own business, giving them real insight into the mindset of business owners. Working diagnostically our Advisors can quickly understand challenges that a business owner faces, and translate

into practical, accessible and scalable actions. Business Advisors are able to demystify grant funding, support business owners to think strategically acting as a catalyst for business development and growth.

We understand Stratford was hard hit by the Coronavirus pandemic, which halted tourism and placed a pause on the bustling hospitality sector within the area. The region is now looking to further diversify their economy by drawing on highly skilled, entrepreneurial and innovative people and businesses to incubate new ideas and rapidly grow the local economy. Together we want to create a stronger, greener and more inclusive economy, delivering participation and prosperity for all.



Welcome from Keely Hancox, Head of Operations

# START-UP

## SUPPORT TO BUILD A NEW BUSINESS DREAM...

The Start Up programme, delivered by the Chamber on behalf of Warwickshire County Council, has successfully delivered support to hundreds of businesses across Warwickshire since 2019. Activities are part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, forming part of the CW Business: Start, Grow and Scale Programme. They are also funded by Warwickshire County Council and all 5 District & Borough Councils. Our experienced Business Advisors understand first-hand the challenges of business start-up.

We help individuals who have an idea, and are looking to start, as well as those in their early phase of trading. Individuals can access up to 12 hours of 1:1 support and a range of workshops and masterclasses.

Not for profit, agile and autonomous we are able to respond quickly to funders' and business' needs. We can develop programmes built on tried and tested successful delivery, as well as trial new ways of working to ensure we continue to innovate and remain relevant. Whether participants are looking to sound out ideas, upskill or ask technical questions, our collaborative approach helps increase chances of success.

### CRMI LTD

CRMi Ltd is an automotive and engineering specialist, buying and sourcing services for companies looking to expand or optimise their manufacturing supply chain. The company launched in September 2020 with support from the Chamber's Start-Up Team, via the CW Business: Start, Grow and Scale Programme.

Business Director, Sam Jeffreys, says: "Working with the Chamber prompted me to try new things to get the business started, giving me an experienced but impartial sounding board for ideas. To begin with I was looking for help with investment, but I got much more. The help, advice and range of support available was crucial to launch the business."



## RAMA FOOD AND COOKERY CLUB

Rama Food and Cookery Club is run by Indian cuisine expert, Uttam Rawat. The Stratford based business offers classes teaching people how to make their own Indian food and provides a food delivery service, with dishes attracting rave reviews. Development Chef, Uttam, came up with the idea when on furlough during lockdown. With the support of the Chamber's

Start-Up Support Service, via the CW Business: Start, Grow and Scale programme, funded by the European Regional Development Fund, Warwickshire County Council and all five District and Boroughs Uttam launched the business. Uttam worked with a mentor and attended a variety of workshops, including marketing, Business Planning and Social Media.

He says: "My mentor was there all the time, offering advice, while the online courses were incredibly useful, giving me help when applying for my start-up loan." Uttam added: "Working with the Chamber was a huge help, it provided me with so much information and confidence which was extremely beneficial along the way."



**93**

new-start businesses created



**314**

masterclasses delivered



**400+**

masterclass attendees

This project is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, forming part of the CW Business: Start, Grow and Scale Programme. It is also funded by Warwickshire County Council and all 5 District & Borough Councils.

# GROWTH

## ACCELERATING A PATH TO BUSINESS SUCCESS...

Our Business Growth Programme, Accelerated Growth, has successfully delivered intensive 1:1 support to thousands of Businesses across Coventry and Warwickshire since 2019. This project forms part of the Coventry & Warwickshire Business Support Programme which is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund. Delivered by

a team of experienced Business Advisors the programme offers 1:1 support, both online, and at Businesses' premises. We work with a wide range of businesses, including those within Engineering and Manufacturing, Food and Drink, Specialist Business and Professional services, information and communication technologies and the Creative sector.

Businesses need to demonstrate an appetite for growth, therein they are looking to recruit staff, diversify and/or explore new markets. We support business owners with strategic business planning, financial management, marketing, sales and grant funding.

## TESTING TIMES

Stratford based, Testing Times provides numeracy resources and training for schools and adults. Owner Stephanie Madden says: "I wanted my business to have a philanthropic impact on maths education and adult numeracy and cannot thank the Chamber enough for their support. They provided a mentoring service and pointed me towards Coventry University Enterprise, to develop my teaching resources. The impact of our resources has been demonstrated in our trial school, sparking a love of maths in children from 4 upwards through play-based learning, helping to develop metacognitive study skills. I was delighted when a primary school I've been working with achieved 92% expected progress in numeracy SATS (national average in 2022 was 71%)."



## ARTEL RUBBER LTD

Alcester-based, Artel Rubber Ltd has been manufacturing silicone hoses and associated products for over 20 years. They supply industries throughout the rail, automotive, defence, marine, agriculture and renewable energies sectors with silicone that has been developed. All products are tested and certified to meet the stringent requirements of each industry. The company received 1:1 support and training under the Accelerated Growth Programme, part funded by ERDF. They received assistance

with their website content, giving them greater reach, better SEO and more enquiries. They were also signposted to other organisations, including an Innovation Programme, Coventry and Warwick University and a specialist Information Technology support programme. All with the aim of helping them grow their business and expand their connections.



**228**

Stratford based businesses engaged with the programme



**41**

businesses undertaken intensive business support programme



**19**

new jobs created



**£592k**

net GVA generated from the jobs created

# TOURISM, LEISURE & HOSPITALITY

After Covid-19 created such a huge challenge in the sector, which was heavily impacted by lockdowns and restrictions, Project Warwickshire was launched in October 2021. Set up by Warwickshire County Council as part of the CW Business: Start, Grow and Scale programme, part funded by the European Regional Development Fund and

Warwickshire County Council. The programme is delivered by Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce and has been supporting small businesses to grow post pandemic through a free recovery and business growth support programme. The project offers fully funded free business assistance, delivered by our experienced business Advisors. This takes the form of 1:1 business coaching, providing

impartial, confidential support and masterclasses on topics such as:

- social media
- online presence
- marketing and recruitment
- customer confidence
- increasing footfall.



## MARCO: ITALIAN DELICATESSEN

Marco's Italian Deli has been in Stratford town centre since 1991. During lockdown, the deli was limited to a takeaway service, and owners Tony English and his son-in-law Marco, approached the Chamber for help in developing new product lines. Tony was assigned Business Advisor Marie, who went on to help the business to boost its online and social media presence and take advantage of local marketing opportunities to successfully raise its profile. Tony said "The support from Marie and the Chamber has been fantastic and proved really

helpful at a very uncertain time for our business. "Marie really got to know us as a business and this helped us to make informed choices of where to invest in new product lines that were not available from other retailers. Once we'd done that, the Chamber support helped us to grow our customer-base through marketing and growing our online presence."

"Since we diversified, our corporate sales have increased massively."



## THE DOUGH HOUSE

The Dough House started life at a kitchen table and, four years later, moved into quaint new premises on Ely Street, Stratford town centre. They offer a range of courses, including pasta making and a Shakespearian cooking experience to individuals, groups and corporate clients. Owner, Fulden Tur received support from Project Warwickshire, helping her to formulate a business plan and successfully apply for a capital grant of almost £15k towards refurbishment costs. She says: "Part of the plan was to look at the corporate market and that is proving to be huge, with some well-known companies bringing teams here to enjoy the experiences. It's an area of the business we can continue to grow."



**26**

Stratford based businesses participated in Project Warwickshire since October 2021



**26**

masterclasses delivered



**28**

jobs retained as a result of the support



**£873k**

net GVA safeguarded from the jobs retained



## TRUE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

For 120 years, Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce has been working with Local Authority partners to drive our region's economy and support businesses to grow. This relationship was built with an unwavering focus on community engagement. Together we continue to support civic minded business leaders in the knowledge that we have some of the best global businesses based within our city, towns and villages. This unique collaboration is successful because it merges public sector strategy with private sector delivery which means a little money can go a long way.

By working together, we have supported businesses through recessions, Brexit, changes in national and local governments, pandemics and global conflicts.

This document celebrates all that we have achieved, and now we focus on where we are going. So here is to our future partnership where Coventry and Warwickshire:

- Becomes a global leader in sustainability and Net Zero
- Facilitates inclusive and diverse workforces
- Encourages skilled local people into well paid jobs
- Builds upon well-established supply chains
- Is an area where entrepreneurs are free to succeed and where profits generated benefit the local communities and economies

Our unique public and private partnerships can be the catalyst for all this and more.

Corin Crane  
Chief Executive  
Officer



# TESTIMONIALS

“The support from Marie and the Chamber has been fantastic and proved really helpful at a very uncertain time for our business. Marie really got to know us as a business, and this helped us to make informed choices of where to invest in new product lines... Once we'd done that, the Chamber support helped us to grow our customer-base through marketing and growing our online presence. Since we diversified and boosted our range... our corporate sales have increased massively which helped the business to survive.”

Tony English, Marco's Deli

“I'd recommend the support to other businesses. It's like having an external person auditing your business and your approach to promotion. It's good practice to assess what we're doing right and wrong and having a mentor who has better knowledge than I do and isn't biased and will tell you if something isn't looking good or where you can improve.”

Charlie Little, Experimental Escape

“The work with the Chamber could not have been better as it prompted me to look at things differently; try new things to get the business started and provided me with an experienced but impartial sounding board for ideas. To begin with I was looking for help with investment in the business, which is why I went to the Chamber in the first place, but I got much more out of it. The help, advice and range of support available was crucial to help launch the business.”

Sam Jeffreys, Business Director for CRMi Ltd

“It can be daunting launching a new business, but Rita has really helped us with our confidence as well as practical advice. From where we were to where we are now is amazing and Rita has helped us more than she will ever know.”

Lisa Cartwright, Access Panel Shop

“Helena helped us with the application paperwork guiding us through it. It included a business strategy, data extraction for the balance sheet, cash flow statistics, profit and loss reports, as well as a rationale for why we needed a grant. We would have given up on the application without Helena's assistance.”

Marc Burrows, Harry Burrows Engineering

“I also benefitted from Sarah's perspective as someone who has run a business at the same as being the parent of young children. She's been there. She's juggled work with the school run. She's plonked the kids in front of the TV for an hour to get something done. The fact she understood me from the perspective of a business coach and woman was incredibly powerful. I'd urge business owners to contact the Chamber for help because it can be a game changer, just like it was for me.”

Faye Hatton, Straw Hat Communications



## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

