

DORSET CHAMBER

2023 - 2024

MANIFESTO

01202 714800



www.dorsetchamber.co.uk



ENABLING BETTER LIVES THROUGH BUSINESS



“Dorset Chamber is one of the most proactive and supportive chambers in the UK, and it has provided us with indispensable advice and guidance over the years.”

Lisa Coley, Sontronics

Welcome to the 2023-2024 Dorset Chamber Manifesto. This sets out our ambitions from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 as the Chamber of Commerce for Dorset, accredited by the British Chambers of Commerce. We approach the year with optimism and energy as we continue to do our best for our members and the wider Dorset business community.

As a Chamber we have tackled some key issues that are still very much considered taboo such as the impact of the menopause on women at work and mental health of our teams and importantly, our business leaders through our Got Your 6 (GU6) project. We will continue to focus on the importance of health and wellbeing, supporting the resilience of our greatest asset, our teams.

The year will see a strong plan of action that will include:

1. Increasing and adding value through membership
2. Building a global economy through international trade
3. Providing events, information and training
4. Providing a voice and lobbying for business
5. Supporting the personal and professional development of our future leaders
6. The Dorset Business Festival in association with Lester Aldridge
7. Delivering the Dorset Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)
8. Working with partners



Caron Khan
President
Dorset Chamber



Ian Girling
Chief Executive
Dorset Chamber

We will continue to focus on helping businesses embrace ESG (environmental, social and governance). This will include a comprehensive programme for businesses to become more environmentally sustainable and aim towards Net Zero, adopt strong social responsibility and strengthen governance.

We've introduced car sharing to reduce the carbon footprint of our events and this year will see Dorset Chamber make a commitment and set a date for becoming carbon neutral.

Following the development of a new Dorset Chamber Inclusivity and Diversity Committee, we will be looking at our own policies and practices in this area as well as sharing best practice with the business community.

Our vision, “Enabling better lives through business” firmly remains. The role of business is critical within society. Business provides employment, helps support our welfare state and education system and provides us with enriched lives through education and opportunity.

Ian Girling, Chief Executive

1. INCREASING AND ADDING VALUE THROUGH MEMBERSHIP

This year will see us continue to add value to businesses through membership as well as maintain our focus on increasing membership as the leading business support organisation in Dorset. We will continue to seek feedback on services through our quarterly Net Promoter Score surveys and we aim to:

Protect

Dorset Chamber membership will continue to provide businesses with vital legal expenses cover as well as access to a legal advice helpline, where members can receive confidential advice in relation to any legal or tax matter. In addition, members have access to specialist employment solicitors who can provide pragmatic advice in relation to HR and personnel management matters.

Connect

Our events offer our members and the wider business community the opportunity to connect with people, organisations and businesses that are invested in raising their profile, growing, learning, and supporting each other and the local economy.

The opportunity to connect is open to people within business across all sectors and we'll always aim to provide a welcoming, friendly and professional environment. You'll see a mixture of face-to-face and virtual events, recognising the benefits of online technology but also the value of meeting face-to-face.

Topics and themes will include essential business skills, business resilience, networking, embedding technology, health and wellbeing, Net Zero and ESG, as well as inclusivity and diversity.

We will also continue to offer members the opportunity to promote their own training through our website, providing members with a valuable platform to connect with the wider community.

Promote

We have an unparalleled multi-channel reach across Dorset through our highly developed range of established respected media channels:

- ✓ Over 5k monthly website visitors
- ✓ Database of 5k+ leaders and decision makers
- ✓ Dorset Business Focus magazine (10k readership)
- ✓ 5.2k LinkedIn followers (70k page reach)
- ✓ 6.7k Twitter followers
- ✓ 2.9k Facebook followers
- ✓ 1.9k Instagram followers

We offer our members the opportunity to:

- ✓ Submit articles and news pieces for our website and magazine
- ✓ Raise their profile through event sponsorship opportunities
- ✓ Receive support and promotion through social media

Saving you money

One of the key benefits of Dorset Chamber membership is the ability to offer our members considerable discounts on a range of services, both through our membership and affinity schemes through the British Chambers of Commerce. This includes significant savings on roadside assistance, business healthcare cover and cash plans.

We offer different membership levels, enabling businesses to access a package of support that meets their specific needs.

We'll also continue to work closely with our Premier and Platinum Business Partners, positioned as champions within our business community and vital contributors and supporters of the work of Dorset Chamber.



Dorset Chamber board members L-R: Lesley Fox, Phil Popham, Nicky Busst, Ian Gilling, Caron Khan, Gary Neild, Tony Brown, Simon Boyd

2. BUILDING A GLOBAL ECONOMY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL TRADE

One of our key roles as a Chamber accredited to the British Chambers of Commerce is building a global economy through international trade. As a one-stop-shop for international trade, we will continue to:

Encourage businesses to consider international trade opportunities and seek new overseas markets. This is through events, general advice and support available through our magazine and website as well as bespoke advice on new markets. We also offer access to a global network of accredited overseas Chambers of Commerce through the British Chambers of Commerce.

We will continue to focus on our international trade training programme, helping businesses to develop their capacity to trade overseas. This includes introductory training to exporting as well as more complex programmes around documentation and legal requirements.

Training can also be offered on a bespoke basis and members receive a substantial discount on training.

As an accredited Chamber, we can issue documentation on behalf of HMRC. Our highly qualified and professional international trade team offer first class support in terms of issuing vital documentation for exporters including Customs Declarations and Certificates of Origin. The team can also offer advice on any aspect of documentation.

Our successful International Trade networking events will continue, providing a valuable platform for businesses to connect with other exporters, share knowledge and hear from expert speakers.

Our expert team are also on hand to offer advice and support to businesses seeking to, or already, trading overseas.

We will continue to focus on our international trade training programme, helping businesses to develop their capacity to trade overseas.



3. PROVIDING EVENTS, INFORMATION AND TRAINING

We will continue to build on our highly successful events programme, both in-person and online. The events offer a valuable platform for networking and hearing from expert speakers. Designed to meet the needs of specific audiences, our events programme includes:

- ✓ Business Leader events – specifically for directors and owners of businesses
- ✓ Breakfast and lunchtime networking events
- ✓ Online networking with accredited Chambers across the UK
- ✓ Workshops offered by our members as well as courses delivered by Dorset Chamber
- ✓ Sector specific events
- ✓ Business Expos

You'll see a range of topical issues being covered including business growth, international trade, key business disciplines, health and wellbeing, ESG (with a major focus on carbon reduction) and inclusion and diversity.

We will continue to develop our website as a valuable online information resource, providing tools and advice on specific issues.

In addition we are developing a range of new services to further support businesses in Dorset.

4. PROVIDING A VOICE AND LOBBYING FOR BUSINESS

One of the most important roles we deliver is our voice for business and lobbying at both a local, regional and national level. We'll continue to provide media comment and campaign for business on key issues. Our membership of the British Chambers of Commerce also means we have a powerful national voice that is highly respected in Westminster and Whitehall.

As an active member of the British Chambers of Commerce South West, we will also work with our fellow South West accredited Chambers to provide a business voice for the region and support the development of the Great South West.

We will build on our successful sector forums, helping us improve our understanding of the key issues businesses face on a sector level and supporting development of services we offer. This also informs our lobbying and campaigns.

We will also encourage all Dorset businesses to complete the British Chambers of Commerce Quarterly Economic Survey, the most respected and influential independent business survey in the UK and a significant economic indicator.

5. SUPPORTING THE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF OUR FUTURE LEADERS



In 2022, we launched our Future Leaders Forum, sponsored by Mazars, which is a series of events supporting the personal and professional development of our future leaders aged under 30. Meeting on a bi-monthly basis, these events will continue to provide a valuable networking opportunity as well as a focus on a range of themes, including effective networking, ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance), public

speaking, interview skills and building confidence. We will also have the opportunity to hear life stories from inspiring business leaders.

The Future Leaders Forum will drive the programme and a member of the Forum will be joining the Dorset Chamber Board, supporting the development of and informing our future strategies around business support.

6. THE DORSET BUSINESS FESTIVAL IN ASSOCIATION WITH LESTER ALDRIDGE

This year we will be holding the first Dorset Business Festival during the week commencing 9 October 2023. This will feature 3 major events with a focus on celebrating Dorset businesses:

A business conference in association with Lester Aldridge, *The Future of Business*

With keynote speaker David Smith, Economics Editor of the Sunday Times and hosted by presenter and business journalist Declan Curry, the conference will feature expert panel discussions on the following topics:

- ✓ Digital transformation and the changing business environment
- ✓ Adopting ESG for business growth
- ✓ Remodelling town centres for the future
- ✓ Redesigning our work-life balance

The Dorset Business Expo in association with Lester Aldridge

Beginning with a breakfast for exhibitors, the expo will offer exhibitors the opportunity to promote their business and services and network with a wide range of delegates.

The Dorset Business Awards in association with Lester Aldridge

Re-defined after a break of 4 years and with an independent expert judging panel, the Dorset Business Awards will recognise excellence in business over a number of categories and will culminate in a prestigious Awards Ceremony. The awards will celebrate Dorset businesses over 10 categories.

We'd like to acknowledge and say a huge thank you to our Premier Festival Partner Lester Aldridge and our five Festival Partners.

Premier Festival Partner



Festival Partners



Dorset
Council

THE DOLPHIN

YMCA
BOURNEMOUTH
Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch

L-R: Tony Brown, vice-president, Dorset Chamber; Grant Esterhuizen, partner, Lester Aldridge; Caron Khan, president, Dorset Chamber; Ian Girling, chief executive, Dorset Chamber





7. DELIVERING THE DORSET LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LSIP)

The Dorset Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is a three-year Dorset-wide review of skills provision against the current and future needs of businesses, funded by Department of Education (DfE).

It aims to identify, and provide recommendations on, the skills and training provision which Dorset employers need to grow and develop their businesses now and in the future.

The result will be a series of recommendations on post-16 technical education including apprenticeships, T-levels, and other workplace learning.

The delivery of the LSIP is led by Dorset Chamber, working closely with public and private sector partners including Dorset employers, the LEP, The FSB, local authorities and all Dorset colleges and independent providers.

8. WORKING WITH PARTNERS

We'll continue to work closely with our partners in both the public and private sector, seeking to work collaboratively in supporting businesses across Dorset.

We'll also work closely with town Chambers across Dorset. We consider our partnerships within the community and voluntary sector to be vital in recognising their contribution to our economy and the valuable services they deliver.

We very much welcome an open and proactive conversation with businesses, partners and stakeholders and if you'd like to talk to us at any time, our door is always open.



We are a progressive, modern and inclusive Chamber of Commerce and our thanks go to our Members, Business Partners, Board, Ambassadors, Partners, Sponsors and of course the Chamber team for your great support.

We look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Ian Girling, Chief Executive

Dorset Chamber Premier Business Partners



www.afcb.co.uk



www.lesteraldridge.com

Dorset Chamber Platinum Business Partners



www.aoig.co.uk



www.blueskyfp.co.uk



www.bournemouthairport.com



www.thecollege.co.uk



www.bournemouth.ac.uk



www.deepsouthmedia.co.uk



Digital Storm

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THE DOLPHIN

www.dolphinshoppingcentre.co.uk



Digital Security
Progress. Protected.

www.eset.com/uk



Field International

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www.greendaleconstruction.com



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MPLY

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www.reidsteel.com



www.savills.co.uk



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www.vizst.com

OUR TEAM VALUES

As a team, we are committed to the following values:

EXCELLENCE	Leading customer service, professionalism and responsiveness.
INNOVATION	Supporting continuous growth and improvement in all we do.
INTEGRITY	Uncompromising standards of integrity and ethical conduct.
RESPECT	For our colleagues, our customers, our organisation and the business community.
TEAMWORK	Universal teamwork and collaboration with a can-do attitude to support the organisation and serve Dorset.
WELLBEING	Providing a family-friendly and supportive work and professional environment.



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