

**Connect | Support | Influence**







# Welcome to Kingston Chamber of Commerce

We are an independent, not for profit organisation entirely funded by our membership and one of the largest borough chambers in London. Formally recognised as the business representative for the business community in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, we provide networking, training, advice and business development opportunities.

Our three objectives are to:

## Connect

**We help businesses in all areas of the Borough by delivering valuable connections, including:**

- **Borough Business**, a quarterly print/online magazine, promoting local business news features.
- **Patron Membership**
- **Business Breakfast** monthly events.
- **Netwalking** mornings.
- **@Work** sector networking.
- **Regular e-news** updates of Chamber and member events.
- **Chamber Socials** and community meet-ups.
- **Women in Business** events.
- **Coffee+Connect** networking for start-ups, sole traders and freelancers.

## Support

**We organise major influential business events, including:**

- **Business Expos**
- **Business support** programmes.
- **Future of Work Summit**
- **Kingston Borough Business Awards**, an inclusive and Borough-wide Awards programme.
- **Kingston Green Business Community** initiatives.
- **New Malden Business Forum** for high street retailers and professional businesses.
- **Skills and career** initiatives.
- **Think Green** sustainable business webinars.

## Influence

**We can represent your business issues locally and regionally. We work with key local stakeholders including:**

- Affiliation to the London Chamber of Commerce
- DWP
- Kingston Adult Education
- Kingston College
- Kingston Council
- Kingston First
- Kingston University
- Kingston Voluntary Action
- Local councillors and MPs
- Members of London Local Chambers
- South London Partnership

## Who we are

The Chamber has three part time employed staff, we all have different roles but work very much as a team. We have an open-door policy here, so please feel free to pop in and say hello. We are on the ground floor in the Guildhall, High Street, Kingston. Just ask reception to let us know you are here, or call us on 020 8541 4441.

Occasionally, we can all be out at events, so if you can't get hold of us please leave a message or email us and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

**Forbes Low**  
Chamber CEO  
[forbes@kingstonchamber.co.uk](mailto:forbes@kingstonchamber.co.uk)

Forbes is the CEO and represents the Chamber and the local business community on all matters across the borough.

He has a long history with the Chamber, he joined as a member in 2009, later becoming a Director and then President. Forbes took up the role of Chief Executive in April 2019.

Forbes is also a graphic designer and has run his own business, Forbes Design Associates since 1998. Forbes is based locally and is a former Kingston Grammar School pupil.

**Ilona Saliev**  
Events / Engagement Coordinator  
[ilona@kingstonchamber.co.uk](mailto:ilona@kingstonchamber.co.uk)

Ilona oversees the Chamber communications and marketing, including website content, email newsletters, twitter (@KingstonCOC) and facebook (www.facebook.com/KingstonCoC) accounts. Ilona and the team run all our events, including the Future of Work Summit and Chessington Business EXPO.

**Robyn Shooter**  
Digital Communications Coordinator  
[robyn@kingstonchamber.co.uk](mailto:robyn@kingstonchamber.co.uk)

Robyn supports and manages the Chamber digital communications and marketing and supports the team at events. If you have news, views, promotions or offers to share with Chamber members, please get in touch with us.

## Our Board

Like many other similar membership organisations, Kingston Chamber of Commerce has an elected [Board of Directors](#).

The Board supports the Chief Executive with the more strategic areas of chamber business as well as with broader business development issues in the Kingston borough.

The expertise of our Board Directors covers a wide range of business experience and backgrounds. Directors are elected for a three-year period but may choose to be nominated for re-election at the Annual General Meeting in May.

Each year, members appoint a President who represents the Chamber at formal functions and presides over quarterly board meetings.

We adopt a highly inclusive approach with all our Board Members and the mix of different backgrounds, outlooks, and experiences is of huge benefit to the Chamber and our members. Their business expertise is a very valuable asset to the Chamber and its membership.

### Our Directors

Mark Attwater	MyBluPrint
Rowena Bass	Accountant
Martin Booth	LeBoo Media
Katerina Damcova	IQ in IT
Richard Excell	Excell Design and Marketing
Peter Greenwood	Greenwood Residential
Chris Hirsch	Holland Hahn & Wills
<i>Vice President</i>	
Julie Leach	Julie Leach Associates
<i>President</i>	
Peter Lynagh	ABLE
Dr Martha Mador	Kingston University
Clare Mannall	CEM Bookkeeping
<i>Treasurer</i>	
Amanda McLoughlin	Twickenham BID
Dominic North	Red-Black IT
Joyce Ong	Marketing Tech
Michelle Peters	Paragon Cleaning Management
Stella Raphael-Reeves	Kingston College
Mike Reed	Time & Leisure
Daniel Rosier	DoubleTree by Hilton, Kingston
Rachel Stewart	Russell-Cooke Solicitors
Simon Vine	United Business Group







# What we do

**We are a lot more than just a networking organisation, members can access all our marketing and promotional activities to help raise business profile.**

We offer representation and advocacy on issues affecting your business, we represent the business community with our local partners such as the council and London Chambers and on a national level via our MP's.

## NETWORKING EVENTS

The more events you go to the more you will grow your network, it's that simple. Members get advance notification of all our events via a weekly email newsletter, please read these updates and book your events as soon as you can as some events get booked up very quickly! Let us know if you are not getting our news, check your junk box and add us to your safe sender list. All our events must be booked in advance and online via our [events page](#).

Chamber events are discounted for members, please select the members rate when booking. Do try different styles of events to see what works best for you and your business, if you're not a morning person you might prefer the lunches, for example.

Remember your membership is for the whole company, not an individual, so anyone from your organisation can attend as a member. Some companies like to split up events, so one person might attend all the breakfasts and another all the lunches, whatever suits you best.

## BUSINESS BREAKFAST

Usually on the first Thursday of every month at member venues across the borough. These are well attended, usually around 30-40 attendees and a good mix of informal and formal networking. At the Breakfast Breakfasts, we have guest business speakers who share their insights, be it on how to price your services, mental wellbeing, improve leadership skills or how to network.

Most often we have a seated breakfast to allow you time to get to know people, we don't do a seating plan, so it's up to you who you sit with, do ask one of us on the day if you would like some assistance with this.

## BUSINESS EXPO

Chessington EXPO is a great way to showcase in the south of the borough and Surrey. It has been running for four years, with a footfall of over 300, 35 plus exhibitors, seminars, Green Zone and speed networking. It's free to attend as a visitor, but if you really want to make an impact then take a stand in the main atrium.

## COFFEE + CONNECT (AT THE WYCH ELM)

This runs every two months and held at the Wych Elm pub in Kingston. This is geared to start-up businesses, freelancers and micro businesses to network. It is an informal coffee and crossiants morning with a business advice slot which gives people a chance to hear and learn some top tips.

## FUTURE OF WORK SUMMIT

2023 was the inaugural Summit which provided a successful day at Kingston Business School. Free to Chamber members, the programme included roundtable discussions, business seminars, speed networking and the University's hackathon. It provided a wealth of learning, networking and inspiration.

## KINGSTON BOROUGH BUSINESS AWARDS

Kingston Borough Business Awards (KBBA) was launched in 2021 and it was open to a wide variety of sectors; from health the sole trader to freelancers to excellence in customer service.

We held the evening awards at the All Saints Kingston, a historic building in Kingston and we were joined by the heads of Kingston University, Kingston Council, Kingston College and many other large businesses across the borough. It is a transparent and fair process and a key business highlight in the year.

## KINGSTON GREEN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Inconjunction with Kingston Council, the Chamber are partners in the newly formed Kingston Green Business Community. This is a free membership for Kingston businesses who are actively following sustainable practices and want to share knowledge and skills. It is essentially a networking hub. It is growing in numbers and proves that many Kingston businesses believe that they should take their own steps to be more sustainable.

## NETWALKING

This is a new addition to the Chamber activities and has been a popular addition to the diary. Free to attend for Chamber members, this is a chance to appreciate the many natural walks we have in the borough and chat with other Chamber members. Bring your four legged doggie friends too.

## NEW MALDEN BUSINESS FORUM

These are quarterly forums primarily for businesses in and around New Malden. The district centres sometimes feel that their voice gets lost so this was a new initiative set up last year and it is beginning to gain momentum. It is a chance to understand from speakers what is actually happening in New Malden on regeneration plans or high street initiatives and give businesses a chance to network.

## WOMEN IN BUSINESS

These are quarterly events, and in conjunction with Time & Leisure magazine. These events are friendly, popular and very well attended. Book early, some of our lunch events have a maximum of 25 capacity and once they are full, we operate a waiting list.

## OTHER EVENTS

Gin tasting, wine and cheese evenings, curry nights, coffee mornings for freelancers, sector specific events, golf days, presidents ball not to mention our members own events.

# How to join us

Please complete the online membership application form on the Chamber website membership page [here](#).

Membership is annual and costs are scaled based on the number of full time employees within the business. You can pay via invoice or spread the cost monthly via direct debit. There is a one-off joining fee of £25 plus VAT which must be paid at point of application.

If you are paying via invoice it can be added to your invoice.

Membership is only activated once payment has been made or direct debit mandates completed. Membership fee information is online [here](#).

# Membership fees

Membership can be paid by invoice or by a monthly via GoCardless + VAT. [See here for more information.](#)

Membership Level	Gross Membership Ex VAT £	Monthly Membership Ex VAT £
1 / Charities (under 50 employees)	£124	£10.33
2 – 5*	£205	£17.08
6 -15	£286	£23.83
16 – 50 (& Charities 50+ employees)	£448	£37.33
51-200	£752	£62.66
200+	£1,593	£132.75

\* Includes Small Retailers, Restaurants, Pubs, Cafes  
i.e. less than 5 FTE staff

## Cancellation

All our membership fees are based on an annual subscription. We provide our members the opportunity to pay on a monthly basis, to assist with their cash flow, by spreading the cost over the year. However, the balance of the subscription must be paid in full if there is any cancellation during the year.

# Being a member

**This is your first opportunity to shout about your business. Unless you want to remain anonymous, all members have a company listing on our business directory. You will receive a login for this once you have completed the joining process.**

## COMPANY PROFILE PAGE ON OUR BUSINESS DIRECTORY

This listing is populated from your application form, but you can edit it at any point by logging into your company profile page on our website which you do here: [www.kingstonchamber.co.uk/profile/](http://www.kingstonchamber.co.uk/profile/)

Any changes on this can take a few days to be approved by website admin and go live. We do get asked to recommend organisations and always refer enquiries to our members via our business directory pages, so make sure your contact details are correct.

## CHAMBER EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

Every week, we send an email to a broad audience of approx 1,700 businesses located in the borough. If you wish to have your content featured in the Chamber news, kindly submit it [here](#).

This could be anything from a promotional offer, news about a project you have worked on, staff news, or even a personal challenge like a marathon. Use this to maximise your exposure to members and business community.

## PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

If you are holding an event or workshop, we can promote it for you on our website and add to our email communication. To tell us about your event please complete the [online form](#) on our website events page or get in touch.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

For social media support, please follow and tag us in so we can like and share. You can find us on twitter (@KingstonCOC) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/KingstonCoC](http://www.facebook.com/KingstonCoC)) , Instagram (@kingstoncoc1905) accounts.

Furthermore, we maintain a LinkedIn company page, providing you with easy access to the latest news and event reminders. Follow us and connect to boost your visibility, engage in discussions, and e-meet with other members.

If you don't tell us about it, we can't share it so please tag us in posts so we are sure to see them.

## BLOG

You can upload a blog to our website once a month at no cost. Full information and our blog guidelines are [here](#).

This is another great tool to raise brand awareness, make it informative and relevant and be sure to use an image to go with your copy. Simply click the submit a blog form and upload your content. Any new blog must be approved by website admin before it goes live, this can take a couple of days.

## BOROUGH BUSINESS MAGAZINE

This is our quarterly magazine, 4000 circulation, including 1800 printed and distributed to businesses, hotels, venues, theatres, etc across the Borough. Produced for us by Benham Publishing, each issue focusses on a different business-related topic with regular features.

Members have the opportunity to submit editorial content at no cost. However, please be aware that the content will undergo thorough checks, and we cannot guarantee its publication. If you are interested, kindly contact us for more information before submitting your copy.

## REFERRAL REWARDS SCHEME

Save money on your membership renewal! Refer other businesses to us and help us grow. If your referral joins us we reward you with a £20 voucher off your membership subscription for next year, you will also be entered in our monthly referral draw for a £20 retail voucher. This reward scheme is uncapped, the more referrals you make the more you can save off your subscription fees.

## ANNUAL EVENTS PASS

If you go to lots of events, you can save money with an annual event pass (£350 plus VAT). You can buy this at any point in your membership online

You will be issued with an event pass code which can be shared with anyone in your organisation that you choose, you then just book every event yourself at no additional cost.

## PATRON SPONSORSHIP

Our Patrons share the values that drive the Chamber and key partners to help the growth of the local economy. Becoming a Patron will provide you the platform to put your knowledge back into the business community. As a not-for-profit organisation, the support of our Patron members allows Kingston Chamber to maintain cost-effective membership fees and to provide additional support to smaller businesses and start-ups. See here for [more information](#).



## Practical tips

**The day before our networking events that you have booked, we will provide an attendee list, with email addresses in a post-event email. We share name, company name and company website.**

Due to GDPR we don't give out email addresses or phone numbers of guests. It's up to you to make contact, if you miss somebody on the day and want to get in touch let us know and we can facilitate that on an individual basis.

We issue name badges on arrival at most of our events to help you identify who is who.

Booking closes at 2.00pm the day before an event or when it reaches maximum capacity, whichever is sooner. If you are unable to attend an event that you have booked for please let us know as soon as possible. We have to let venue know numbers and pay for catering the day before an event and will be unable to refund after this point.

We use Eventbrite to manage our bookings and event payment. All the information of attendees is pulled through from your Eventbrite, so please double check your Eventbrite account for typos and make sure your company contact information is correct.

## Volunteering

**If you would like to get involved in the community in other ways there are plenty of opportunities.**

Each year the Chamber President chooses a charity who we help by raising funds and awareness and offering other support where we can.

### EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Can you inspire the next generation of business owners? We work very closely with the local education sector, from secondary schools, colleges and university.

The education sector is always keen to hear from local employers or business owners and you can get involved in many different ways depending on your preference.





Whether you are the manager of a large multinational or work on your own from a home office, Kingston Chamber is **THE place to go to for business support.**

Our aim is to be your partner in business and to help save you time and money, using our extensive knowledge and connections. Our membership fees are competitive and flexible.

We are the only formally recognised business support organisation in Kingston. We have members of all sectors and sizes, inside and outside the Borough.

There has **never been a better time to be a member.**

“ ”

We have been able to see how the Kingston Chamber of Commerce helps businesses to network, grow and thrive. Especially during the lockdown when they showed resilience and innovation connecting everybody online. They really stepped up, lead the community and showed strength during such difficult times for businesses which ultimately gave people hope.

There is a quote that says “If opportunity doesn’t knock, build the door.”

I believe this represents what the Chamber does in our community.

**John Zapata Restrepo**

Managing Director & Co-Founder  
Avatar Cleaning Services Ltd

