



Business Manifesto

2026

A plan for Change

LOCAL *engagement* REGIONAL *representation* GLOBAL *opportunity*





Our Mission 2026

To advance the Thames Valley's global reputation as a business location of choice and an engine of growth for the United Kingdom.

The ambition is to shape local and national growth plans that can secure the thriving, green, healthier future we want for a truly competitive Thames Valley.



MELLOW
FLOW™



It's time to dance to the Rhythm of Blues™ and celebrate AkzoNobel's Colours of the Year 2026 – an upbeat and versatile colour family that's calming, connecting and creative.

There's a trio of shades for 2026 – the light blue Mellow Flow™, the dark blue Slow Swing™ and the vibrant Free Groove™ – so everyone can find a style that works for them. The harmonious collection of signature indigos is just what we need in our homes, according to the results of the company's extensive annual trend research.

AkzoNobel is thrilled to feature our Colours of the Year 2026 throughout the latest Business Manifesto.

AkzoNobel

Proud member of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce.

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In 2026, it will be 100 years since the University of Reading (UoR) was granted its Royal Charter and became a university. The centenary is a suitable occasion to showcase our impact on the Thames Valley in the past, present and future. We are planning celebrations to mark 100 years of excellence throughout the year.

The kind invitation to contribute to the 9th annual Business Manifesto of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (TVCC) by providing a foreword is therefore timely, the more so as TVCC is celebrating its 75th anniversary.

Milestones focus the mind: how can we ensure the Thames Valley continues to flourish in the next 100 years? As an archaeologist I have always been interested in the long-term and it has served me well to be optimistic.

We can continue to flourish, most effectively, through impactful partnership and a systems leadership approach to enable changes that will deliver future prosperity, and growth, and help ensure we **fulfil our ambition for a more prosperous, healthier, greener Thames Valley**. Challenge, and change, will remain but working together with purpose and leadership, we can achieve much.

We are championing new ways of co-developing solutions with the ambition of presenting the Thames Valley in a single, clear, and coherent, regional proposition that equals more than the sum of its parts. By way of example, the UoR is:

- A proud co-founder, alongside Heathrow, Honda, TVCC and the University of the Built Environment, of the regions first All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the Thames Valley launched late last year. The APPG will be an important instrument to present the region with one coherent voice in Westminster. We are working with MPs to shape and take forward the two, or three, key priorities to advance the profile and prospects of the whole region and its contribution to UK plc.
- Benefiting from our involvement in the Thames Valley's life sciences working group. Our School of Biological Sciences has set-up an Industry Advisory Board – meaning businesses are directly shaping our teaching programmes.
- An active supporter of Windsor Debates as a forum for thought leadership and reflection on what matters in shaping the Thames Valley's future in a time of rapid environmental, technological, political, social, and cultural change and volatility.
- A beneficiary of the Thames Valley's strength in attracting high value foreign direct investment (FDI), and the buoyant international trade environment supported by TVCC – Shinfield Studio's being the highest profile FDI we have welcomed on our land.

With our valued partnership with TVCC, we move forward with such purpose as we continue to lead on local engagement, regional representation, and global opportunity, by:

- Maintaining the pledge to be an active member of the Thames Valley Assembly (TVA); it is a powerful driver for change, providing the independent voice of business for the region.
- Driving a sector-based approach, and identifying market opportunities, to ensure that as one of the UK's economic powerhouses, we continue to prosper.
- Focusing on the direct and indirect impacts that will affect, and opportunities that drive, the delivery of our ambition, including:
 - Creating climate resilient businesses and jobs in a region that continues to drive the growth agenda.
 - Providing adequate housing, especially for younger generations, and resilient infrastructure (clean energy and power, digital, water, rail) networks.
 - Supporting proposals that improve our NHS, healthcare services and innovation.
 - Unleashing the regulatory and taxation burden on our business and the key sectors of growth.
 - Fostering the provision of relevant green, IT and other skills, at the right quality and the right time.
- Providing a business voice, into national government, to ensure the delivery of their strategies is commercially focused.
- Ensuring we can help shape the focus and direction of a future Thames Valley Mayoral Authority.

There is clear evidence that the partnership forged between TVCC, the UoR and the region's senior business and local authority leaders, is helping ensure we are an effective part of that system approach to power the Thames Valley.

As we prepare for an exciting milestone year for the UoR and TVCC, I am delighted to take on the role of Chair of the TVA, following the defining work of its founding Chair Chris Parker who has helped TVCC to shape the TVA into a powerful, diverse group which reflects the reach of the Chamber across sectors, business communities and companies large and small.



Professor Robert Van de Noort, CBE DL
Vice-Chancellor, University of Reading



Ambitious



Competitive



Connected

The Cogs



Global



Influential



Working

Introduction

Welcome to the 9th iteration of our Business Manifesto, TVCC's annual policy statement outlining our priorities and work programme for 2026.

As the independent voice of business in the Thames Valley, for micro to multinational organisations, we aim to drive better economic conditions and new opportunities for our members and the wider business and resident community.

A trusted partner to business for over 75 years, we represent and enhance the interests of our members across the economic functional geography of the Thames Valley - which covers **Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Swindon**.

We offer local engagement, regional representation, and global opportunity.

We remain strong advocates that presenting the case for the Thames Valley requires a single, clear, and coherent, regional proposition that all stakeholders come behind. This requires leaders and leadership. It requires models of working, a triple helix approach, which enables and empowers stakeholders to act with purpose and impact.

Across our six themes of **Ambitious, Competitive, Connected, Global, Influential and Working** Thames Valley, we outlined our priorities.

The Thames Valley has a tremendous story to tell. How it is told, and by whom, matters. The region's business community has a key role to play and a responsibility to lead and show leadership during such a crucial period for the UK.

We help our members to highlight good practice and how their actions are delivering economic growth and benefit, not just for the Thames Valley, but for the wider UK. Through our depth of industry and civic connections across traditional geographical boundaries and industry sectors, we want to help ensure we fulfil our ambition for a more prosperous, healthier, greener Thames Valley.

Find out more [About Us](#)

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue jacket and a lanyard, is speaking into a microphone. She is gesturing with her right hand. The background is blurred, showing other people at a conference or event.

The *largest*
and the most
influential
membership
organisation in the
Thames Valley



Home to World Leading Academic Institutions including the No.1 University in the World.



Home to Heathrow, the UK's only hub airport and the world's most connected airport.



Outperforming and growing faster than any other region outside of London.



Home to the world's most successful companies and the UK's key growth sectors.



Leading skills and training programmes in Oxfordshire and Berkshire.



BERKSHIRE

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

OXFORDSHIRE

SWINDON



Thames Valley & The Industrial Strategy

Following a “summer of strategies” in 2025, which marked the release of a number of government documents, including the Industrial Strategy, its associated key sector plans and the 10-Year Health Plan for England, attention, quite rightly, needs to move beyond these plans and strategies toward delivery.

In the Industrial Strategy eight sectors have been identified that have the greatest growth potential over the next decade and a critical role to play in supporting economic security and resilience, net zero and regional growth.

We believe the Thames Valley has evidential strengths in no less than five of these sectors (advanced manufacturing, creative, defence, digital technologies, and life sciences) and clusters of national importance across the remaining three (clean energy industries, financial services, and professional and business services).

Showcasing our region, we will focus on highlighting how investment in the Thames Valley is having a wider impact and delivering economic growth and benefit to the whole of the UK. Government is focused on devolving powers to the Combined Mayoral Authorities (CMAs), the direction of travel is for the Thames Valley to be organised to deliver devolution at scale by May 2028. In readiness and in the meantime, there is work to be done to show how we can help deliver the growth and productivity gains required for UK plc to thrive.



Ambitious *Thames Valley*

We are the champions of our region's success and what makes us successful. Throughout our work and activities, in 2026, we are increasing our efforts to showcase why the Thames Valley is a great place to do business, and how that contributes to the growth of UK plc.

The Thames Valley has the UK's second fastest growing economy. Year on year, we are one of the UK's most successful regions for attracting foreign direct investment. With one of the highest percentages of companies exporting and driving international trade, we also have one of the highest concentrations of foreign owned companies with their worldwide or European HQ's.

However, we need to do more collectively to bring these figures to life.

Our key priorities

01

Defining the Thames Valley's value proposition

We will develop a value proposition that equals more than the sum of its parts. We need to, and will, define what we are best known for, why these make it a great place to do business and, how the region is the effective partner stakeholders require to succeed.

02

Driving growth for UK plc

We will maintain our momentum in presenting the case, and positioning the Thames Valley, at the heart of the government plan for growth. We will work to identify opportunities for prototyping solutions for the UK, and what will be required to make them happen in our region. We will champion the role of Small and Medium Sized (SMEs) and exporters and internationalisation as a highly effective means to make our local economy more productive and more resilient. We will develop new value added- services and consultancy to help more exporters to explore new markets.

03

Providing the systems leadership between industry, academia and civic leaders to realise the Thames Valleys potential

Through partnership and leadership, we will aim to prepare the ground for devolution at scale, to secure our wider Business Manifesto priorities.



3M – Science. Applied to Life

Founded in the USA in 1902, 3M's global science-based technology business with a market capitalisation of more than \$80 billion. Globally 3M makes more than 27,000 different products, investing in research and development and using science to continuously innovate.

Well known 3M brands include Scotch, Command, Post-it, Scotchgard, Thinsulate and Scotch-Brite. It employs more than 1,000 people across the UK with 441 based at the UK and Ireland HQ and Customer Innovation Centre in Bracknell in the heart of the Thames Valley.

There are three 3M plants in the UK which manufacture PPE including disposable and reusable respirators in Newton Aycliffe in County Durham; supplied air respirators in Skelmersdale in Lancashire; and industrial adhesive tapes in Bangor in Northern Ireland. 3M exports products from these factories all over the world to sectors including healthcare, automotive, marine, energy, defence, aerospace, and electronics.

3M's financial and skills investment into the UK continues, with the planned opening, in 2026, of a [new automotive aftermarket and training facility](#), at the MIRA Tech Park, Warwickshire, is one of Europe's leading automotive and mobility innovation hubs. The new facility will upskill technicians taking increasingly complex repairs and enable staff see greater productivity since highly knowledgeable technicians can complete jobs faster, more efficiently and with fewer errors.

"Securing this new facility at MIRA Tech Park is a significant milestone for 3M, as it will enable us to demonstrate our skills training capabilities, address skills shortages across markets and foster innovation in a state-of-the-art environment."

Lee Roan, 3M Regional Division Sales Manager for the Automotive Aftermarket Division.

“

The Thames Valley economy is the strongest in the country outside London, but we do so whilst being green and safe. We have a 'secret sauce' that could help drive a happy and healthy economic growth nationally. I look forward to standing up for this ambition both locally and in Parliament.

Jack Rankin
MP for Windsor

CASE STUDY



Competitive *Thames Valley*

The Thames Valley is one of Europe's most successful and productive business communities. Our objective is to support its continued success and help ensure our economy remains competitive.

Securing growth is rightly a key tenet of the Industrial Strategy, to ensure the UK is successful and competitive. As the region's only Accredited Chamber, and leading business organisation, we are best placed to articulate what are the most favourable conditions that can deliver this growth for the next decade. Competitiveness also means creating the conditions for sustainable, inclusive, and innovation-led growth that benefits every part of the Thames Valley.

Our key priorities

01

Advancing our curated industry working groups

The region is home to several world-leading industry clusters, including advanced engineering, digital technologies, and life sciences. We are also seeing rapid growth in other industry clusters, such as advanced technology, creative industries, defence and net-zero transitions. TVCC already hosts the region's only, business-led, life sciences group and in 2025 set-up the same for defence and security. Proven examples of the triple, if not quadruple, helix models at work, we will continue to advance these, and other, groups.

02

Creating the most favourable conditions for growth

We are providing opportunities that help our businesses succeed, including promoting innovation; fostering collaboration; driving regulatory reform; enabling access to overseas markets and supporting increased business investment.

03

Deepening our Political Engagement

We are focused on ensuring we effectively represent the region's business community and that our business voice is being heard. We are helping to shape the decisions, local and central government are considering, to make sure we secure most benefit for our region and its future.



Moderna Innovation and Technology Centre

TVCC was proud to have been heavily involved in supporting the set-up of and to attend the official opening of the Moderna Innovation and Technology Centre (MITC) in Oxfordshire, joining the Health Secretary, Wes Streeting MP, alongside senior Ministers, including Science Minister Lord Vallance.

The facility marks a cornerstone of Moderna's ten-year strategic partnership with the UK Government, designed to strengthen health resilience and drive economic growth.

The MITC is rightly celebrated as this milestone is a first for the UK as it's the only facility dedicated to manufacturing mRNA vaccines, delivering a secure, on-shore supply of British-made mRNA respiratory vaccines. Beyond manufacturing, the MITC is home to a cutting-edge clinical R&D hub helping to cultivate the next generation of scientific talent.

Moderna's presence in the Thames Valley has had significant benefit for the UK, which includes to date:

- Largest industrial sponsor of clinical trials in the UK and since 2021 it has launched 23 clinical trials across 110 UK sites.
- Embarked upon mRNA Access Partnerships with researchers at the Universities of Oxford, Imperial College London, Liverpool, Surrey, and Aberystwyth.
- Funded three UK-based post-doctoral fellows and two PhD students.
- Launched 19 clinical trials since 2021, involving 124 clinical trial sites across England, Scotland, and Wales
- Pioneered innovative trial recruitment strategies by leveraging community pharmacies through its partnership with Boots and primary care, embedding research within local communities.
- To date, more than 12,700 people in the UK have participated in a Moderna clinical trial.
- The multi-million-pound investment created hundreds of jobs during construction, and benefitted suppliers from across the UK, including the north east of England.
- 150+ UK employees.

The MITC is more than a site — it represents the power of partnership across government, industry, and the UK life sciences ecosystem, strengthening the UK's health resilience and the Thames Valley's position as a global life sciences hub.

Find out more, [visit Moderna UK](#)

CASE STUDY

moderna

“

It has been incredible to see the MITC built at speed to bring our mRNA manufacturing to the UK, and this progress wouldn't have been possible without the support of our partners and the UK Government. With the facility now open and operational, we're proud to be the first company to have established a UK-based mRNA manufacturing capability to support NHS seasonal vaccination programmes. This mission-driven collaboration strengthens the UK's pandemic preparedness and is a win-win-win for patients, for government, and for the life sciences sector.

Darius Hughes
Moderna





Connected Thames Valley

The Thames Valley is one of the UK's, if not Europe's, best-connected regions, with unrivalled local, regional, and international connectivity.

Our economic growth, and stability, depend significantly on maintaining the advantage of this connectivity and ensuring we have investment in critical infrastructure networks. This is the bedrock upon which a resilient economy is built.

Connecting the Thames Valley makes us stronger, provides more opportunities for growth and builds a better future for all. We will continue to focus our efforts on making sure we are in the very best position to serve the UK's growth ambitions.

Our key priorities

01

Supporting Heathrow Expansion

We will support sustainable proposals for the expansion of the UK's only hub airport. This includes the timely delivery of improved surface access - the [Western Rail Link to Heathrow \(WRLtH\)](#) scheme, as part of an integrated development proposal, and building the skills of the workforce that will be necessary to support the delivery of this major national project. Such transformational infrastructure projects have the capacity to unleash the potential of the Thames Valley.

02

Delivering modern infrastructure networks

A key part of securing economic growth is our transport networks (road, rail, air), energy grids, digital connections (EV charging, cyber security, Datacentres) and utilities (power, water, etc). We are focused on ensuring the statutory bodies, and other stakeholders, are investing and delivering the efficient, resilient, networks we need at speed. Resilient, future proofed, networks can power our business community, serve our residents, wherever they are located, and secure our long-term stability.

03

Planning for Growth

We will support measures that place growth at the heart of government decision making, reduce regulatory burdens and ensure tax policy and legislation are focused on enabling business success. This includes removing planning barriers and building a system that is balanced, well-resourced, and fit for purpose. We will advocate for a flexible business rates system that reflects local conditions and incentivises investment and growth.

The UK's Gateway to Growth - Heathrow

We welcome the government's continued support to expanding Heathrow, recognising the airport's role in delivering economic growth across the country.

TVCC supports proposals that will create an airport that is fit for the future, enabling the quality service that global passengers expect, open-up new routes and unlocking benefits for the whole of the UK.

As the UK's only hub airport Heathrow's role in supporting the country's economy and trade with the world is unique. As the world's best-connected airport, we are a vital infrastructure asset for every part of the UK, the airport connects directly with 239 destinations across 89 countries. The value of goods processes through Heathrow, every year, is greater than the UK's two largest seaports combined.

We need to do it right and ensure impact and legacy. Throughout the lifetime of the project, we need to ensure proposals deliver environmental enhancements and meet stringent carbon-reduction targets. This is why TVCC continues to champion the timely delivery of the WRLtH scheme as an integral component of expansion. Local communities are important to the success of Heathrow. We therefore need to ensure maximum benefit, not just for residents affected, but for the supply-chain businesses who will have much to gain.

"Getting Britain building' isn't just a slogan - it's about delivering real projects that drive tangible growth for the Thames Valley and other communities and businesses across the country. Expanding Heathrow is one of the most powerful ways to do that, and we're grateful for the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and Government's continued support."

Thomas Woldbye, Chief Executive Officer, Heathrow Airport

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WRLtH is not just an infrastructure project - it is a lifeline for communities, businesses, and the economy across the Thames Valley and beyond. The scheme links 20% of the UK population within one interchange of the UK's only hub airport. It will cut journey times, create tens of thousands of new jobs, and generate hundreds of millions for our economy. We wholeheartedly support this scheme to make Heathrow more accessible, sustainable, and national engine of growth and regional connectivity.

**Baroness May of Maidenhead
and Tan Dhesi, MP for Slough**
APPG for WRLtH co-Chairs

CASE STUDY

Heathrow





Global

Thames Valley

The Thames Valley is one of the UK's most globally orientated economies. We have an extraordinary range and depth of firms headquartered in the region, and companies who trade both nationally and internationally.

Our region has a long, and proven, track-record of delivering high volume, high value FDI and international trade. This helps ensure we remain competitive and a driving force behind the nation's growth.

With a world-class ecosystem of industry, academia and government, the Thames Valley is key to the UK. In an increasingly unstable world and competitive global economy the objective is clear. Our government must 'invest in the success' of the Thames Valley to ensure it has the capacity, and capability, of delivering its wider economic growth objectives.

TVCC is the largest issuing body for international trade certification in the UK Accredited Chamber network. This reflects the demand, particularly, from SMEs for trusted trade facilitation support, and our role in keeping Thames Valley businesses moving.

The challenges to internationalisation are real, as are the rising costs and compliance requirements for importers and exporters. However, our experience informs us that the Thames Valley business community continues to adapt its supply chain strategies to ensure they are more resilient to the changing political landscape. As a result, there are risks and opportunities for the region, which are defined by the industry sectors and often complex international supply chain. Chambers of Commerce are uniquely placed given their hands on experience to advise Government on the practical impacts of UK trade policy, and we are committed to helping the voice of exporters to be heard.

We are grateful for the support of our members to deliver an effective inward investment support service that is unique to the UK Accredited Chamber network.

Our key priorities

01

Championing international trade and inward investment

As an economy, our outlook is truly international. Our centres of excellence for inward investment and trade continue to identify opportunities, deepen collaboration, and forge new overseas partnerships to help secure this growth, FDI and resilient supply chains. In addition to our existing Japan and Romania desks, we will launch a new India desk. We will develop additional added value services that best serve our international trade customers and lobby government to ensure it is focused on creating the business conditions to unleash our trading potential. We have tools to boost UK growth and unblock barriers for UK exporters and importers.

02

Showcasing the “UK’s true turbo economy”

We will highlight the wider value of how invest ‘here’ generates economic growth across the UK. By example, over the past ten-years, TVCC’s involvement in supporting inward investment, has secured an estimated £75bn worth of FDI, and many thousands of new jobs into the Thames Valley economy.

03

Focusing on promoting the key sectors of growth

Through a triple-helix approach, and advancing curated supply chains, we are convening industry, academia, and government, to foster collaboration, accelerate innovation and secure investment and trade opportunities; focused on those key sectors of growth the Thames Valley is world leading.

“

I commend TVCC on its continued leadership in convening the business-led life sciences working group. Our industry group continues to highlight the unique position, and opportunity, the Thames Valley has in promoting the life sciences sector and delivering UK growth ambitions. We are more than well placed to rise to the challenges and support the NHS deliver its 10 Year Health Plan. We are ready to provide solutions, and develop the pilot projects, that can help ensure the NHS is fit for the future.

Sue Staunton,
James Cowper Kreston



Thames Valley and Osaka Chambers Renew Partnership Agreement

During a trade mission to Osaka in September 2025, TVCC has strengthened its international ties with Japan through the signing of a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI).

The signing ceremony, held in Osaka City, marked the 10-year anniversary of the Chambers' first agreement, underlining a decade of collaboration and shared ambition to support businesses to do business between each region. Providing practical support to encourage Trade between the UK and Japan is a core focus of TVCC with the assistance and experience of Masako Eguchi-Bacon our Japan market specialist.

Speaking at the MoU ceremony, which was attended by the regional and national media, OCCI President Mr. Shingo Torii highlighted the importance of global partnerships for Japanese businesses, "The overseas expansion of Japan's small and medium-sized enterprises has been delayed, and this partnership agreement will provide a valuable opportunity for growth."

Paul Britton, CEO of TVCC, who addressed the room, reinforced the value of mutual co-operation, stating: "Osaka has a powerful economic scale similar to that of the whole Thames Valley region. Our Chambers of Commerce are one of the largest and longest established in our nations, and both are committed to helping small and medium-sized enterprises thrive internationally".

In 2025, TVCC led a trade mission to Osaka, to develop new connections, trade and investment opportunities. Working with OCCI, Kansai Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, SME Japan and official partners Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, the mission focused on the key sectors of innovation, technology and sustainability with a full day dedicated to attending the World Expo 2025.

CASE STUDY



A group of people, including men and women, are wearing VR headsets in a modern office environment. One man in the foreground is holding a VR controller. The background shows other people and office furniture, all slightly blurred.

“

The agreement celebrates a milestone in UK–Japan business relations, positioning both Thames Valley and Osaka Chambers to drive innovation, trade, and investment opportunities across diverse sectors.

**OCCI President Mr. Shingo Torii and
TVCC CEO, Paul Britton**
Joint Statement



Influential *Thames Valley*

As the Thames Valley's leading independent business representative body and the region's only Accredited Chamber, we are focused on ensuring our member's voice is being heard through our campaigns, work, and lobbying.

With devolution on the agenda, the Thames Valley is going through the most significant period of political change in a generation, redistributing power and investment from Westminster.

We believe that closer working across traditional boundaries of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Swindon will help to position the Thames Valley business community, and its anchor institutions better, and with the greatest impact. Examples of regional devolution highlight that scale is effective in transport planning, skills, employment support, housing and tackling climate change.

A key question for our community is to establish the additionality that will be felt by businesses and their employees in the Thames Valley by through greater devolution.

We will work to ensure the prospects for additional public funding are identified and captured for infrastructure, development of our region's key sectors, decarbonisation, place promotion, and support to remove barriers to growth for international trade and skills development. This will benefit the region and mobilise the role TVCC can play in direct delivery.



Our key priorities

01

Securing an effective “Devolution Dividend” for the Thames Valley

We will champion the voice of Thames Valley business to help secure a Strategic Mayoral Authority with the scale and vision to unlock the full potential of our Accredited Chamber of Commerce community across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Swindon.

02

Deepening political engagement and partnerships

Effective and sustained dialogue with all our politicians, is essential to making sure we are representing the interests of the business community, in Westminster and within the 'town halls'. We do this through a long-standing programme of networking and communication, including our Political Working Lunches, Parliamentary Question Time, Thames Valley Assembly and Windsor Debates. We respond to consultations and present our case on a range of topics, through our open letter submissions. The establishment of the regions first APPG for the Thames Valley strengthens our engagement.

03

Harnessing the power of the Accredited Chamber Network

Across the UK and overseas, TVCC is part of a wider, international network of Chambers. Unlike any other business representative body, our reach extends from local to global. In addition to our own direct links, the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) provides access into government, and their officials. Our focus remains on maximising these relationships to fully representing our members, and the region, on a national and worldwide stage.

“

Swindon's future is very much the Thames Valley. There is a cluster of skills and job opportunities in high growth industries including defence, science, and technology across the Thames Valley region which Swindon is a key player in, and I look forward to working together to further grow our economy in the region.

Will Stone
MP for Swindon North



All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Thames Valley



The APPG for the Thames Valley is key to advancing the regions global reputation as a business location of choice and engine of growth for the UK. Launched last year, the APPG provides a high-level instrument to influence and shape the priorities for the region and presents a single, coherent, clear, and regional proposition for the Thames Valley.

During 2026 the work of the APPG will focus on shaping this proposition across two/three key priorities, agreed by its Parliamentary members, “to inform and shape local and national growth plans that can secure the thriving, green, healthier future we want for a truly competitive Thames Valley”.

As APPG Secretariat, its work reflects TVCC's commitment to present a single, clear, and coherent, regional proposition that equals more than the sum of its parts and ensures the Thames Valley is recognised as a competitive, green, and healthy business destination.

The work of the APPG is backed by the energy of Heathrow, Honda, and the Universities of the Built Environment and Reading, alongside the support of the business and resident communities.

Heathrow

HONDA
The Power of Dreams

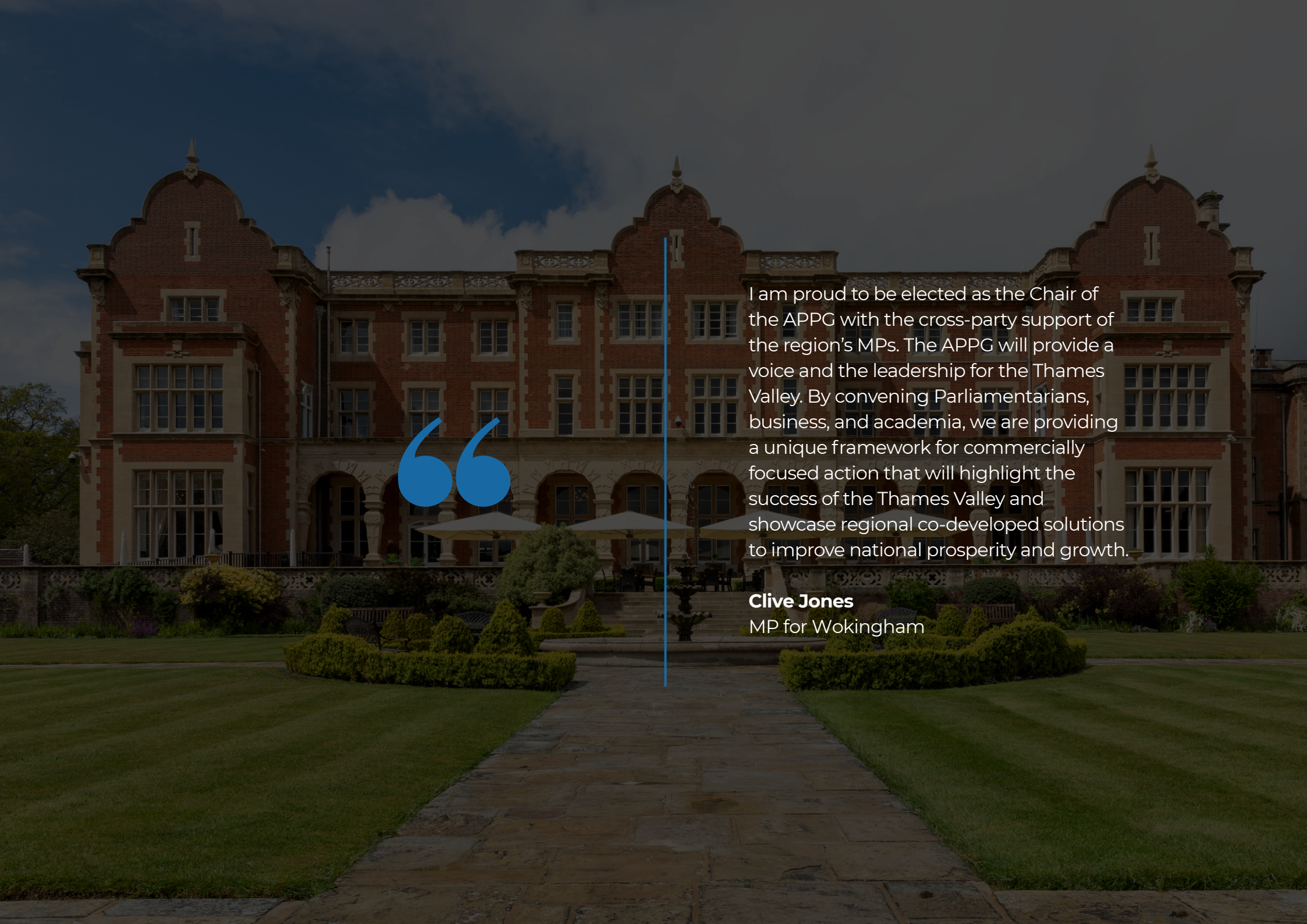
pwc

 University of the
Built Environment
EST. 1959

 University of
Reading

CASE STUDY





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I am proud to be elected as the Chair of the APPG with the cross-party support of the region's MPs. The APPG will provide a voice and the leadership for the Thames Valley. By convening Parliamentarians, business, and academia, we are providing a unique framework for commercially focused action that will highlight the success of the Thames Valley and showcase regional co-developed solutions to improve national prosperity and growth.

Clive Jones
MP for Wokingham



Working *Thames Valley*

Working alongside our Accredited Chambers, together we make up a strong network of trusted champions of businesses, places, and global trade. We represent over 70,000 businesses, of all shapes, sizes, and sectors, employing almost six million people across the UK. So, we have a pretty loud voice working for business.

TVCC is working for the Thames Valley economy, working with purpose to help create a region where people and businesses can thrive. We are helping to inform a skills and employment system shaped by employer needs, working to ensure the workforce are equipped for future jobs and are ready for the challenges, and change, the future workplace will bring.

We will extend our reach, broadening our engagement to involve more Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) partners, colleges, and their students, in our events programme. We want to provide opportunities for more students to meet with businesses at our successful and established 'Meet the Chamber' events which regularly attract over one hundred employers from the local area.

As an increasing number of SMEs unlock the potential of artificial intelligence (AI), we know there is appetite for more, and ambition to progress and identify the opportunity to utilise AI to its fullest potential. We will be working with partners, like the BCC, to improve AI awareness, support and skills for SME's.



Our key priorities

01

The Local Skills Improvement Plans

We are focused on building the skills of the workforce. Building on the first phase of our successful work, and mindful of the priorities of Skills England, we will continue to mobilise employers, skills providers, universities to mobilise and co-create solutions that help simplify access, and attention on public-private partnerships with industry to address sector skills gaps. This will include a retained, sharper, focus on certain sub-sector packages and cross-cutting themes, and attention to new areas identified through our earlier work, including defence and security.

02

Representing business

Each Accredited Chamber is unique and provides a slightly different focus to serve its members. We are no different, and at TVCC we have solutions to help business grow, protect, connect, save and lobby. Our programme of over 100 annual events, serves as a unique opportunity to network, collaborate and do business with impact; Our Thames Valley Insights highlights industry thought leadership and showcases R&D and innovation. Quarterly, we uncover vital insights and views, in the UK's largest and longest-running independent survey of business sentiment.

03

Upskilling International Trade customers

Whilst nationally, too few British firms make the most of trading opportunities, Thames Valley businesses are statistically more international in their outlook. They have been helped to prosper, on a worldwide stage, by working with TVCC. Overseas trade can be complex with many different terms, procedures, and regulations. This is why we provide, and will expand, our suite of trade workshops and events working with businesses to unlock new opportunities abroad while strengthening the skills base at home.

“

The LSIP partnerships have brought industry and education together. It's made real connections and sparked ideas that will last.

Sarah Powell
Le Manoir aux
Quat' Saisons



Local Skills Improvement Plans

As the designated Employer Representative Body (ERB), TVCC leads the coordination of LSIPs covering Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

Informing a skills and employment system shaped by employer needs, in the Annual Progress 'Impact' Report 2025, we outline the progress made and how the LSIPs have helped reshape how employers (nearly 3,000 engaged) and colleges (£5 million invested in new training and 2,190 learners used new training facilities) have worked together in preparing people for the jobs local businesses need.

Following Department for Education (DfE) endorsement of our first phase LSIPs, during 2026 we are strengthening the collaboration between business and education, to continue to develop study pathways and deliver skills packages to equip the workforce with in-demand skills for sectors like construction and digital and disruptive technologies.

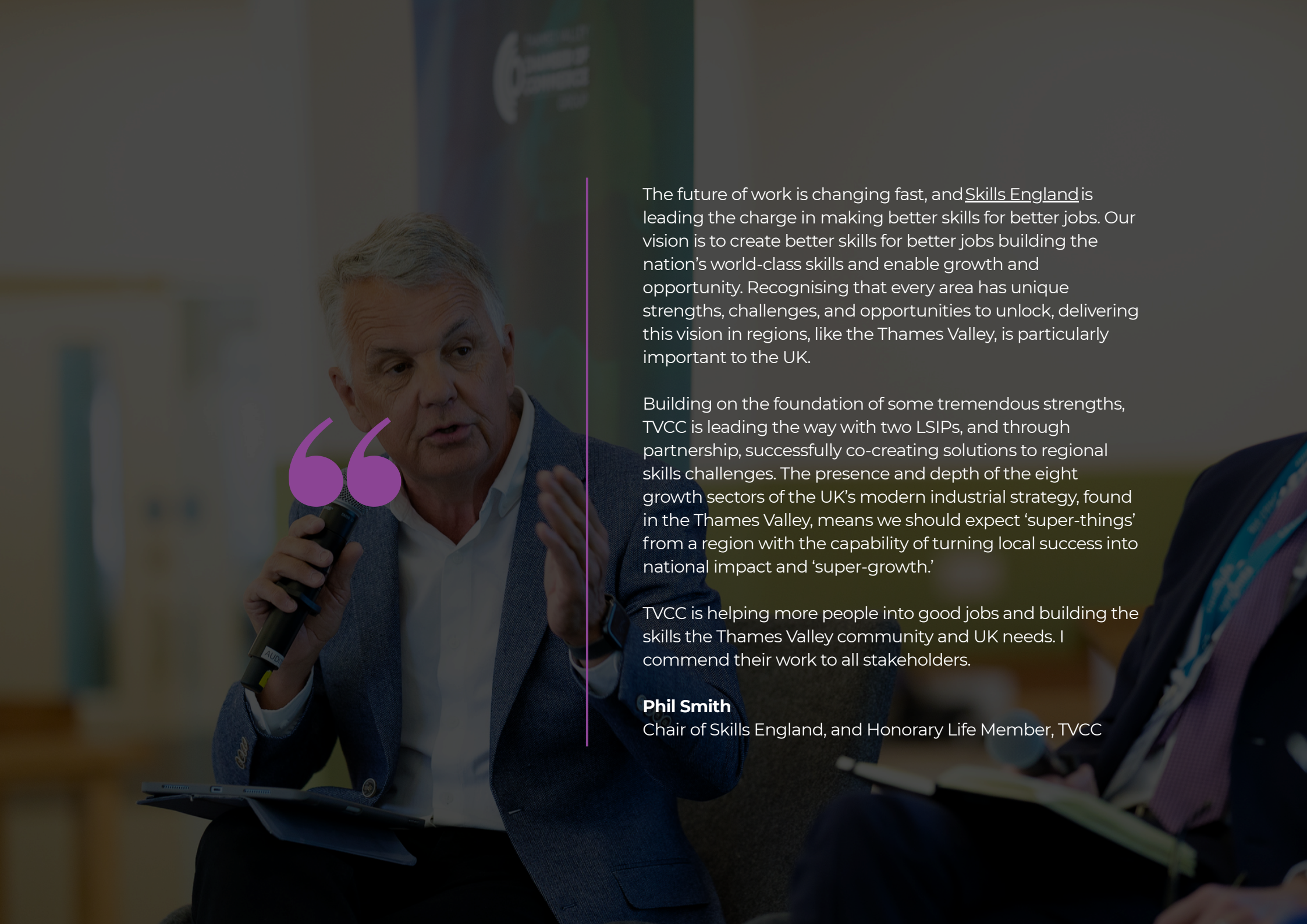
Our work will involve a deeper look at selected sub-sectors, such as within life sciences, and sectors new, to the LSIP, where there is evidential regional strength and growth potential, such as defence and security.

Cross cutting themes also remain, including equality of opportunity, including accessibility entry routes and progression pathways; resilience (e.g., critical services, infrastructure) and net zero (sectors enabling decarbonisation). Find out – visit the [TVSU homepage](#).



CASE STUDY



A photograph of Phil Smith, an older man with grey hair, wearing a blue blazer over a white shirt. He is holding a black microphone in his right hand and gesturing with his left hand. He is sitting at a table with a laptop and papers. In the background, there is a blurred image of another person and a banner with the TVCC logo.

The future of work is changing fast, and Skills England is leading the charge in making better skills for better jobs. Our vision is to create better skills for better jobs building the nation's world-class skills and enable growth and opportunity. Recognising that every area has unique strengths, challenges, and opportunities to unlock, delivering this vision in regions, like the Thames Valley, is particularly important to the UK.

Building on the foundation of some tremendous strengths, TVCC is leading the way with two LSIPs, and through partnership, successfully co-creating solutions to regional skills challenges. The presence and depth of the eight growth sectors of the UK's modern industrial strategy, found in the Thames Valley, means we should expect 'super-things' from a region with the capability of turning local success into national impact and 'super-growth.'

TVCC is helping more people into good jobs and building the skills the Thames Valley community and UK needs. I commend their work to all stakeholders.

Phil Smith

Chair of Skills England, and Honorary Life Member, TVCC

Our 2026 Business Awards

Following launches across the region in March, where we showcase our key sponsors and the categories that are up for grabs, shortlisted companies will be announced in May.

We will celebrate the achievements of the Thames Valley's vibrant business community, once again, **Thursday 2nd July 2026**, where we honour exceptional talent, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Find out the latest on the 2026 Business Awards [here](#).

The Electrical Compliance Collective Ltd

Winner of Thames Valley's Business of the Year 2025



Celebrating business excellence right across the Thames Valley, this is the region's most prestigious and high-profile business awards.

Shortlisted businesses, of all sizes, came together to recognise success and showcase Why the Thames Valley is celebrated as the UK's true turbo economy.

Swindon based The Electrical Compliance Collective Ltd (TECC) secured two awards, including the Thames Valley's Business of the Year based on their outstanding contribution to regional growth and community impact.

Beyond delivering compliance and safety services, TECC also carry out all types of electrical installations including Solar and EV car chargers. TECC has created high-quality local jobs, invested in apprenticeships, and partnered with schools and colleges to offer work experience and help build future skills pipelines. Their commitment to sustainability and supporting local supply chains has strengthened resilience across the area.

TECC is just one of many businesses across the Thames Valley that are making a powerful difference to the region's economy and communities - Watch [here](#).





We're honoured to be awarded the Excellence in Customer Service award and the prestigious Business of the Year award – a truly mind-blowing moment for our team! These awards feel like a real celebration of the journey we have been on and the values that have shaped who we are. We're so grateful to the TVCC for recognising what we are building here at TECC.

Pete McCallum

The Electrical Compliance Collective Ltd

100 years of excellence

Connecting

Our community, Our actions & Our impact

Celebrating 100 years of excellence, 100 years later the University of Reading is among the top 30 UK universities in the world. It is home to over 27,000 students from over 160 countries, and a global community of over 300,000 alumni.

It is one of the Thames Valley's key anchor institutions, and actively shaping the future of the region, and wider UK through its actions and leading schools and departments. The university now contributes over £1 billion annually to the UK economy supporting more than 12,000 jobs nationally.

The university is home to the oldest business school in the UK, Henley Business School (established 1946) and, in 2016, launched the University of Reading Malaysia. Other noteworthy milestones include the installation of the first solar panels on a university building (1996), Professor Ed Hawkins creates the Climate Stripes (2018); Kew Gardens' herbarium collection moves to the universities Thames Valley Science Park (2023).

And, as music has always been at the heart of student life at Reading, lest we forget, in 1976 the Sex Pistols played a gig in the Art department, with bands such as Blur, The Smiths, Motorhead, The Who and U2 all taking to the stage at the Students' Union.

In 2025, Reading was named Sustainable University of the Year. Professor Robert Van de Noort, Vice-Chancellor, said:

"We are proud to be a multi-award-winning community playing a sector-leading role in addressing climate change and environmental sustainability through our world-leading research, teaching and campus operations."

A century of impact and innovation gives opportunity to mark the past, present and future impact of UoR throughout the year. Find out more about the 2026 Celebrations.

100 YEARS  **1926 2026**
UNIVERSITY OF READING

 **University of
Reading**

Our Business Alliance Members & Strategic Partners



“

Our Membership has been hugely beneficial for our firm's profile and regional connections. TVCC are excellent advocates, supporting us with new introductions and market intelligence. Their rich events programme offers something for everyone. We are proud to support their groundbreaking Mental Wellbeing Charter.

Gina Connell
BP Collins

”

It's hugely beneficial to be a Lead Member and to work closely with the Thames Valley Chamber. Events such as Windsor Debates and participation in the Thames Valley Assembly provide rich opportunities to network and gain valuable insights from other member businesses across the Thames Valley. Regular economic and political briefings provide further useful information and excellent opportunities be part of the wider discussion.

Ashley Wheaton
University of the Built Environment

“

It's great as members of Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce to connect with other businesses across our internationally significant region. To have a louder, united business voice advocating for investment throughout the Thames Valley, not least for infrastructure, is very valuable.

Thomas Lydon
Great Western Railway

From our *members*



Bill Gornall-King
Group President

Paul Britton
Chief Executive Officer



Business Manifesto 2026

A plan for Change

LOCAL *engagement*

REGIONAL *representation*

GLOBAL *opportunity*

www.thamesvalleychamber.co.uk