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"...IM will remain both  
sharp and determined."



XPENG Launch, London.

Cover Image: Village Avon, Aspen, Colorado.

**I**t's a good idea in business to have a way to spread risk. We have three main business areas in IM Group, potentially four if you separate IM Properties and Spitfire. In a normal year, one area is doing well, one is doing okay and one is going through a bit of reinvention to be better-placed for new challenges that have arrived.

This year has been a little different. It seems that new challenges are affecting all of our businesses at once. The company is still doing well in terms of sales and profit performance. However, we are having to work extremely hard to retain the flexibility in our activities and cash flow that we will need for the forthcoming period. Using the word 'flexibility' might sound like a strange way of expressing this problem. But I choose that word carefully. In our business we often talk about not being able to control 70 percent of the things that influence us – our competitors, government legislation, economic markers such as the interest rates or exchange rate. The idea is to do really well with the 30 percent that you do control and watch the rest of it very carefully so you can react quickly when something changes. This is where the value of flexibility comes in, especially for a family business like IM.

There is a natural hedge in our business. A 'hedge' is where you can lay off risk. For example, if you have an investment in a foreign country, such as America, that investment is valued in the local currency – in this case US Dollars. If the Dollar-to-Pound exchange rate goes against us, the value of our investment automatically goes down irrespective of how that asset has been trading or is valued. You can mitigate, or hedge, this

risk in various ways that are a little too technical for me to explain here. The natural hedge in our business is that we import products into Europe and the UK. If the UK interest rate goes up, this hurts our property business, but it also strengthens the pound which helps our car business, and vice versa. A hedge.

In fact, this exact situation – high interest rates but favourable currency rates – has been the case for the last few years with our car business doing well and our property business having to rethink a few things so it can return to the high-performance figures generated over the last decade or so. Now, however, as part of the 70 percent I spoke of, there are many and varied extraneous elements that are causing some serious rethinking within our car business too. The move to selling EVs has become very problematic for everyone since the government's ZEV mandate was introduced, forcing the pace of supply over demand and therefore pushing market prices well below cost.

How will the march towards a fully EV world turn out? I'm not actually sure. What I do know is that the work we have been doing with a multiplicity of brands over many years puts IM in a position of utmost flexibility to be able to give safe passage through turbulent times to the manufacturers we represent and the dealers who represent us.

Spitfire Homes has been in this same 'thinking zone' and is probably a year or so ahead of the rest of the business in that regard. This year represents a near doubling in sales and signals a tremendous improvement in how the team are performing. We see a very bright future for Spitfire and in



a sense they are leading the way in terms of new thinking and new growth for the rest of the group to follow.

Our commercial property business has long been well-regarded in the industry and we have no intention of changing that opinion! But it does take careful thought and no small dose of courage to commit to the future when the present has been so difficult for everyone. Getting these judgements right is what turbocharges performance. We also know that opportunities arise in difficult times so having the right approach to our cash management will pay dividends – literally.

You can read of Gary Hutton's retirement in this review. Gary has been such an important contributor to IM's success over the last few years. He has helped to develop the team that comes after him and ensure that the corporate mentality at IM will remain both sharp and determined. Adding these ingredients to flexibility and our intent to manage cash effectively is the recipe we will use as we move forwards into the second half of the decade. 🍷

**Andrew Edmiston**

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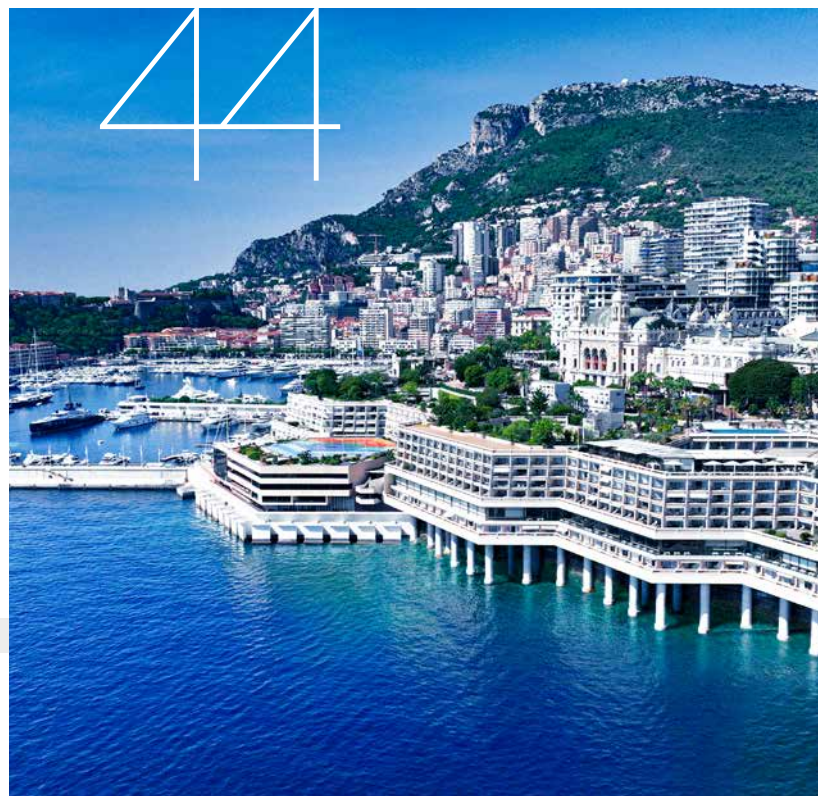
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# BUILDING ON USA OPPORTUNITIES





'After previously working in Europe, the company found that the business culture in the USA proved much more aligned to its progressive, entrepreneurial spirit.'



Mariano's supermarket

IM PROPERTIES  
Guy Hartton

**IM Properties is seizing business opportunities in the USA – targeting profits, creating jobs and building communities.**

While that's been the backbone of IM's work in the UK for years, it's the USA that is fast becoming a new frontier of growth – and should be for years ahead.

The first ventures into the US started in 2006. But these were relatively small investments. They came at a time when land prices in Britain had soared and return on investments diminished – so IM began exploring opportunities abroad.

After previously working in Europe, the company found that business culture in the USA proved much more



JP Morgan Chase

aligned to its progressive, entrepreneurial spirit.

IM's ambitions and enterprise led to a partnership with a similarly-driven property development company, Kensington Development Partners. It introduced IM to JP Morgan Chase, one of the largest US banks, which was looking to expand its operations. But the world economic crash in 2008 stalled even the bank's plans.

However, a joint venture was formed between IM and Kensington, which successfully developed several bank sites as well as enhancing the reputation for IM delivering projects.

That proved to be the catalyst for IM's American

venture. Next came a stream of Mariano's supermarkets in greater Chicago, all built on-time, on-budget and with good profitability. But these were single-tenant sites.

"It was great business but we knew we could do even better," explained Tim Wooldridge, IM Properties' Managing Director. "Larger sites would attract a more-diverse tenant take-up meaning the assets, once developed, benefitted from greater liquidity."

Three much larger sites in the Chicago suburbs set the pattern and introduced residential opportunities alongside retail – all proving very successful.

By now firms were approaching IM asking to develop sites [▶](#)





Village Avon, Aspen

'The City of Denver committed a \$35-million contribution to infrastructure costs...'

300-days-a-year of sunshine, great natural beauty with the Rocky Mountains on the doorstep and lower costs than states such as California, are proving a magnet for many hi-tech firms.

Link 56 in Denver is being rolled out as one of IM's latest developments. The 150-acre site is close to Denver Airport – one of America's largest –

and offering opportunities across the US rather than in Chicago, where IM's American business was initially centered.

One of IM's satisfied customers, Amazon, wanted to expand into Arizona and asked IM for help. It responded with a site in the state capital, Phoenix. That attracted a surge of interest from a host of retailers, banks, restaurants, fast-food chains and the giant House of Sport outlet. Tim summed up demand for units and plots as "fantastic."

It wasn't just the businesses that were happy. City authorities saw tax incomes soar as whole new communities grew – elements replicated in IM's next project in Denver, Colorado.

Like Arizona, Colorado has a fast-growing economy. Its





which is spurring growth and demand even further for both retailers and home-builders in this premier location.

The City of Denver committed a \$35-million contribution to infrastructure costs – a third of the total – to what is essentially a new community. IM and Kensington secured permission to build 1,800 new homes on-site with IM

likely to build the first two phases before considering whether to sell the remainder, or continue building.

The up-market standards set by IM is already reaping rewards. One small plot on a crossroads at Link 56 was snapped up for \$5 million by 7/11 to build a gas station. Link 56 will take up to eight years to construct. Whether



Andretti Indoor Karting at go North, Schaumburg, Illinois

IM choose to do that, or move on, remains to be seen.

Again in Colorado, IM is developing another prestige project near the exclusive, world-renowned ski resort of Vail in the Avon valley – an area of outstanding natural beauty. Here IM has options to build 120 apartments and a Whole Foods supermarket – providing high-end residential units in an area starved of supply, plus a market-leading grocery.

This could be replicated in Lafayette near Boulder, Colorado, which boasts some of the highest real estate values in the USA. Again, this project will be anchored by a new grocery store accompanied by up to 450 town houses and apartments.

Tim summed up IM's work in the US as "very rewarding" adding: "The US is the biggest global real estate market. If our hard work and application pays off we should see continued opportunity, which complements our position of strength back home in the UK." 🇬🇧

"If our hard work and application pays off we should see continued opportunity..."



Raising Cane's, Morton Grove

SUBARU  
Tony Garuth

**S**tatistics can be totally misleading – take a look at Subaru's year of success for example.

On the face of it official sales figures for Subaru in the UK might look gloomy. But as Lorraine Bishton, Managing Director of

Subaru UK & Ireland reflects on a great year for the brand in 2025, registration numbers have to be looked at in context.

She explains: "We didn't really have any electric Subarus to sell due to limited supply from Japan. If you took

those out from the previous year then Subaru's non-EV sales were actually up by 17 percent year-on-year as of August." As Mark Twain wrote: there are lies, damned lies and statistics...!

# LOOK BEYOND THE FIGURES



**YEARS  
WITH SUBARU**

Lorraine Bishton



**SUBARU'S NON-  
EV SALES UP BY**



'Next year should be truly electric for Subaru.'

3

NEW EV'S

However, next year should be truly electric for Subaru. Three new EVs will be launched in 2026 – the Uncharted, a compact SUV; a new Solterra and the E-Outback.

Lorraine has been to Japan and driven all three: "They're really great cars and wonderful to drive with all the character and features you would expect from Subaru. I'm really looking forward to selling them here."



In January Lorraine celebrates two years with Subaru and says she's loved every minute of her time with the brand and IM. She says 2025 has been hectic – but in a good way. "We launched the all-new Forester with great success. We celebrated the 30th anniversary of Colin McRae's World Rally Championship at the Goodwood Festival of Speed and collected several key motoring awards. So, it was a pretty packed year."

New dealers were appointed to add to Subaru's network, which now stands at 57. But there are no plans to significantly increase the number of outlets in 2026. "We're not going to grow the network for the sake of it. But I would like to appoint new dealers in key open points, which include Shrewsbury, Essex and Cheshire."

Official figures released in September show that the UK market for sales of petrol and petrol hybrid were **down** 7 percent year-on-year. However, Subaru petrol and petrol hybrid sales were **up** 12 percent during the same period. 📊

30<sup>th</sup>

ANNIVERSARY OF  
COLIN MCRAE'S  
WORLD RALLY  
CHAMPIONSHIP



UK DEALERS

SUBARU AND ISUZU, UK AND IRELAND  
Hatty Gourn

# HELP TO FULFIL INJURED VETERANS' DREAMS

**MISSION  
MOTORSPORT**  
RACE | RETRAIN | RECOVER  
The Forces' Motorsport Charity  
Registered Charity No. 1146159



Subaru and Isuzu, UK and Ireland, and their staff stepped in to help fulfil the dreams of injured ex-British military personnel.

And the dream for the veterans – some of whom had lost limbs in action – was to drive a race car around the famously-demanding Nürburgring Nordschleife circuit in Germany.

Mission Motorsport, the Forces Motorsport Charity, had ambitions. But it needed a car that could cope with the legendary 12.94-mile track that sweeps through Germany's Eifel Mountains and is widely considered the world's most challenging.

As well as able to cope with the track, the car would need modifications for disabled ex-service members to drive – and drive safely.

The charity found the ideal car – a Subaru BRZ, which had once been written off – and set about modifying and adapting it for people with lower-limb disabilities.

Subaru worked on the project long-term with Mission Motorsport and provided additional support around the 'Race of Remembrance' event in November last year.

In July this year 'Destination Nürburgring' saw disabled

Image credit: Frozenspeed  
Motorsport Photography



drivers making new memories around the famous circuit, an experience that once seemed out of reach.

To further support the Nürburgring adventure, two Isuzu D-Max pick-ups and a Subaru Outback were provided to the charity to transport the BRZ, participants, support crew and equipment to Germany for the event.

Steve Binns, a former member of the Parachute Regiment who broke his back in a motorcycle accident 20 days after returning from the Falklands War and now uses a wheelchair, was one of the drivers. "It was life-affirming for me," he said. "If I don't wake up tomorrow it won't matter, I'll have ticked all the boxes of my dreams."

Brian Wheeler, PR Manager at Subaru UK & Ireland,



"It was life-affirming for me, If I don't wake up tomorrow it won't matter, I'll have ticked all the boxes of my dreams."

added: "It's been a personal and professional privilege to work with Mission Motorsport on this project. When I first became aware of the project it was obvious what a difference this car could make to the charity's aims and beneficiaries.

"I'm pleased to say it ran perfectly on the most demanding track in the world. To see the faces and reactions of those who drove it was so meaningful."

James Cameron, CEO of Mission Motorsport, added: "The Nürburgring trip is one of the standout moments of the year for our beneficiaries. It's not just about the racing, but also about rebuilding confidence, forging friendships, and celebrating what's possible.



L to R: Steve Binns, Brian Wheeler and James Cameron.

"We're immensely grateful to Isuzu UK for providing the D-Max pick-ups ensuring that our team and cars could get to the Ring safely and in style." 🏁



SPITFIRE PROPERTIES  
Ruth Gayton

# PILOTING SPITFIRE TO NEW HEIGHTS



Dave Smith



IMReview



**D**ave Smith, Spitfire Homes' new Managing Director, knows the housing and property business from the ground up – literally!

During his career he's been a construction engineer, site manager, an executive for a number of businesses (including boss of a rival house builder) and held many more positions across the property industry.

Dave's first job was as a labourer/groundworker for a national contractor followed by a role as a 'Chain Boy' – a term used to describe a surveyor's assistant, which comes from historical use of chains as a method of measuring. A chain is equal to 66 ft – still used today as the length between stumps on a cricket field.

Today he is both a Chartered Builder and Chartered Surveyor and joined Spitfire in April from St Modwen Homes where he was Managing Director.

He said: "I knew and respected both IM Properties and Spitfire; but when starting with any new business I have tended to brace myself for what I might find. However, I've discovered a business in great shape, run exceptionally well with a great team of people – in my experience, not always the case.

"Spitfire is renowned for the quality of its build and design. It's a business with a well-earned reputation.

"However, we do face challenges. The market remains fairly tough for housebuilding, which has still not fully recovered from 2022's perfect storm of interest rates increasing, demand and sales values dropping while costs

continued to rise. This resulted in reduced profits – exceptionally so on sites where land was purchased in the two-years prior to that mini-budget.

"Spitfire is out-performing the market in terms of both sales rates and values, with costs under control. There are a couple of sites in progress that were purchased in that same time period so we are trading our way through that. However, there is a pipeline of exceptional land opportunities coming through that will see our business move forward with increased profitability."

Dave sees a bright future for Spitfire and he and his team are working on a major assessment for the next chapter in its history, which will be considering growth acceleration.

And future plans? Dave explained: "The quality of our build and design is what sets Spitfire apart, it is what the brand is built on and what allows us to sell quicker and for more value



**"Spitfire is out-performing the market in terms of both sales rates and values, with costs under control."**

## NEW HOMES ACROSS THE MIDLANDS

Latest plans by Spitfire could see hundreds of new homes built in the Midlands, including 136 in Balsall Common, Warwickshire; 50 in Harborne, Birmingham on the site of a former police station and 47 in Belbroughton, Worcestershire.

Plans for 127 homes in Little Impney, Droitwich; 113 in Broadway in the Cotswolds and 48 in Kissingbury, Northamptonshire, have also been lodged.

than the competition. That should not fundamentally change. The business is in great shape, with talented people. Therefore I'm concentrating on a series of marginal gains to make the business more efficient and profitable."

None of the changes will be dramatic, he said. Just subtle operational changes that, added together, will make a difference. "One area of focus is related to working capital," he explained. "In an environment where capital costs are not low, reduced use of working capital – mixed with earlier revenue take – is one small example of what will move the dial." ■

IM NORDIC  
Thor Taygün

**It takes just one word to sum up IM Nordic's business results – incredible!**

The Scandinavian and Baltic states division of IM's business portfolio has posted strong results for several years. But the latest are truly exceptional. Even challenging market conditions and a host of new competitors has not dented IM Nordic's sales performance.

Subaru sales in Sweden outperformed every other country in Europe with more than 4,500 sales in 2024 – ahead of Germany, the UK, Italy and 25 other markets. Figures for 2025 indicate another outstanding set of results.

Also impressive was Subaru's share of the market with the brand claiming the No1 spot in Estonia, Latvia, Sweden and Lithuania with Finland close behind. In all, IM Nordic sold 29 percent of all Subaru sales in Europe.

Isuzu's performance is even more impressive. D-Max out-sold Toyota Hilux, Ford Ranger, VW Amarok and all

other pick-ups in 2024 and again 2025 looks as strong.

Sweden has been a particular strong market since IM Nordic took over distribution of Isuzu in 2025. In the past four years it has grown to an astonishing 40 percent! Again, IM Nordic is leading Europe.

Customers are obviously happy to buy from IM Nordic. In the annual Dealer Satisfaction Index, where car dealerships are asked almost 100 questions on their relationships with distributors,

'Subaru sales in Sweden outperformed every other country in Europe with more than 4,500 sales in 2024...'



Christer Blomdell, seated centre in white top, with his senior team.



IM had outstanding votes of confidence from both Subaru and Isuzu outlets.

Subaru was voted No 1 brand by car dealerships ahead of Audi, Mazda and 15 other brands. Isuzu took the laurels on the light-commercial-vehicles side ahead of Mercedes, VW, Toyota and other competitors. And these aren't one-off results – IM Nordic has secured the top spots for five consecutive years.

Rightly, Christer Blomdell, Managing Director of IM Nordic, is massively proud of these consistently-outstanding results. Sheer hard work from everyone in his company contributes to the success. "But enjoying work and going to work is part of the picture too," he says. "It really feels as if we are all part of a big family." 📧



# INCREDIBLE NORDIC RESULTS

The Northern Lights  
Tromsø, Norway



## THRAPSTON

**P**atience, tenacity, agility, and creativity are hallmarks of IM

**Properties' real estate journey over the last 25 years.**

Thrapston Business Park is a project that epitomises the company's approach to doing business in an increasingly-complex world of development.

The A14 is a major trunk road connecting the heart of the country's industry in the Midlands to the Port of Felixstowe – Britain's busiest container port. It is a route that straddles the well-established 'Golden Triangle' for logistics and a corridor with acute need for more floorspace to accommodate a burgeoning logistics sector.

In 2021 the company announced its plans to bring forward a business park of approximately 2.2 million sq. ft on a 120-acre site just off the A14, adjoining the market town of Thrapston. It could create 2,100 jobs in manufacturing, light industry and logistics.

The project included a 1 million-sq.-ft building proposed to be occupied by DSV, a global transport and logistics company, extending a business relationship from IM Properties successful Mercia Park employment hub. A planning application followed in 2022 and, in July 2025, North Northamptonshire Council approved the plans.

In the intervening period the site was designated, in

part, as a Scheduled Ancient Monument – a nucleated Roman Settlement or clustered settlement. It was also claimed as a habitat for golden plover, a bird protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act. The scheme was revised to respond to these new constraints.

David Smith, IM's Director, Planning and Communities, said: "It is rare for development projects to be without challenge; however, Thrapston Business Park certainly tested our resolve.

"The team has had to draw on all its qualities. The outcome is testament to the hard work put in so far, and we look forward to realising another market-leading IM properties development." 🏡



David Smith

**"The outcome is testament to the hard work put in so far..."**

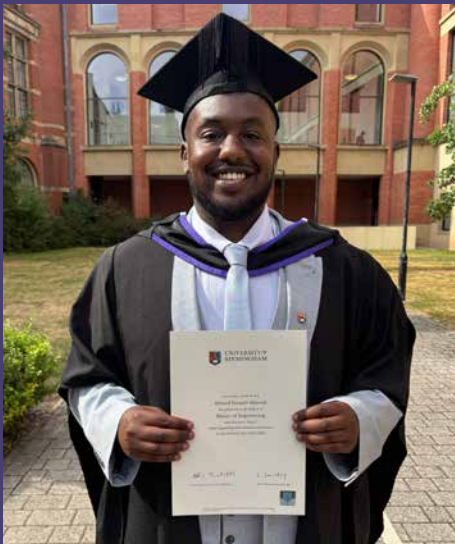
**POWERED BY IM'S  
VALUES - BOOSTING  
UK BUSINESS**



# With a little help from my friends

**A**hmed Ahmedi was a shy, reserved young man when he first became involved with IM Properties through a long-standing partnership with the Building Birmingham Scholarship scheme.

He spent a week-long placement at IM where Properties' Asset Manager, Vicky Aspinall, had been his mentor



during the past four years. She spent time getting to know Ahmed and, although not directly involved in engineering herself, used her natural flair for communication and managing projects to help him.

Ahmed recently graduated from Birmingham University with First

Class Honours in his Integrated Master's Degree in Civil Engineering. He's now a mentor himself on the university's Birmingham's Road to Professions Programme.

Vicky said: "Ahmed has become a confident and accomplished young professional who can walk into any room and network like a pro. I felt like a proud parent watching his graduation for his First-Class Honours degree. He deserves all of his success, he's focussed and such a hard worker."

Ahmed said: "Vicky's support shaped my experience. She believed in me and gave me the confidence to showcase my potential and pursue my ambitions.

"Vicky's support shaped my experience. She believed in me and gave me the confidence to showcase my potential..."

"I'm incredibly grateful for all Vicky's support and guidance over the past four years. Her encouragement and mentorship have been invaluable and I truly appreciate everything she's done to help me grow, both personally and professionally.

"Before I started the BBS course I felt a bit in my own bubble. Looking back I wasn't comfortable talking to people. Through my placements, and working with Vicky, I now feel confident to go up to people and start talking.

"Having regular check-ins and meetings enabled me to set and focus on my goals. I want to say thank-you to Vicky for being such a positive influence and for all the opportunities along the way." ✉



Vicky Aspinall with Ahmed Ahmedi

## TOWCESTER PARK

**Work has started on an exciting £200-million employment park with features that set it apart from every other business centre in the UK.**

Towcester Park in Northamptonshire will create around 1,500 new jobs and some are likely to be in Britain's world-leading motorsport industry with 'Motorsport Valley' on its doorstep.

The 1.1-million-sq.-ft site sits in 60 acres at a prime location off the A43 and just six-miles from Junction 15a of the M1. That means 90 percent of the UK's population can be reached within four hours driving time, well within the limits set for commercial vehicle drivers' 'tacho' time behind the wheel.

This ideal location makes it almost heaven for logistics companies looking for a base. And IM Properties will build a range of state-of-the-art warehouses to fill the void, including a huge 'cross-dock' unit of 470,00 sq ft – one of the largest of its kind in the UK.

'Cross-dock' units are rare and are attractive to logistics companies as they allow both

inward and outward goods movements from opposite sides of the warehouse and therefore streamline internal operations.

Alongside this huge warehouse will be mid-size units and all are attracting interest from potential occupiers. Initial groundworks and infrastructure construction started in 2025 with buildings being offered to businesses in early 2027.

Another key feature of Towcester Park is an area called Kickstart. This is set aside for smaller units

**'The 1.1-million-sq.-ft site sits in 60 acres at a prime location off the A43..'**



of between 12,000- to 20,000-sq.-ft designed to give start-up and specialist companies a dedicated base to grow their businesses.

Richard Sykes, Development Director at IM Properties, said both larger units and smaller units had already attracted interest from firms in logistics, motorsport and hi-tech areas. "With Silverstone being just down the road, as well as ease of connectivity to the national motorway network, we have already received serious enquiries about taking space".



**IMReview**



A futuristic interior space with large, multi-paned glass walls. The glass panels are illuminated from within, creating a vibrant, multi-colored glow of blues, purples, and pinks. Silhouettes of several people are visible against the bright background. On the left, a person sits on a low bench, working on a laptop. In the center, a group of three people walks from left to right. On the right, another person walks from right to left. The floor is dark and reflective, showing the silhouettes of the people and the colorful light from the walls. The overall atmosphere is modern and high-tech.

# DREAM LOCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT PARK

# IM Group's new Board

**The new Senior Board at the IM Group is not just a significant structural change.**

It creates a new framework to take the business into the future.

Andrew Edmiston, IM's Managing Director, says the appointment of operational directors to the board will build on its effectiveness and bring elements of the business closer together.

"When Garry Hutton told us he was planning to retire we knew he was going to be very difficult to replace. He's a unique person and has contributed so much to the business.

**"We have always been a company that seizes on opportunities and challenges..."**

"So with the Golden Jubilee of the company coming up and Gary retiring we decided that it was an opportunity to look at things much more broadly. The world is changing fast and our ways of working and thinking have to change too.

"We have always been a company that seizes on opportunities and

challenges and the new Board will reflect that as we move forward to the coming chapters in our history."

As the father of five children, Andrew points out that they will be the third generation of Edmistons to be involved in the family-owned business. And to involve and prepare them further, all are taking part in an Ownership Development Programme.

How will the new Board be made up?

From October 2025 the members will be Lord Edmiston as Chairman; Andrew Edmiston; Tim Wooldridge, Managing Director of IM Properties; Christer Blomdell, Managing Director of IM Nordic; William Brown, Managing Director of International Motors and new members Kevin Ashfield, IM Properties UK Development Director and James Pearson who has been appointed legal director under his new role as Group Finance Director.

Having operational directors on the Board for the first time is critical, says Andrew. "The whole idea is to have a much closer insight to areas of our property and car business and be able to explore some of the specific pressures on them. But importantly it is to see aspects that are common across the business.

"IM Properties require a lot of capital investment and we have to think carefully how to use our capital in the most efficient way. During the last few years, if anything, the Group's opportunities have been accelerating, which requires us to think yet-more carefully about how we employ capital.

**"Now we must take bold steps for the next 50 years of the company."**

"For example, we have great plans for Spitfire. This year alone it doubled in turnover and already Dave Smith, who came in to head the business, has identified ways of completing sites more quickly thereby controlling capital costs.

"Our automotive business continues to be exciting, always exploring new opportunities – many from China where we have a long history of doing business."

Andrew concluded: "Now we must take bold steps for the next 50 years of the company. The structure of the newly-extended board is our starting point to map out the future." 📍



William  
Brown

Christer  
Blomdell

Andrew  
Edmiston

Lord  
Edmiston

Kevin  
Ashfield

Tim  
Wooldridge

James  
Pearson



GARY HUTTON TESTIMONIAL  
Andrew Edmiston

# GARY SAYS FAREWELL





**E**very employee plays a significant part in the fibre and soul of our group. Sometimes though, they do that from a position of great influence by the very nature of their role.

When, in 2010, Mike Adams retired from the property business here at IMG, a replacement was needed. Coincidentally, a few years before, IM's Director of Administration, Bob Browning, had also retired and had been only partially replaced.

My father instinctively knew that he wanted to ask Gary Hutton to join the business as Mike Adams' replacement and duly asked him to 'come over for a chat'. Gary had known IM for around 25 years as the company's auditor partner/tax adviser. As they talked, it became clear that Gary would be able to cover both roles – of head of IM Properties (then located in a separate office in Haseley) and head of finance and administration for the 'group'.

Since I was Managing Director of IM Group, Dad had to ask my permission for Gary to be involved. Given he'd been both my father and my boss for many years, that was privately amusing! It was an easy decision. I had seen Gary's work on our acquisition of Daihatsu

from Inchcape, which inspired great confidence, and I was pleased to be able to have such capable hands heading the finance team of the car business.

Gary's arrival proved to be a seminal moment for IM. In his role as head of our property business he instinctively knew that it was time to release the young blood in the company to take hold of the opportunity for growth in the business in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008. He suggested that the property team should move from their base in Haseley and join the car business at our new Coleshill headquarters, effectively making the two businesses into a group from a 'geographical' perspective. It was also sensible to change the structure and so, for the first time, IM truly became a group.

Gary and I had been working closely together and had effectively – with my father – turned into a three-man Senior Board. We naturally fell into giving what the group needed from each of us in the capacity of our individual talents.

Gary's talents were obvious: determined, practical, an excellent problem-solver and capable of a high level of thought. He is also a great

"Gary's talents were obvious: determined, practical, an excellent problem-solver and capable of a high level of thought."

team player, though will strongly follow-through on his views and ideas, especially when 'in his lane'. We both found a way to work together because we both loved the group and didn't care much for titles and appearances.

We did, though, both understand that the axis between us was an important one for the company and any disagreements should be confined to our office. There weren't too many and those that arose we were able to resolve. Our shared love of Manchester United was always helpful because we had something outside of work to talk about. We have been to many matches together, and hopefully that will continue.

As Gary retires at the end of this year, replacing him has been tricky. I'm grateful that he gave us plenty of notice to prepare. Instinctively I

knew that we wouldn't be able to replace Gary with one person. We have entered into a phase where there is huge environmental change for all three of our main businesses. That thought has led us to widen the Senior Board and welcome some talented and directly operational staff to it. I believe this will be a good solution and appropriate for today's business environment and for the future. Gary has been directly involved in the development of all of the new board members, so his mentality will still be present at the highest decision table.

Gary has engineered much, if not all, of the group structure that binds together the operations of IMG. Our business is very much a group these days, markedly different to 2010 when he arrived. IMG has always been a successful business with a wonderful atmosphere throughout the group. As I wrote at the beginning, it has fibre and a soul. And I'm very grateful to Gary for his tremendous influence on both. We all wish him a long and happy retirement as he, along with his lovely wife Julie, sees more of the world, enjoys their grandchildren and finds a new stage in life to continue the adventure. 📷



XPENG  
Ray Guthnot

# MEET THE SMART WAY TO DRIVE

**F**orget almost everything you think you know about a car company. That's the first rule in understanding XPENG – a high-tech firm that just happens to make some of the world's most advanced vehicles.

From flying cars to almost designing their own in car computer chips, XPENG has simply rewritten the automotive rule book. And that's only half the story.

It's the latest brand under the wing of International Motors whose Managing Director, William Brown, knew that a launch event in February simply couldn't follow the pattern of a normal car launch. That would undersell what makes XPENG different!

So alongside motoring journalists were engineering and technical writers, business leaders, bankers, investors, car dealerships and energy companies in an audience of 250 people at the event in Old Billingsgate Conference Centre near Tower Bridge.

"It was the most diverse group ever to be gathered to launch a new car brand," explained William. "But all had interest in, and were fascinated by, the XPENG story. It's just so different from any other car company that we had to take time to explain what makes its cars so special and exciting."

On view was the XPENG G6, which is now on sale in the UK, plus four other models including the eVTOL X2 flying car.

So just how different are XPENG cars? "The whole approach to cars is different," said William. "They are all EVs, nothing unusual in that, but XPENG use in-house-developed software





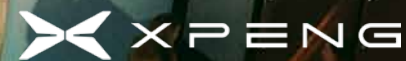
that is just so advanced. Yet from a driver's perspective it's not intrusive. You are barely aware that it's there.

"Some manufacturers' cars have features such as autonomous braking, speed limiters and lane control. But they can be jarring – almost overpowering. XPENG uses more-sophisticated systems and the driving experience is far more intuitive.

"In China they have even-more-advanced systems that we in the West are not ready for yet. I've driven some of them and it was mind-blowing. Without you being aware, the car's systems are scanning everything around – far better than any human can."

William's 20-mile commute to work often involves traffic at a standstill. It's tedious and certainly not relaxing. "But XPENG has technology that can relive all the stress. It's coming – it's the future of driving and we will be at the forefront."

Next year three more XPENG models will be launched in the UK by International Motors. William is now on a mission to prepare dealers and customers to understand a completely new generation of smart mobility. 🚗



"From flying cars to almost designing their own in car computer chips, XPENG has simply rewritten the automotive rule book. And that's only half the story."

ETERNAL WALL  
Tony Garuth

**W**ork has started on a huge Christian monument to the power of prayer, which will be one of the tallest and most ambitious sculptures in the world.

Called The Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer it will stand 169 feet tall – nearly three times the height of the Angel of the North and twice that of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro.

It's being built on land donated by the IM Group near its old headquarters in Coleshill and will tower above the nearby countryside and be visible from the M6,

# ETERNAL WALL GROUND BREAKING

M42, the HS2 railway line and is under the Birmingham Airport flight path.

Everything about The Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer is mind-blowing. A million bricks, each digitally-linked to someone's answered prayer, will make up the dramatic award-winning design – a

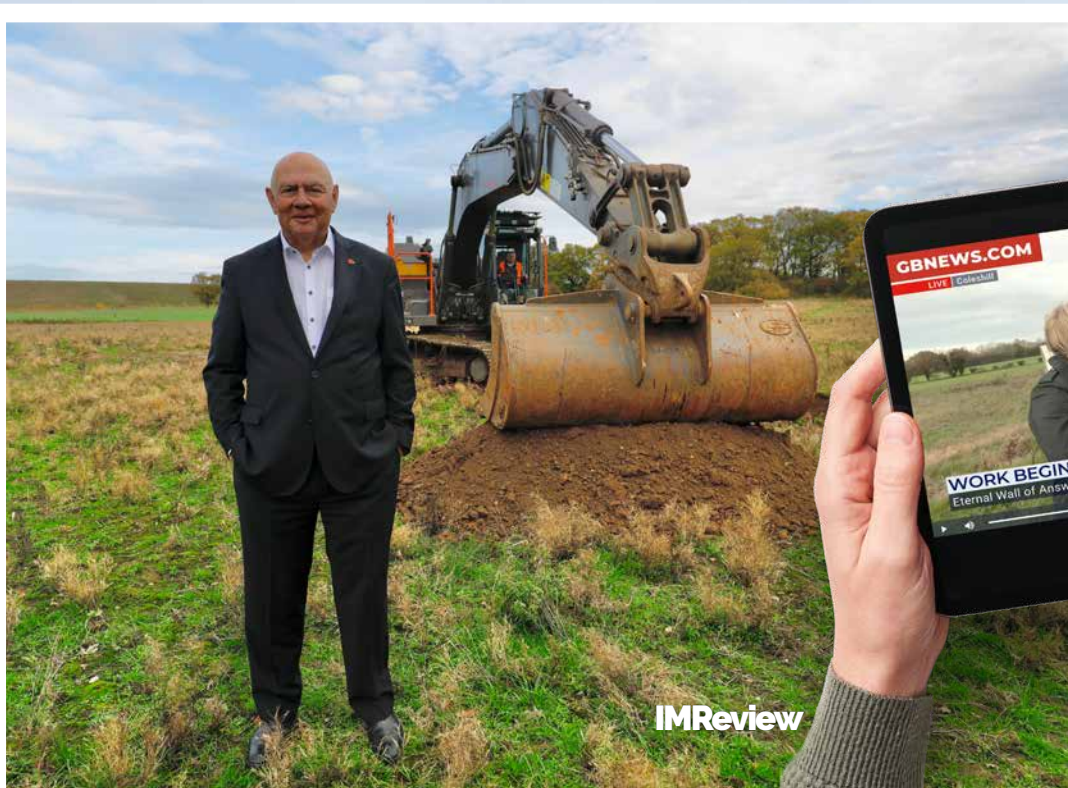
Möbius strip, a mathematical teaser that has both an inside and an outside surface which twists but continues as one at the same time.

Completion is expected in 2028 following the ground-breaking ceremony on November 5th. A £30-million donation to the project

– a group award by its chairman, Lord Edmiston – enabled work to start.

The concept originated two decades ago by Richard Gamble, a former Leicester City FC chaplain. But raising funds has been a slow process until Lord Edmiston's intervention.

Now that ground work has started the huge structure will begin to take shape.



IMReview





The ground-breaking event saw Lord and Lady Edmiston joined by people who have helped to drive the vision forward including the Deputy Mayor of North Warwickshire Borough Council; the council's CEO, Steve Maxey; and Bishop Mike Royal the Secretary General of Churches Together in England.

Richard Gamble and Eternal Wall CEO, Dr Ian Bullock also helped turn the first sods of earth using specially-engraved spades. Also helping were Andrew Edmiston, IM Group Managing Director; Paul Buckley from Snug Architects which won the competition to design the structure and Mike Lally, Managing Director of Birmingham-based Cadence Projects, which will project manage the build.

Television presenter and devout Christian, Gemma Hunt, hosted the day. 🙏



L to R **Michelle Heritage**, Chief Partnerships Officer at Eternal Wall; **Dorcas Ojiakor**, Eternal Wall volunteer; **Dr Ian Bullock**, Eternal Wall CEO; **Andrew Edmiston**, Managing Director IM Group; **Councillor Davina Ridley**, Deputy Mayor of North Warwickshire Borough Council; **Lord Bob Edmiston**, Chairman IM Group; **Richard Gamble**, Eternal Wall Founder; **Steve Maxey**, CEO North Warwickshire Borough Council; **Dorothy Houghton**, Eternal Wall volunteer and **Paul Buckley**, Snug Architects.



GRACE FOUNDATION  
Ruth Gayton

**F**antastic landmarks have been hit by Grace Foundation as its partnership with schools-in-need reaches 15.

But it's not just the increase in the number of schools, students and parents being helped that's impressive – changes in the attitude, behaviour and development of pupils have brought joy to everyone.

Ofsted, the body responsible for school inspections, has also been impressed with the rising standards where Grace Foundation 'Ethos' teams have been embedded in schools.

Huxlow Academy in Northamptonshire had previously been rated as 'inadequate' by Ofsted. That's the lowest grade and officially show the school has 'significant areas of concern.' Just months ago, with the 'Ethos' team having been in the school for less than a year, and thanks to the exceptionally hard work of the school, it was inspected again. This time it was rated



Tudor Grange Kingshurst, in Solihull, this year became the 14th partnership school and the team is already making a difference. This is being achieved with the support of The Rigby Foundation. The Rigby family, like IM Chairman Lord Edmiston, who founded the Grace Foundation, lead a highly-successful Midlands based global business and

are determined to make a difference to the lives of local young people.

Eric Payne, another Midlands entrepreneur, has also given financial backing to Grace Foundation. In January 2026 Shire Oak Academy in Walsall will become the newest member of Grace Foundation's numbers. This will be the third school he's sponsored.

## SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS PEOPLE HELPING YOUNGSTERS

as 'good' in four out of five areas – just outside the top-rating of 'outstanding.'

School Head, Kim Isaksen, said: "Many of these significant improvements have been driven by the outstanding work of our Ethos team which has transformed the culture of our school."

**"It's the generosity of these successful business people that's helping to change the lives of a generation of youngsters..."**





Dave Boden, Grace Foundation's Executive Director, said: "It's the generosity of these successful business people that's helping to change the lives of a generation of youngsters, mostly from underprivileged backgrounds. "I've got a list of probably 15 more schools that have reached out to us for help, but we can only stretch

our budgets so far. We are already helping more than 15,000 pupils and engaged with them more than 632,000 times in and out of school."

Assistant Director Phil Miles added: "More sponsorship would allow us to do even more. We would probably still focus on schools in the Midlands as that's where our roots and the IM Group are." 📍



IM LAND  
Guy Hartton

A fantastic window of opportunity has opened for IM Land – creating exciting opportunities for the tight-knit team of specialists.

It could mean that IM Land will open the way for thousands of badly-needed new homes being built across the Midlands and beyond.

Richard Knight, IM Properties UK Residential Delivery Director, explains: "A major amendment to the government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has presented us with what could be a huge opportunity. But we're having to act fast."

The rather bland sounding document is basically a rulebook requiring councils to

# QUEST TO BUILD MORE SEN I

identify land that can deliver houses for local needs. In many areas that need has drastically increased following years of undersupply. Coupled with a stronger 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' now puts pressure on councils to agree applications.

Richard says in the past IM Land might have dealt with just one or two applications a year. But the NPPF's new guidance means that his department will deal with up to 13 by June of 2026! "We have to accept that our







Richard Knight

proposals might be rejected by different councils. But housing targets set by the current government mean an appeal against refusal stands a far better chance of being successful on well-designed schemes.

"But planning is vastly complicated. We have to make sure our initial applications are highly-detailed, because if they are rejected we must justify them when, and if, we go to appeal."

**'...IM Land will open the way for thousands of badly-needed new homes being built across the Midlands and beyond.'**



That means committing huge resources in time and money to make sure plans for housing and commercial developments are thoroughly prepared. And, as Richard points out, time may not be on IM Land's side: "Plans for developing land can take years, sometimes decades. But this new NPPF move gives us tremendous scope. Yet that can all change if a new government is elected – and who knows when that might happen – and reverses the rules..."

Meanwhile, IM Land's team has been bolstered and should increase from six to eight by the start of 2026. In January, Glen Langham joined as Residential Planning Director.

Key development applications include a submission for a new community of up to 1,200 homes, two schools, sports and health hubs and a neighbourhood centre at Curborough Brooks, near Lichfield.

At Burbage, near Hinckley, IM Land is working with IMP colleagues and the local authority for the potential to bring forward up to 437 acres of gross commercial development on a portfolio site. This has reached an early stage in the authority's Local Plan for future developments.

Other sites are at Westwood Heath, Coventry; Broughton Astley, Leicestershire; Pucklechurch, Bristol; Streethay, near Lichfield and Walsall. 🏡

A DAY IN THE LIFE

# A REAL PASSION FOR SPITFIRE

**A**sk Alysha Spicer what she enjoys about her job and it's like unleashing a whirlwind!

Her eyes widen, her smile broadens and she simply gushes out a passionate non-stop dialogue about her life at Spitfire Homes as a newly-promoted Trainee Sales Manager.

She joined Spitfire soon after A-levels in 2018 in what was intended to be a gap year before deciding on what degree to go for at university. But Alysha – then the most junior sales consultant in the business – very quickly found that selling houses was something she was born to do!

Her infectious enthusiasm, commitment and attention to detail was soon spotted. Alysha recalls her first stint in the job: "It was fantastic. I did three



**IMReview**





months in all departments and learnt so much from really good people and just loved every minute."

She worked in land and planning, the commercial side of Spitfire, technical and design and construction. But it was sales where she really found her feet.

Alysha says Spitfire has many great things that sets it apart from other house builders – great design and build quality being paramount. "At Spitfire everyone works together as a team and I think that's key to setting Spitfire apart and to its success."

In April she was promoted to her new role of Trainee Sales Manager. This means that instead of being based on one site, Alysha covers a wide area. Normally she spends one day a week at Spitfire's office at The Gate, headquarters of IM. The rest of the week she is busy going to one site after another.

"It was fantastic. I did three months in all departments and learnt so much from really good people and just loved every minute."

So, what's the best part of her job? "I love opening a new development with new show homes. But I really love finally handing over the keys after completion when someone is just moving in. It's so joyful."

She also likes challenges. "You have sales chains that break, or mortgage problems arise, and that's when we can step in and help to find solutions".

Away from work Alysha likes socialising and travelling, with Portugal being her favourite destination. 🇵🇹

## SPITFIRE LANDS IN COVENTRY

Alysha is pictured at Spitfire's Clarendon development near Burton Green on the west side of Coventry – it's the firm's first site within the city boundary.

A range of two- to five-bedroom homes are being built, all to the new Spitfire Signature high-quality specification.

It is one of Spitfire Homes' larger developments. The 182 homes, built in phases, include 32 percent of the houses as affordable housing. Even before the site was officially open for viewings, several were sold off-plan.

Sustainability is at the heart of Spitfire's philosophy. Homes at Clarendon feature solar PV panels, air-source heat pumps, underfloor heating, EV charging points and smart heating systems.



Gary Lever

Construction is being delivered by Senior Site Manager, Gary Lever, who has previously been awarded The National House Building Council 'Pride in the Job' award. 🏡



## YEAR OF AWARDS

It's been a bumper year of awards for International Motors in the UK with so much silverware that a display room, rather than a cabinet, would be needed to show it all off!

Brands under the IM umbrella – Subaru, Isuzu, GWM and XPENG – have had a truly astounding year of successes.

Subaru won the 'Manufacturer of the Year' title in the *Auto Express* Driver Power customer satisfaction survey for the second year running.

It dominated seven out of 10 scoring categories beating more than 30

manufacturers to claim the coveted prize. What makes it so special is that it's based on customers' ownership and satisfaction feedback.

Paul Barker, Editor of *Auto Express*, said: "Subaru owners clearly love their cars as this survey clearly shows. It highlights what drivers really think of the models they have put their hard-earned money into. From safety to reliability and value they clearly appreciate what Subaru offers".

The Subaru Outback was crowned 'Best Crossover of the Year' by off-road publication *Overlander*



Darren Cooper at Peter Cooper Motor Group a new XPENG dealer

4x4. The win underlines the legendary Outback's enduring 'go-anywhere' off-road capability, as well as its sector-leading practicality and dependability.

The latest victory marks half a decade of sustained dominance for Subaru at the *Overlander* 4x4 awards. The Outback took home the Crossover Award for both 2024 and 2023, while the XV triumphed in 2022 and 2021.

*Overlander* 4x4 editor, Alan Kidd, said: "The Outback's

a bit of an institution. It's seen off an army of pretenders to its throne."

Five unusual accolades were won by Subaru at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival where a show garden was created using 9.5 tonnes of building waste.

Subaru's Cocoon Garden won the prestigious Best Show Garden award, a Gold Medal, awards for Environmental Innovation, Best Construction and the highly-coveted Tudor Rose Award.



Subaru's Cocoon Garden produced with Mike McMahon Studio.



The Tudor Rose Award winners, Hampton Court Palace



'Brands under the IM umbrella – Subaru, Isuzu, GWM and XPENG – have had a truly astounding year of successes.'

New GWM dealership, Draycotts in Sutton-in-Ashfield



Thirteen was a lucky number for Isuzu with the D-Max taking the 'Best Workhorse Pick-up' title for the 13th consecutive year in *Trade Van Driver* magazine's 2025 awards.

Editor, Matthew Eisenegger, said: "The mighty D-Max has done it again, winning every year since the awards began. None of the rivals could quite match it."

Other top awards collected by Isuzu in the year included: Pick-up of the Year (*Company Car & Van*),



# BUMPER YEAR OF AWARDS

L to R: Jonathan Tshand, Park's Motor Group; Chris Graham, XPENG UK and Steven McIntosh, Park's Motor Group



Best Range, Best Back-up vehicle and Sustainability award (*Overlander 4x4*).

For the fourth year in a row D-Max claimed the Pick-up of the Year title awarded by *Company Car & Van* magazine. Editor, Andrew Walker, said: "When a pick-up wins an award four years in a row, it must be doing something right and the D-Max does that alright. It'll do the rough stuff whilst also tackling the urban jungle too."

XPENG was recognised for setting a new world record

for the longest autonomous car-drive in which a fleet of P7 models covered more than 2,174 miles from Guangzhou to Beijing.

GWM UK has been setting records too with the pace of new dealerships appointed in 2025. It's recently opened outlets in Sutton-in-Ashfield and Wincanton to bring the tally up to 46 while also planning others in Hexham, Workington in Cumbria, Guildford and Telford. It has a target of 140 outlets within five years. 🚗

GWM  
Hatty Gourn

**B**reaking a cardinal rule and changing the brand name has given GWM in the UK – formerly ORA – a stronger and more exciting future in Britain's crowded automotive market.

Toby Marshall, Managing Director of GWM UK & Ireland, acknowledges that rebranding after launch goes against convention and is a bold move. But, as General Douglas MacArthur famously said, "Rules are meant to be broken." And for GWM, the gamble is paying off.

With five sub-brands under the GWM umbrella, including Haval and ORA, the Chinese automotive giant, which sells more than 13 million vehicles globally each year, saw an opportunity to unify its brand architecture.

By rebranding all products under the GWM name, the company opened the door to introducing a wider range of vehicles across more markets.

GWM Europe announced a strategic shift: from 2024 its individual brands



would no longer operate independently but become product lines under the master GWM brand. This is part of the 'ONE GWM' strategy.

Toby explained: "The UK followed with the launch of another model from the GWM stable – the Haval Jolion Pro. That triggered a full rebrand across our website, marketing, and dealer network, transitioning from ORA to GWM.

So why make such a significant change?

The answer is simple: to unlock the potential to bring more GWM products to our markets.

"The benefits are already clear," said Toby. "In October we launched the GWM POER300, a pickup truck. Pleasingly, media coverage focused on the vehicle's performance and not the brand transition. Auto Express gave the





'By rebranding all products under the GWM name, the company opened the door to introducing a wider range of vehicles across more markets.'



POER300

## RIPPING UP THE RULE BOOK

pickup four stars out of five. This vehicle launch would not have been possible if we'd stayed branded as ORA."

Autocar never questioned the brand name, instead concentrating on the vehicle's abilities and value. Against rivals the magazine said: "Overall, the POER300 is a capable option. It is good value, which is vitally important to small business owners and farmers."

Toby concluded: "Looking ahead, we're in active discussions with GWM about launching four new SUVs in the UK over the next couple of years, each with different drivetrains."

He pointed out that the POER300 was in a completely different sector of the market from the Isuzu D-Max – also sold by IM's automotive division. 📺



Haval Jolion Pro



## NET ZERO

**M Properties has been selected to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of sustainable construction in the UK.**

The business is contributing to a new cross-sector UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard Test Programme. The pilot programme is expected to influence new legislation to meet UK net-zero commitments.

It's designed to establish a clear and consistent definition of what it means for homes, factories and warehouses to be genuinely Net Zero Carbon by setting strict limits on various aspects of sustainability.

As part of the pilot, Hinckley 340 – a 340,853 sq. ft unit at IM's Hinckley Park development – has been chosen as one of just 22 buildings nationwide to take part within the storage and distribution sector.

Hinckley Park, just off Junction 1 of the M69, has become a significant success story for IM Properties since its £52-million investment in land and initial costs. Today it is home to major occupiers including Amazon, DPD, Octopus Energy and Geosynthetics, together supporting close to 2,000 jobs and providing a lasting boost to the local community.

Hinckley 340 was constructed to an industry-leading specification, adhering to the UK Green Building Council's criteria and establishing clear pathways for the

"This is all about doing the hard work now and making sure we're properly prepared for where the industry is going."



Simon Seaton-Smith.


# LEADING THE WAY ON SUSTAINABILITY

current government pilot. The building, which achieved an EPC A rating and BREEAM 'Excellent' accreditation, was delivered as Net Zero in Construction and is designed to be Net Zero Ready.

Simon Seaton-Smith, Director of Innovation & Sustainability at IM Properties, described the selection of Hinckley Park for the pilot scheme as a real honour and a real responsibility: "We are at a critical moment for the industry to align ahead of inevitable regulatory change," he said. "This is all

about doing the hard work now and making sure we're properly prepared for where the industry is going.

"We've been working for a long time to make sure we're both aware of the expectations around net zero and actively responding – often going beyond to deliver best practice.

"This aligns perfectly with our Sustainable Futures framework focusing on People, Place and Planet. To be selected for the pilot test shows that our commitment is being recognised." 



# What a place to work!

**A** once unloved office in Coventry city centre is now one of the most sought-after places to work thanks to far-sighted thinking by IM Properties.

The building, called Bourn, proudly stands as a sentinel to 'green technology' after IM invested £9 million on a total refurbishment. And the changes that made the building as environmentally friendly as possible have paid off as a business investment.

Bourn covers nearly 90,000 sq. ft over six storeys and with latest tenants, FireAngel, moving in is now 80-percent let and likely to be fully occupied during 2026. The upgrade, alongside state-of-the-art green technology, reflects IM's Sustainable Futures strategy based on the three pillars of People, Planet, Place.



Rob Hemus

FireAngel is a leading UK fire safety technology company founded in Coventry in 1988. Bourn will become its European headquarters with 91 of its 110 staff based there.

Nick Rutter, FireAngel CEO, said: "We've always called Coventry our home and are proud to remain in the city. We have a loyal, skilled workforce and it was important to us to ensure they remain at the heart of our future.

"Bourn's people-first approach, with its wellbeing focus and sense of community, really stood out and reflects our own values. The strong sustainability credentials of Bourn were really the icing on the cake, providing us with a workplace fit for a European HQ that will attract global attention."

Instead of the more-traditional cosmetic office upgrade, IM's approach has been to create a community environment that makes working at Bourn enjoyable.

Rob Hemus, IM's Director of Asset Management and Sustainability, gave examples: "We offer different



L-R Nick Rutter, Kuldip Nagra Bourn's Customer Experience Manager and Adrian Wilding FireAngel CFO

**"Bourn's people-first approach, with its wellbeing focus and sense of community, really stood out to us and reflects our own values."**

wellness classes such as yoga, boxercise and Pilates as well as hosting food and drink events.

"From a Planet perspective we refurbished the building to make it as sustainable as possible by removing all gas and installing solar panels and EV car chargers. Bourn has a top Energy Performance Certificate rating of A.

"With People in mind we added changing rooms, showers and cycle storage

to encourage cycling to work. Employees were at the heart of our planned management of the day-to-day running of the building. There is background music, fragrances and plants in the common areas.



"We have green lease clauses with tenants so we work in partnership including on a waste initiative. From a Place perspective we engage with the local area and support local charities so that we can practice our own social values." 🌱



## MERCIA PARK

A flagship business park that created more than 2,500 jobs could soon have a 'baby brother' with the prospect of work for a further 1,700.

Mercia Park was built by IM Properties just off Junction 11 of the M42 in north Leicestershire. The 238-acre site is home to Jaguar Land Rover's global parts business and was the UK's largest single pre-let transaction. Freight forwarder DSV also has its Midlands operations based on site.

The success of Mercia Park has created more demand for warehousing and in February IM submitted plans for 'Mercia Park Phase 2' to North West Leicestershire District Council. A decision was expected in December. The two parks will sit on either side of the A444 at Junction 11 of M42.

Richard Sykes, Development Director at IM Properties, describes Mercia Park as

a prime location. He said: "The District Council's draft local plan has proposed that the land we want to develop is an expansion of the existing Mercia Park.

"It recognises that the new development could capitalise on the profile, infrastructure and investment in the community that we have made so far in Mercia Park."

'Once fully built it is estimated that between 1,030 and 1,720 new jobs would be created.'

# More jobs follow Mercia Park success

He added that demand for large-footprint logistic parks was growing in this area but that the number of suitable sites along the M42 corridor was rapidly dwindling.

Under IM's plans a large 605,000-sq.-ft warehouse would be built on Plot 1 of the new site with another 435,000-sq.-ft unit built on Plot 2. The whole area

would be bordered by trees and hedgerows and new water features would be created. Around 37 percent of the site would be retained as green spaces with ponds to attract wildlife.

Once fully built it is estimated that between 1,030 and 1,720 new jobs would be created. ■



## BISHOPS CLEEVE

**T**wo parts of the IM Group, Spitfire Homes and IM Properties, have come together to create a unique development in the Cotswolds that could set a future trend.

The companies worked together to buy a mixed-use site in the pretty village of Bishop's Cleeve at the foot of Cleeve Hill, the highest point in the glorious Cotswold countryside.

Spitfire quickly got on with building 220 new homes and named the development Fairmont. Part of the overall site had been earmarked for light industrial use with planning permission for up to seven warehouses.

But the IM Properties division saw other opportunities for the land and struck a deal

for a prestigious leisure centre and spa instead.

So now Spitfire Homes' Fairmont development will have a David Lloyd leisure club on its doorstep with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, learner pools for children, tennis courts, six padel courts along with two sports halls, a well-equipped

**'...IM Properties division saw other opportunities for the land and struck a deal for a prestigious leisure centre and spa...'**

# TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

gym, fitness studio rooms and a children's soft-play area.

There will also be a spa with relaxing pools, a sauna and steam room along with business lounges and terrace areas.

Lewis Payne, IM's Development Director, said: "The non-residential part of the Bishops Cleeve site was a bit of a gamble. But we could see its potential.

"Declan Mallon, Technical Director at Spitfire, and his team did the enabling infrastructure works. That ensured the IM Properties element of the site was 'oven ready' for David Lloyd to take forward. In turn, that



has accelerated delivery of the site with David Lloyd aiming to start building work by the end of the year."

It's the first time IM Properties and Spitfire have combined on a development like this generating not only a healthy uplift in land value but also a valuable facility for the residents of Fairmont. Its success could pave the way for similar joint ventures in the future.

As well as attracting customers from Bishop's Cleeve the sports club and spa is less than five miles from Cheltenham, seven miles from Tewkesbury and 13 miles Gloucester and Evesham. 📍



**Three women working in International Motors have been honoured as rising stars in the automotive industry.**

Alison Aldridge, Mel Butcher and Sharon Townsend have been recognised in the prestigious Autocar Great Women Rising Stars Awards in which hundreds of women in the motor industry were entered.

Under the marketing section Alison, International Motors Head of Brand Marketing, won high praise from the judges. They highlighted her "innovative leadership across multiple brands."

Alison was nominated by William Brown, Managing Director of International Motors. He told judges: "Alison achieves cut-through at a time when brands are seeing unprecedented levels of competition. She has a unique and innovative approach."

Mel, at the time Isuzu UK & Ireland General Sales Manager, won her honours in the sales category. The judges said: "Her dealer-focused approach combines

office support with extensive on-site visits to provide training, challenges to traditional methods and innovative solutions."

Alan Able, Isuzu's UK Managing Director, in his nomination said: "Mel is always looking for ways to improve our processes to make it simple for our dealer partners."

Sharon, head of International Motors Mitsubishi Aftersales Parts and Service (IM MAPS) division, was recognised in the operations section. Judges noted that following Mitsubishi's exit from the UK in 2021 "Her leadership has kept parts sales strong and, remarkably, increased the UK service centre network beyond pre-2021 levels. Her team's excellence was recognised with Mitsubishi Motors Europe's Parts and Accessories Excellence 2024 award, establishing their initiatives as industry benchmarks."

Her nomination for the 2025 award said: "Sharon's strategic vision and commitment to service

"My sincere congratulations to all the award recipients and the remarkable women we've recognised in 2025."

## IM'S RISING STARS RECOGNISED

excellence have sustained Mitsubishi's aftermarket business during challenging market conditions."

Chair of the judging panel, Rachael Prasher, Managing Director of Haymarket Automotive, added: "My sincere congratulations to all the award recipients and the remarkable women we've recognised in 2025."

"The exceptional talent, wide-ranging expertise and deep-seated passion

underpinning the automotive sector are truly inspiring. As we collectively steer through this period of significant industry transformation, such talent and varied perspectives are absolutely crucial."

Sharon Townsend





The presentations took place at the Horiba MIRA proving centre in Warwickshire where Lorraine Bishton, a three-time winner in Autocar's 'Top 100 Women in the Global Car industry award', was one of the key speakers.

Autocar editor, Mark Tisshaw, said the standards this year were higher than ever: "This year, the exceptional quality of the submissions made the judging process both challenging and rewarding. I am confident that all the winners will continue to represent the best of our industry through their successful careers and personal growth. We are very eager to follow their future achievements." 📷



Left to right: Lorraine Bishton, Alison Aldridge and Mel Butcher

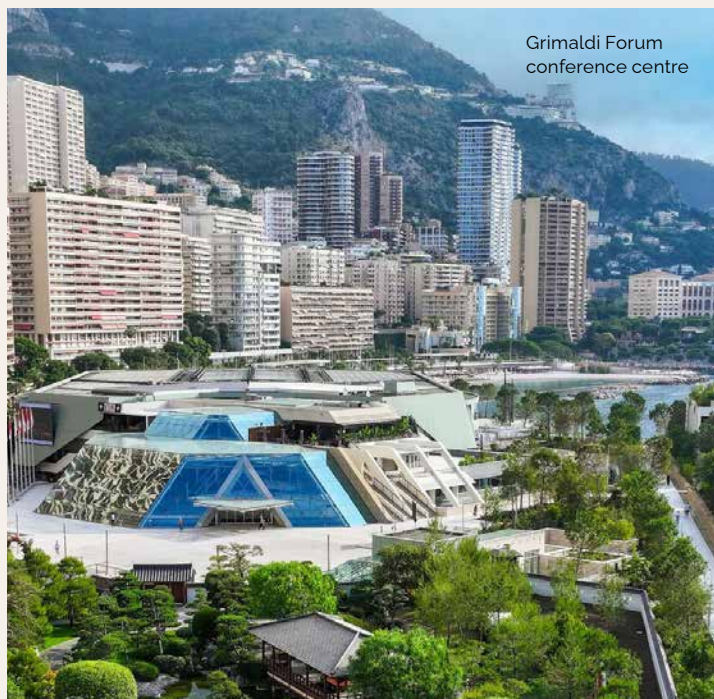


IM GROUP  
Guy Arthnot

One of the most famous hotels in the world, the Fairmont in Monte Carlo, will host a conference on the occasion of IM Group's 50th anniversary. Managing Director, Andrew Edmiston, said: "Occasions such as a Golden Jubilee help you to reflect on what has happened in the past and what you need to do to embrace the future. It just so happens this also coincides with formally introducing our new Senior Board.

"Staff will be hearing about ambitious future plans for our business.

"We can draw on the milestones of the last 50 years to show how we got to where we are now. But we must look forward and plan for the future. That's vital for the business to seek and secure opportunities to grow."



Grimaldi Forum  
conference centre

Sitting in the glamorous heart of Monaco, the Fairmont has breathtaking views of the Mediterranean with the iconic Casino de Monte-Carlo just minutes away. It's hosted the rich and famous since Princess Grace of Monaco inaugurated the hotel in 1975.

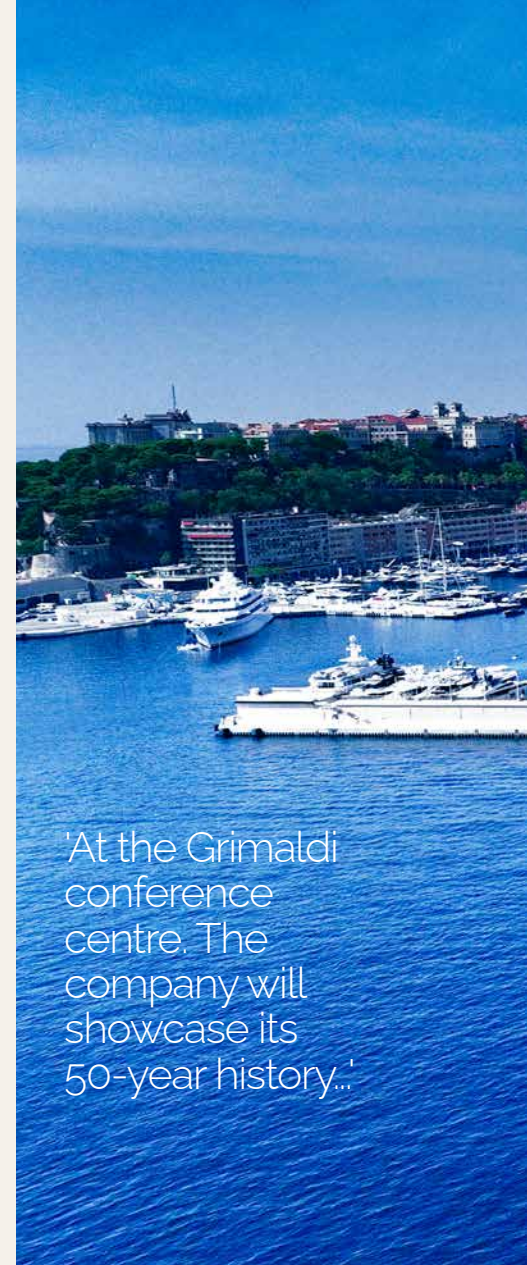
It oversees the challenging hairpin turn of the Circuit de Monaco. During the prestigious F1 race, cars roar through the famous tunnel beneath the hotel. And in



May, when the IM event takes place in Monte Carlo, the all-electric Monaco E-Prix takes place on the same circuit – reflecting IM's electric-car future.

Staff and partners will arrive at the Fairmont on Friday, May 15 with time to relax, take in the atmosphere and views.

On Saturday the staff conference takes place. A number of Members of the new IM Group Board will outline their vision for the future of the company. This



'At the Grimaldi conference centre, The company will showcase its 50-year history...'

will be the first opportunity for staff to hear of the plans..

"We have always been a company with high ambitions – even in the most difficult of years," says Andrew. "Which is why members of the board will share their ambitious individual, and collective, plans for the future."







# LOOKING FORWARD TOGETHER

The International Motors Live (IML) Conference will also take place during the weekend.

At the Grimaldi conference centre, the company will showcase its 50-year history and how it can draw on that as it faces the future.

This is a critical time for IM as it looks forward to the next chapter in the story one of Britain's few 50-year-old privately-owned family businesses. 📺





Christian Vision (CV) is reshaping its operations to ensure maximum impact. The charity has always striven to look to the future, seeking new ways to innovate, maximising and empowering team members whilst remaining faithful to its mission.

This year CV is taking yet another bold step forward through a major organisational shift: moving from a regional structure to a global, functional one.

Previously, CV was split into four regions, each managing its own operations, initiatives, and communications. The new structure will allow team members across the world to

work together, empowered to focus on global impact.

Co-Founder and Co-Chair, Tracie Edmiston, explains: "We are determined to remain true to the heart of our mission. This organisational change enables us to manage global projects more effectively and expand more rapidly.

"It optimises the use of new technology and artificial intelligence (AI) whilst forming our work practices to be fit for purpose for future generations."

The new structure introduces four global functions: Mission, People, Technology and Finance & Governance. Each is designed to help enhance operational efficiency and unlock cross-team collaboration. Through these functions staff around the world will share knowledge more freely, align on global standards and avoid duplication of efforts. This will allow CV to work out its mission to share the message of Jesus with people who don't know Him.

For CV this is not simply a structural change, it's a cultural one. The new way of working is designed for leaders to lead with clarity and for all staff to thrive. Team members will deepen their experience working across time zones and cultures, and have access to options for personal development and progression.

With this foundation in place, CV is equipped to make an impact today – and secure its future while pushing ahead with renewed confidence. 🌍

'Team members will deepen their experience working across time zones and cultures...'



# Impact by Numbers

Latest figures show just what an impact work by the Grace Foundation has on schools, students, their parents and communities.

Across its 14 partner schools Foundation staff reached out to more than 15,000 students last year. More than 632,000 individual engagements took place with 50 trained staff.

Last year saw a 75-percent increase in wellbeing and behaviour interventions with more than 9,000 youngsters and more than 4,000 one-to-one support sessions – a 37-percent increase. Engagements with parents also increased

by 37 percent to nearly 40,000 offering practical, emotional, relationship and wellbeing support. This led to enhanced school attendance, more positive behaviour, healthier decision-making, better relationships and improved aspirations. 📈



## Emergency help for families in need

This year Grace Foundation's Emergency Fund donated £10,000 to help families in need buy essential items.

Household goods, electrical appliances and even food vouchers helped improve the living standards of families often desperate for help. This in turn provided a more stable background for young people and

resulted in rates of attendance at schools improving – sometimes dramatically.

One single-parent family received a bed for their Year-10 child, a young carer diagnosed with autism. The child had been sleeping on the floor and the bed provided a comfortable night's sleep and the outcome of more focus at school. 📈



# mitsubishi vehicles heading to the UK again

**International Motors announced plans to introduce new Mitsubishi vehicles to the UK market from 2026.**

The new models, drawn from Mitsubishi Motors' global lineup, will bring the brand's latest advancements in innovation and four-wheel drive technologies, to the UK market.

Complementing the established Mitsubishi aftersales network of more than 100 sites, a dedicated number of retailers will handle sales and customer

service. Customer deliveries are scheduled to begin in summer 2026.

Sharon Townsend, Head of Mitsubishi Motors in the UK, said:

"We're delighted to be introducing exciting new Mitsubishi vehicles to our loyal UK customers. Over the past few years, we've continued to see enthusiasm for the brand, which has strongly influenced this decision.

"By building on our trusted aftersales network and dedicated retailer partners,

we are committed to providing an exceptional ownership experience."

Frank Krol, President & CEO of Mitsubishi Motors Europe, added:

"Our upcoming models represent the very best of Mitsubishi Motors' core technologies in performance, four-wheel drive, and much more. We look forward to a successful introduction in the UK – a market where our brand continues to have a deep emotional connection with loyal customers." 📷



## Long-planned scheme started

**Work has started on a £140 million employment park that could bring 1,500 new jobs to Stratford-Upon-Avon.**



The 65-acre scheme called Stratford 46 has been in the pipeline for several years and has already attracted huge interest from local and national companies.

It is just off the A46 on the west side of Stratford-Upon-Avon, a strategic trunk road that links eastwards to the M40 and Coventry and westwards towards Evesham and the M5.

Stratford 46 will be a mixed-use scheme with high-quality logistics, offices and roadside premises. Lewis Payne,

Development Director at IM Properties, said: "It has been a long and complex journey to reach this point, with extensive discussions behind the scenes.

"However, interest from businesses has remained consistently strong, from those looking to expand in the area to new occupiers seeking prime space. This has helped to underline our strategy to push forward and satisfy the pent-up demand for business space along the M40 and M42 corridor across a range of sectors." 📷



## Bill just can't stop buying Subarus!

**If there is one brand that Bill Nunn likes its Subaru. He's taken delivery of his 26th!**

Bill is one of the most loyal Subaru buyers in the world. He bought his first, a Legacy estate more than 30 years ago. His latest is a new Forester. In between Bill has bought a succession of Foresters, XTs, Impezas and Legacy estates.

Most were bought from Subaru dealer Adams Brothers in Aylesbury. "Since buying

my first Subaru, the cars have certainly become more modern, capable and spacious," said Bill. "But the core values that set Subaru apart have remained.

"They are just great cars: always a pleasure to drive, comfortable, reliable and safe. In 30 years, covering hundreds of thousands of miles for work and private use in all weather conditions, they have never let me down." 🇬🇧



## TOP SPOT AGAIN FOR SUBARU



Subaru has been awarded the 'Manufacturer of the Year' title by the Auto Express Driver Power customer satisfaction survey for the second year running.

It dominated seven out of 10 scoring categories beating more than 30 manufacturers to claim the coveted prize. What makes the award so special is that it's based on customers' ownership and satisfaction feedback.

Paul Barker, Editor of Auto Express, said: "Subaru owners clearly love their cars, as this back-to-back win in the industry-leading Driver Power customer satisfaction survey clearly shows. It highlights what drivers really think of the models they have put their hard-earned money into. From safety to reliability and value they clearly appreciate what Subaru offers". 🇬🇧



## Start 2026 with a win

Isuzu is already celebrating its first award of 2026 and picked up plaudits on the way!

The Caravan and Motorhome Club Towcar of the Year 2026 named Isuzu's D-Max Steel Edition as its Pick-up Towcar winner. Against all its key rivals it stood out in every category.

James Batchelor, the awards driving judge, said: "We've been impressed by the Isuzu D-Max for

years. And in 2026 it's this car's moment to shine. This is one rugged and no-nonsense pick-up that can be relied upon to deliver a towing experience that's safe and dependable.

"The D-Max is impressive. With its rugged spirit and adaptability; it gets on with the job with minimal fuss. It keeps its caravan in remarkable check and is impressively torquey for a 1.9-litre unit." 📺

## ISLAND IN THE SUN

Probably the world's most remote EV charging point, on the island of St Helena isolated in the middle of



the Atlantic, has thanked Subaru for proving it works.

St Helena, 1,200 miles off the south-west coast of Africa, is a British Overseas Territory where Napoleon was once exiled. Today the island has ambitious plans to generate 80-percent of its power by wind and solar by 2028.

Subaru UK shipped an all-electric Solterra to St Helena



for a two-month trial to help test the feasibility of the island going electric. The all-wheel-drive top-of-the-

range Subaru was driven both on- and off-road on the tropical volcanic island. 📺



# LET'S GET MUDDY

'It's all part of the popular Tough Mudder series of races held across Britain...'

Some very dirty people have been scrambling onto the back of some showroom-clean Isuzu D-Max models.

It's all part of the popular Tough Mudder series of races held across Britain where contestants have to show grit, determination,

teamwork and resilience as they take on obstacle courses with everything from a 5k mud run to crawling through a caged 48-foot pit of water.



At the end of the endurance, teams covered head-to-toe in mud and slime often climb aboard D-Max display models – they say it's a gesture of appreciation for Isuzu's sponsorship! 🇬🇧

# FUTURE IN FOCUS

**Once heard a talk from a 'futurist' – somebody who studies the future and talks about the changes it might bring.** His central theme was that we think change is more far-reaching and impactful than it actually is. For example, he told a fictitious story about a man who was in a coma and woke up 25 years later. When he left hospital to return home and to his normal life, he arrived in his mostly-familiar street, opened his front door with a familiar key. The carpet and walls in his house were familiar, though he could smell were quite new. He went to bed with a soft pillow and some familiar blankets. When he woke up, the coffee smelled a little nicer than he remembered but the sound of the toaster popping up the toast was

familiar, as was the knife he used to spread the familiar butter and jam. As was the taste of his toast. He got dressed into a shirt, trousers and a jacket, though he didn't need a tie. He picked up his briefcase, which was still pretty familiar, walked to his car, and the first less-familiar thing he noticed was his car key. He knew it was a car key because it said the brand on it. He walked up to the car and found he could open the door. Instead of turning the key, he pressed the rather obviously marked button that said 'start'. He depressed the clutch, moved the gears and drove off as normal. The road signs were the same, pedestrians and cyclists milled about just as he remembered. Some of the buildings looked different to what he remembered but

he could still recognise what they were for. And so his day went on. He sat at his desk, turned on his computer, which now looked a lot smaller but still recognisably a computer, as was the mobile phone he noticed he could now carry in his pocket. You get the picture.

They say AI is going to change the world almost beyond recognition. I believe it has the possibility to do that to a certain degree and I believe that the moment we can use it to make our businesses 'better', we will do so. Why? Because human history says that if something can give us an advantage in a competitive race, we will use it.

So which is the future to be – little change or big change? Is it cheating to say both could be correct at the same time? If you pushed me to commit to a side, I would say the tendency for things to feel like they are changing quickly

when in reality they are not, will prevail. But to more fully answer the question, although the futurist's story showed little change to the physical things in our lives, nothing he said reflected the real 'big' change that has been happening over those last decades – the way we think. And that is where AI could have its biggest impact. There are many challenges for the world to grapple with when considering AI, and we should take that very seriously indeed. But what I am really interested in here, is what 'thinking differently' means for our company's tomorrow.

We operate a business that has been very successful in a few industries over nearly 50 years. We have a formula for many of the things we do. Like the story about the man coming out of his coma, you could wake up and come to our office and there are many things that

"We think change is more far-reaching and impactful than it actually is."



## "So which is the future to be – little change or big change?"

would work quite similarly to many years ago. We use laptops, and telephones, and colleagues and external relationships, and banks, and car manufacturers. We have a structure, an email system and a finance team.

To some degree, even our thinking is rooted in values that were present in our business 50 years ago. So has anything changed at all? The advent of AI leaves the world second-guessing what is real and what isn't. What thoughts are truly human?

What makes humans unique is the ability to mix a high degree of rational thought with emotional feeling and intelligence. As a race, the way we think is constantly adapting to our surroundings. When so much artificial, and often inaccurate, thought is available to us, suddenly true human thought

becomes more valuable. Our company is more than just the products it sells.

We have a business event planned for May 2026, coinciding with our company's 50th anniversary. We will use it to bring focus to the future and how to shape it better. We will engage with a very important

but basic thought. What is a 'company'? To understand the answer to this question well is to reach the right starting point for also understanding what achievements a company should make in its future. What should we be aiming at? Not wanting to give

my own thoughts away before our event I'll leave it at this...


### To be continued!



Andrew Edmiston



"If something can give us an advantage in a competitive race, we will use it..."



The Village of Avon, not far from the world-renowned ski centre of Aspen in Colorado, is one of many IM Properties developments in the USA. The western mountain state has a fast-growing economy and IM is helping to satisfy demand for both homes and retail outlets.

It's one of IM's latest developments since the company first ventured into the US in 2006. Often called 'the land of opportunity' the USA has certainly been rewarding for IM.

Tim Wooldridge, IM Properties Managing Director, says: "The US is the biggest global and real estate market. If our hard work and application pays off we should see continued opportunity which compliments our position of strength back home in the UK."