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Caroline Theobald

Caroline Theobald founded Bridge Club Ltd in 2000 as a private company with a mission to 'champion, foster, and accelerate enterprise and entrepreneurship'.

Bridge Club Ltd has introduced thousands of people to like-minded individuals and given them access to a wealth of contacts. These connections have resulted in successful partnerships, lucrative contracts and a whole host of other business benefits.

In 2007, Caroline accepted a Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion and became Honorary Consul for Sweden. In recognition of her Consul work, she was made the honorary chairman of the North East chapter of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in 2010 and now has the satisfaction of seeing the formalisation of 'Creative Links' a formal commitment to collaborate between North East England and region Vastra Gotaland.

Caroline sits on the boards of several companies, is the co-founder of Gabriel Investors LLP and the Northern Institute for Business Ethics and chairman of International Newcastle. Caroline is also the independent chairman of the BQ Live debates that take place around the country.

Charlie Nettle

After completing a degree in Business, Charlie went on to complete his masters, specialising in marketing communications. He has been in senior marketing roles since 2000 and began his career in the IT and education sector before joining the North East Chamber of Commerce in 2007.

As NECC approaches its 200th anniversary in 2015, Charlie is making it his personal mission to ensure that businesses in the region have a better understanding of the Chambers of Commerce and the role they play for businesses. As part of this, Charlie implemented a segmented membership model in 2011, which was recognised nationally by the British Chambers of Commerce in 2012 when Charlie was presented with the national award for Excellence in Membership Services. Other Chambers around the UK are now replicating this model.

He is also a non-Executive Director for the mental health charity, Middlesbrough and Stockton MIND.



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Darren Richardson

Darren has over 25 years' specialist knowledge in corporate identity and brand creation. His work focuses on the use of design methods to provide organisations with strategic design, innovation and transformation consultancy.

Darren founded Gardiner Richardson in 1998 with Lucy Gardiner, sharing a vision of a new approach to helping organisations build their brands by creating conversations, establishing connections and building relationships. The company now employs 35 people and clients include Metro Tyne and Wear, Siemens, Drager, Egger and RIBA. In October they were voted the UK's best regional agency, winning the Freshest Consultancy award at the prestigious national Fresh Awards.

Before Gardiner Richardson, Darren was based in London working with leading consultancies; Landor Associates, Sampson Tyrrell and Roundel Design Group. During this period he helped shape and create corporate identity systems and branded environments for clients including Cathay Pacific, Delta Air Lines, Euro Star and Norwegian Telecom.

Darren sits on the board of Trustees at BALTIC, Centre for Contemporary Art and the development board at Sunderland Foundation of Light. He is a regional ambassador for the Design Council, an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Designers and an external examiner for Northumbria University.