



**freshwater**



## PRESS RELEASE

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### A 'fresh' contribution

Newport and Gwent Chamber of Commerce Enterprise and Industry (NGCCEI), trading as the South Wales Chamber of Commerce (SWCC) and Centre for Business (C4B) welcomes its newest Board Member, Steve Howell, Founder and Chief Executive of Freshwater.

Steve joins the NGCCEI Board to offer creative expertise and business experience resulting from his 13 years at the helm of one of the UK's most successful PR and marketing groups. Founded in Newport in 1997 and now headquartered in Cardiff, Freshwater has appeared in the *Wales Fast Growth 50* list for six consecutive years and is ranked as Britain's number one regional PR agency.

After a career in local government public relations, Steve worked on the South Wales Argus and at BBC Wales before launching his own communications consultancy. From small beginnings, Freshwater now has 90 staff in nine offices

and is listed on the Alternative Investment Market of the London Stock Exchange in 2007.

Andrew Wilkinson, Chairman of the NGCCEI Board, said: “It is great to have Steve as part of the NGCCEI Board, he is highly regarded within his field and I know he will bring a lot of experience and advice with his new position.

“The purpose of the NCGGEI Board is to provide strategic direction to the executive management. Steve’s specialist expertise and knowledge within this field will no doubt prove to be valuable for both the South Wales Chamber of Commerce and Centre for Business.”

Steve Howell said: “As someone who started a business from scratch with no previous commercial experience, I know directly about the challenges facing Chamber members. Building a company can be rewarding and enjoyable but it’s often also a lonely and stressful role, especially in these tough times. Hopefully, I can contribute to developing strategy and contribute specialist expertise in areas such as funding growth, acquisitions and marketing.”

**Ends**

**Notes for editors**

### **SWCC**

South Wales Chamber of Commerce is the ultimate business network in South Wales and now incorporates the West Wales Chamber of Commerce. The chamber exists to provide a regional voice and offer support to businesses pan South Wales.

Since merging with the West Wales Chamber of Commerce, the South Wales Chamber of Commerce now represents over 1000 businesses and 100,000 employees.

### **C4B**

Centre for Business has been providing outstanding business advice, training and premises since 1982.

One of the longest-established business support organisations in South Wales, the last two decades have seen the business grow in size, knowledge and experience.

Through the highly skilled and experienced team of business professionals, advisors and consultants Centre for Business delivers an unparalleled range of business support services in terms of range, flexibility and expertise.

## **Freshwater**

Freshwater is a Cardiff-headquartered communications consultancy with 90 professional staff working from 9 locations and offering expertise in public relations, stakeholder communications, public affairs, social marketing, online media and creative services.

The group has more than 350 clients in sectors as diverse as energy, transport, health, education, consumer, retail, local government, leisure, property, technology and professional services.

Freshwater's headquarters are at Cardiff Gate Business Park where 35 of the group's staff are based, including a PR team servicing Welsh clients such as the University of Wales Lampeter, Coleg Gwent, John Lewis, Health Inspectorate Wales, Ryder Cup Europe, Specsavers, PHS Group, The Welsh Whiskey Company, Prince's Trust Cymru, Visit Wales, Lloyds TSB Insurance and Holder Mathias Architects.

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