

# ROCKFACE WINTER 2023

Proud of our heritage. Excited by our future.





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[www.wainwright.co.uk](http://www.wainwright.co.uk)

# WELCOME

**I am pleased to introduce my first issue of Rockface** as Wainwright's CEO. That said, some of the focus in what follows is rightly on my predecessor, Peter Barkwill, who stepped aside in September after 26 years in the role.

It was great to gather with so many of Peter's friends and colleagues to mark his contribution to Wainwright and express our gratitude to him (see pp. 16 – 17). A very important occasion for us all.

From my point of view, Peter has been exceptionally generous with his time since I joined the business in April and has patiently answered my many questions. I'm grateful for his kindness and reassured that he continues to be involved with Wainwright as a non-executive director. His legacy lives on in our values: as Tim Gibson writes, the "Barkwill effect" will be felt for many generations to come (pp. 20 – 21).

Were it not for Peter's change in role, our biggest story this issue would be the success of Wainwright Contracting in winning a £14m tender with North Somerset Council (pp. 4 – 7). This is a significant achievement for our business: the first time we've supplied contracting direct to a local authority rather than through an intermediary. It reflects Wainwright's growing stature with the public sector and is an achievement in which the whole team can take pride.

I'm also pleased to see some of the photographs from our Annual General Meeting (pp. 22 – 23). This was a great occasion and I enjoyed my conversations with shareholders, learning about the things they are interested in and how they view Wainwright. I am always keen to hear the views of our investors and customers, so please do get in touch if you have anything to share.

Reflecting on Peter's period as CEO has given us all a chance to take stock of where Wainwright is at this time of economic, political and social uncertainty. It's great to read Asphalt Business Manager Jody Bennett reflect on the development of our Moons Hill and Avonmouth facilities (pp. 8 – 9), and to see Clare Vigus leading our sales operation in her new role (p. 13).

Part of what gives me confidence in Wainwright's long-term future is the substance of our history. This is seen in our longstanding relationships with contractors like the Sleemans. Andy, Steve and now Simon have overseen our quarry blasting operations for 40 years, during which the industry has changed in all sorts of ways. The profile of them gives a great insight into the evolution of our sector over four decades (pp. 10 – 12).

As a cycling enthusiast, I was pleased to read about Transport Planner Stuart Evans's accomplishment in cycling from London to Paris for the Royal British Legion (pp. 26 – 27). A different form of propulsion is the focus for Wainwright Futures Foundation beneficiary Josh Seviour, who secured an apprenticeship with Red Bull F1 after receiving sponsorship from us for a college motorsport project (pp. 28 – 30).

Josh's story shows the impact Wainwright has on the wider community. It is an outworking of the values that lie at the core of our business and guide our decision making: personal, professional, ethical. Such values stem from our history and shape our way of doing business today. As a theme for this issue, and a strapline for our company, I believe the cover of this issue of Rockface says it all: we are indeed "Proud of our heritage and excited by our future."

I look forward to building that future together.

**Tom Longland, CEO**









BID WINNERS:

# WAINWRIGHT CONTRACTING WINS NORTH SOMERSET BID

Wainwright's contracting division has secured a prestigious local authority contract, worth £14m over four years. Here's the inside story on how the tender was won

**North Somerset Council** has awarded Wainwright a four-year contract for surfacing works across its jurisdiction.

The contract was made available through competitive tender, and Wainwright's Contracting Director Lee Seviour learned in September that his team had been successful.

"It was a tense week while we waited for news, having worked hard to deliver a high-quality tender document," Lee says. "I was checking my emails every minute and we were so pleased when we received the positive outcome."

It was fitting that Lee's colleagues, Contracting Operations Manager Matthew Moore and Contracting Commercial Manager John Wellstead, were on hand when the acceptance letter arrived.

As Lee remarks: "It was very much a team effort to secure this contract. We pulled together, with support from a professional bid-writing team, and were delighted with the result. There was considerable celebration in our Moons Hill office!"



## Local history

Although the North Somerset contract represents the first direct tender to a local authority for Wainwright Contracting, it is by no means a new relationship for the business. Previously, Wainwright was part of the Milestone supply chain that served North Somerset – meaning there is already a strong connection with the council.

“As it happens, Wainwright’s history of supplying local authorities runs far deeper than our contracting division,” reports Lee. “The company has supplied materials to local councils for several decades. Part of our founder John Wainwright’s genius was to persuade roadbuilders of the exceptional qualities of our aggregates, including high skid resistance and durability.

“Now, we deliver those qualities along with the first-rate customer service that has been the foundation of Wainwright Contracting’s growth in recent years. By using our own specialist gangs to lay our materials, North Somerset knows it’s getting the best quality offering in every area.”

## A tough tender

That was the essence of Wainwright’s pitch to the council, which involved an extensive tender document covering a full range of topics. As well as quality control and service, the company was asked to demonstrate its contribution to social value and environmental care, committing to activities such as tree planting, use of recycled materials, and careers visits to local schools.

Lee says this is part of the appeal of the contract. “I’m looking forward to going into schools across North Somerset and sharing my enthusiasm for our industry. We know we need to keep attracting the best people to join our sector, and this is a great way of inspiring the next generation.”



As well as being impressed by Wainwright’s social, educational and environmental commitments, North Somerset scored the tender well in terms of quality.

“Quality is a major factor in awarding these contracts,” explains Lee. “We’ve always prided ourselves on delivering quality and service, so it’s great we were able to convey that in our tender documents. We’re looking forward to delivering on our promises.”

## An eye to the future

The North Somerset Council contract represents a key moment in the development of Wainwright Contracting. The division is an important part of Wainwright’s overall business, establishing a route to market for its asphalt products. Growing the local authority footprint has been a priority for Lee and his team over recent years.

“We’re still looking to expand our reach and are pursuing opportunities with other councils in the region and beyond,” he explains. “Our success with North Somerset, coupled with our high-profile patching and emergency repair work on the National Highways network, shows that we’re absolutely on the map throughout the South West. We’re looking forward to leveraging that as we continue to grow in the years ahead.”

For now, though, Lee and the wider contracting team can enjoy a moment of celebration. The contract is worth £3.5m per year for the next four years, and will require approximately 10,000 tonnes of material per year.

“We’re securing our future as a crucial part of Wainwright’s success,” he concludes. “The team and I couldn’t be prouder, and look forward to delivering for North Somerset and Wainwright as the contract gets underway.”





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“We’ve always prided ourselves on delivering quality and service...”

**The team behind the tender**

- Lee Seviour – Contracting Director
- Matthew Moore – Operations Manager; Contracting
- John Wellstead – Commercial Manager; Contracting
- Paul Bishop – Senior Estimator
- Emma Jackson – Commercial Assistant
- Harriet Brixey – Operations Coordinator



AROUND THE BUSINESS:

# ASPHALT IN FOCUS

The asphalt division remains the largest contributor to Wainwright's profitability. Asphalt Business Manager Jody Bennett reflects on a year of challenge, evolution and progress



**Anyone familiar with the history** of Wainwright will know that the opening of Avonmouth Asphalt in 2016 was a significant moment. It was the first time the company had operated an off-site asphalt plant, and it greatly expanded both the geographical reach and the volumes being produced by the business.

Asphalt has continued growing in the years since, and is a major contributor to Wainwright's success. Even amid the current economic uncertainty, Asphalt Business Manager Jody Bennett says the division is holding its own in a challenging market.

"Our ongoing contract to supply National Highways as part of the FM Conway supplier community means we have a flow of large-volume orders passing through Avonmouth. That keeps us focused as a business, with our Moons Hill plant also serving customers throughout the region."

## A balanced approach

This all speaks of the business model that shaped Avonmouth's development in 2016. "The plan was always to have the two plants working in tandem and servicing roughly half of Wainwright's demand each," says Jody. "That's the position we are now in. It makes for a well-balanced business, with the teams at both plants working hard to generate efficiencies wherever possible."

Jody is quick to pay tribute to the staff who keep Wainwright's asphalt operation on top form. Asphalt Plant Managers George Beer (Moons Hill) and Antony Rowlinson (Avonmouth) are now working closely with Trainee Asphalt Plant Managers Joe Robinson and David Rexworthy. As Jody reports, "This is great for Wainwright, because it grows the talent we can draw on in the future."

He adds: "We're lucky to have a great group of people at both plants, who work well together to get the job done. We all appreciate the fleetness of foot and autonomy that comes with working for a company like Wainwright. We're invested in its success, and have the trust from senior management to get on and deliver."

### Recycled Asphalt (RA): our targets

25% average recycled content by 2030  
50% average recycled content by 2050

## Investing in the future

Sustainability has been a key focus for Wainwright's asphalt operation in recent years. Moons Hill underwent modifications in the summer to increase the volume of recycled materials that can be used in the production process – putting it on a par with Avonmouth.

"Recycling is clearly a big part of the future of asphalt production," Jody reflects. "It's great that we've pursued this in good time, so we're already ahead of the curve."

Another innovation that aids the use of Recycled Asphalt (RA) is construction of new Zapp Shelters for recycled materials. These canopies were installed at Moons Hill in early





2023. They keep the materials dry, meaning less gas is needed to heat them when used in the mixing process.

“The benefits of such investment are twofold,” explains Jody. “On the one hand, they help us green our operations. On the other, by reducing energy consumption and waste, they aid cost control – a key gain in the current trading conditions.”

Wainwright’s overall target is to incorporate a minimum of 25% average recycled content in every asphalt mix by 2030, rising to 50% by 2040. According to Jody, the latest investments make that an achievable goal, to which he and the team are thoroughly committed.

“We’re also exploring cold mixes,” he says, “with George Beer and [Technical Director] Andy Robinson driving this forward. We believe we can mix high-quality asphalt at surprisingly low temperatures, delivering yet more gains for the environment and for Wainwright’s bottom line.”

## A bright outlook

Despite the economic headwinds, Jody is positive about Wainwright’s asphalt business, and sees plenty of future growth.

“We’re pursuing new projects and fresh opportunities to expand further,” he says. “There’s a great deal to feel upbeat about, even as we manage the business to maximise our margins and maintain quality.

“Wainwright asphalt has a great reputation and is trusted by government and commercial clients to deliver. With that as our base, we can continue growing, making an ever-greater contribution to Wainwright’s overall success.”



## No ordinary Joe

Moons Hill Trainee Asphalt Plant Manager Joe Robinson has been selected by the Institute of Asphalt Technology (IAT) to receive sponsorship for a Foundation Degree in Asphalt and Pavement Technology.

Joe will complete the degree alongside his full-time job at Wainwright, studying part time via distance learning and face-to-face lectures.

The course is a popular one within the industry, providing participants with a chance to develop their knowledge and understanding of asphalt production, business and operational management, and sustainability.

Renowned for its practical nature, the Foundation Degree is seen by many as the key qualification required for a management career in asphalt production.

“I’m delighted to have been chosen for the sponsorship from the IAT,” says Joe. “I’m excited to pursue my career with Wainwright and am learning such a lot in my role as Trainee Plant Manager.

The Derby course is an opportunity to bolster my conceptual and business understanding, so I can take my career forward in the future.”

“Joe is an asset to our team at Wainwright,” says Asphalt Business Manager Jody Bennett. “Along with David Rexworthy, who is Trainee Asphalt Plant Manager at Avonmouth, he represents the future of our business. This investment in his progression will pay dividends – for Joe, for Wainwright and for the wider industry.”





THE FAMILY WAY:

# BLAST FROM THE PAST

The Sleemans have organised blasts for Wainwright since 1983, making them the company's longest-serving contractors. Father and son Andy and Simon tell us their story

**If you've ever wondered** about the connection between peanut butter sandwiches and quarry blasts, Simon Sleeman will tell you the answer.

It was his love of the former that led him to pursue a career in the latter – and Wainwright is just one customer to be grateful for the expertise he delivers.

"I got into the business by following my dad, Andy, to work," Simon says. "I remember making peanut butter sandwiches in the morning and heading off to a quarry for a blast. It just felt natural to go into the family business."

Simon is the third generation of his family to work in the trade. His grandfather Desmond, known as "Dixie", started the business in the 1970s. Then Andy moved it from their native Cornwall to Somerset, landing Wainwright as one of his first clients upon relocating east.

"I remember coming to the Mendips to look for work in December 1982," Andy says. "I must have done something right because I was booked for a blast at Moons Hill the next January. We've been here ever since."

## Across the generations

Andy retired in 2019, but he remains in close contact with the industry. Andy's brother Steve is also involved in the business and has many connections in the quarrying sector. But Simon takes the lead nowadays, and is the person responsible for organising drilling and blasts at the Moons Hill Complex.

"The techniques we use have come on enormously over the years," says Andy. "What Simon does now is barely recognisable from the way things were 40 or more years ago."



One notable change is the far closer attention to health and safety in the industry. Andy still remembers a time many years ago when fuses were lit using the cigarette of the blasting engineer. Now, of course, it is done remotely, with multiple checks of the blasting area to minimise the risk of an accident.

“The first thought of anyone when detonating a blast is about safety,” Simon says. “The second is: ‘Was it a good shot?’ Get it wrong and it’s no good for anyone, so we put in a lot of planning to maximise the chances of success.”

## High tech and hard graft

The tools of Simon’s trade are at the cutting edge of technology. They include electronic detonators that can be programmed to stagger a blast, thereby ensuring the safety and efficacy of the explosion. Before he gets that far, he’ll have surveyed the site, drilled holes to load with explosives, and modelled the extent of the rock fragmentation as a result of the blast.

“Simon is recognised as one of the best drilling and blasting operatives in the country,” says Andy, proudly. “He’s far surpassed anything I did. I think he got his mother’s brains!”

“Yes,” Simon laughs, “but I definitely got Dad’s work ethic. He always set the best example in this regard.”

It is the family work ethic that’s enabled Simon to keep the Sleeman name alive in the Mendip quarries. He’s developed his expertise and is now looking into training as a drone pilot to survey the quarry face. “It’s an expensive process that requires specialist kit,” he says, “but I think it’ll be worth it for the improvements it delivers.”

## The passage of time

All this seems a long way from the industry Andy joined 40 years ago. “When I first came to Moons Hill, the Head Office building hadn’t been erected and John Luff [Peter Barkwill’s predecessor as MD] used to walk his Labrador around the quarry catching up with staff along the way. You wouldn’t be able to do that now!”

Andy is one of a handful of people still connected to

Wainwright who knew it before the Barkwill years. He remembers Peter’s arrival as Quarry Manager and says it was obvious from the start he would progress in the business. “Peter was always a good man, and it was clear he would rise to the top. He certainly made his mark on Wainwright.”

One of the things both Andy and Simon most appreciate about Wainwright is the personal approach it adopts to contractors. Andy and Simon agree that the company treats them like a part of the family.

“With larger operators, there isn’t the same opportunity to develop personal relationships with the people you work alongside,” says Simon. “But I know Ben [Dormer, Aggregates Business Manager] and Darren [Portch, Assistant Quarry Manager] really well. We have a great working relationship and a strong sense of mutual trust.”

Andy says this is one feature of Wainwright that has been constant since the 1980s, even as the specifics of drilling and blasting have changed. “The job was a lot more physical back then, with heavy equipment that needed moving by hand. But the atmosphere in the quarry hasn’t changed. It’s still a friendly, focused environment, where you pull together to get the job done.”

Getting the job done is a defining feature of the Sleeman family’s business, from which Wainwright has benefited over the last four decades. And with Simon carrying the mantle for the current generation, it seems as if there’s plenty of work still to come. Let’s just hope he remembers to pack the peanut butter sandwiches.

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“...the company treats them like a part of the family.”



MEET THE TEAM:

# CLARE VIGUS, SALES MANAGER

Clare Vigus has recently been promoted to the role of Sales Manager at Wainwright. She explains what her new role entails – and how she's grown with the business since joining in 2019

**For many of Wainwright's customers,** Clare Vigus is the face of the business. She joined the company as Field Sales Manager in October 2019 and has built a strong network over the years that followed.

"With a background in sales, I've always enjoyed forming relationships with people and helping to solve their problems," Clare explains. "I love representing Wainwright, because it's such a values-driven business. I really believe in what we stand for."

## Joined-up thinking

In October of this year, Clare was promoted to the role of Sales Manager, giving her greater oversight of the whole of Wainwright's sales operation.

"The plan is that I can join things up a bit," she says. "We want to ensure that, for our customers, dealing with Wainwright is a seamless experience. I hope to be a strong point of connection between the Head Office sales team and our customers, so we deliver the quality and service that's always been our hallmark."

Clare will work closely with the Sales Office Supervisor and their team to keep Wainwright's order book bulging. "We're making our operation a little more commercial in focus," she says. "That way, we can be proactive in serving our customers throughout the region."

## Growing together

Clare says it feels like a good time to progress her career with Wainwright. Earlier in the year, she successfully completed a one-year Diploma in Asphalt and Pavement Studies at the University of Derby.

This part-time course is run in partnership with the Institute of Asphalt Technology (IAT) and was designed to develop the skills of people working in the asphalt and related industries.

"I decided it would be good to stretch myself and deepen my technical knowledge," Clare explains. "It's been a challenge and I've been so grateful for the support of colleagues from across Wainwright in getting those assignments in on time. But it's also been a fantastic experience and I've learned a huge amount along the way.

"What's more, it's given my technical knowledge a welcome boost as I embark upon my new role."

Speaking about Clare's achievement in completing the course and her promotion, Operations Director Wayne McKeown said: "Clare is a great asset to Wainwright. She is brilliant at her job, and the Derby qualification has only served to heighten the expertise she brings to the role. We're lucky to have her at the forefront of our sales team."





## NEWS BRIEFING:

# The big 60 | Julia's fitness fundraiser | The way things were | Stoke extension planning permission | Wainwright pitches in

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JONI!

"A special celebration for a special person." These were the words uttered by members of the Wainwright team as they gathered in the kitchen to celebrate Joni Stoker's 60th birthday in July.

Joni has worked as PA to the CEO for several years and is a lynchpin of many of Wainwright's activities. Shareholders will know her from her hard work organising the Annual General Meeting and other showpiece events. For many, she is a first point of contact with Wainwright.

As Technical Manager Ian Sweetman's beautiful photographs show, it was a happy occasion full of great cheer. Special indeed!



# STAND UP (AND SQUAT DOWN) TO CANCER

Purchase Ledger Administrator Julia Swift is the fittest she's ever been. And while that's not a news story, her decision to complete 100 squats a day throughout November for Cancer Research UK definitely is. It's a significant undertaking, and (all being well), Julia will have completed it by the time you read this.

Julia decided to take on the challenge to honour the memory of her late father-in-law and two close friends who lost their lives to cancer.

"It's a cause close to my heart," she says, "and I wanted to do something to support a charity that does so much good in researching cancer treatments that save lives."

To promote her effort, Julia received a free "Stand Up To Cancer" t-shirt and a resistance band. The latter is designed to make the squats more challenging, and Julia's dedication is evinced in her decision to use it most days.

"I try to fit in the squats in the evening after work," she says. "It's part of a wider fitness regime that involves up to nine classes per week."

Julia decided to work on her fitness while recovering from surgery two and a half years ago. She started with gym work, but quickly found she preferred the camaraderie of fitness classes. Now she's a regular attendee at her local sports centre and says she feels better than ever.

"Fitness is important for mental wellbeing as well as physical health," she says. "It's become central to my routine."

Thanks to her fundraising effort, Julia's sharing the benefits of her passion more widely. If you'd like to sponsor her, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/bdd9u2fr>.



## Public consultation underway for quarry extension

A public consultation has been held for a planning permission application to extend Stoke Quarry.

The extension will safeguard Wainwright's operations, ensuring continued access to the strategically important basalt that is at the core of the business.

Local residents were invited to Stoke St Michael Village Hall and the Somerset Earth Science Centre on Wednesday, 15 November. Plans detailing the extension were on display, and members of Wainwright's team were on hand to answer questions.

Visitors to the events were invited to leave written feedback that will be incorporated into the application when it is submitted to Somerset Council at the end of 2023.

More information is available at [www.wainwright.co.uk/planning](http://www.wainwright.co.uk/planning) – including a feedback form for those unable to make the consultation event.

## “A PLEASING PERSONALITY”

Contracting Senior Estimator Paul Bishop found this job advertisement while sorting through old newspapers at his family home. It's an ad for a Company Secretary for “long-established and successful private quarry company” John Wainwright and Co. Ltd – dated Saturday, 2 January 1988.

The ad states: “Applicants should be between 25 and 30 years of age, have a pleasing personality and an ability to handle a loyal staff.”

A “competitive salary and benefit package” is on offer for the right candidate – but that's the only bit of the notice that might still be included in a modern-day job advertisement. How the world has changed...



### Jolly hockey sticks:

The Wainwright Futures Foundation has donated two first aid kits to Frome Ladies' Hockey Club. Here's the team before a game, with one of the kits readily to hand.



CELEBRATING PETER:

# A GATHERING OF FRIENDS

A surprise tea party at the Somerset Earth Science Centre was the perfect opportunity to pay tribute to Peter Barkwill as he stepped aside from his role as CEO

**On Friday, 29 September**, a very special celebration took place in the Somerset Earth Science Centre.

Peter Barkwill's family, friends, colleagues and business associates gathered to wish him well in the next phase of his career, as he stepped aside from his position as Wainwright's Chief Executive.

And the best thing of all? He had no idea it was happening.

Those who know Wainwright and Peter will appreciate how hard it was to keep this secret. The event was almost derailed when the man himself decided he needed to pop out in his car around half an hour before the party was due to start.

Fortunately, Contracting Director Lee Seviour noticed what was happening and managed to save the day by persuading Peter to go back inside Head Office.

The result was a look of genuine surprise on Peter's face as he arrived at the Centre to a rapturous welcome from his admirers.

A delicious high tea was served and speeches were made. Peter was so overwhelmed he made two speeches: the second coming after he received a bespoke walnut desk with an inset three-dimensional model of Moons Hill and a traditional desk lamp.

The desk was created by Tomas Zakarauskus, a trained carpenter who works in Wainwright's estates team. Peter was delighted with it, saying it would take pride of place in his office.

With familiar faces who have known Peter throughout his career at Wainwright, the afternoon proved a fitting celebration of his tenure as Chief Executive. Stories were shared, jokes cracked, and profound appreciation shown for Peter, his wife Jenny, and their family.

"Peter has built Wainwright around the values he stands for," said incoming Chief Executive Tom Longland as he paid tribute to his predecessor. "The company is what it is today as a result of his dedication, passion, and commitment."







PAYING TRIBUTE:

# WHAT THREE WORDS

We asked some of Wainwright's people to name three words that spring to mind when they think of Peter. Here's a selection of the answers





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“So far, the Futures Foundation has contributed more than £200,000 to local charities...”



A PERSONAL HISTORY:

# THE BARKWILL EFFECT

Writer and Wainwright communications adviser Tim Gibson charts Peter Barkwill's impact on the company and the people around him over nearly four decades

**How to do justice** to Peter Barkwill's impact on Wainwright in just a few words?

That's the challenge many have faced in the months following his decision to step aside from the role of Chief Executive. A role he held for 26 years and inhabited with rare ease. A role he made his own, in a company that ran through his veins. A role you could half imagine he'd retain for life, such was his commitment to Wainwright and its people.

Amid the encomia, the celebrations of his commercial success in driving a more-than tenfold increase in turnover and record profitability, the plaudits around his entrepreneurial vision and flair for leadership, there is a modest man, who will far from enjoy the praise being heaped upon him.

That speaks of the Peter paradox. He is a force of nature who never craves attention. A man of action who deliberates with care. A savvy businessman who always puts people first.

These traits are at the core of his legacy in creating a values-driven company that is admired throughout the industry for its personal, professional and ethical approach. A company that runs through the legs of giants, keeping the big corporates on their toes and coordinating initiatives such as the annual Mendip Quarry Producers litter pick, the Somerset Earth Science Centre, and the support of local charities like the Frome Christmas float.

One of Peter's proudest achievements is the Wainwright Futures Foundation – an idea he brought to life during the company's 125th anniversary year. So far, the Futures Foundation has contributed more than £200,000 to local charities, community groups and environmental causes, as well as benefiting individuals. You'll see an example of its impact in the story about apprentice FI mechanic Josh Seviour on pp 28-30 of this magazine.

Such is the Barkwill effect, with ripples that go beyond the company and bring benefit far and wide. Think of the tenfold increase in head count or the network of contractors whom Wainwright's growth has supported over the years. Think of the generations of staff who have flourished with Wainwright, developing their talents and building lifelong careers.

Think of the bold pursuit of Net Zero and the embrace of sustainability, the abiding commitment to health and safety and the care of every member of the team.

Peter's impact is seen in the physical environment of Wainwright, too. When he took over in 1997, the Head Office building at Moons Hill did not exist. It was his vision

to build it in 2000, then extend and renovate it 17 years later. It was under his watch that Moons Hill gained a new crushing plant and a Benninghoven asphalt facility.

And it was during his tenure that Avonmouth Asphalt – a state-of-the-art KVM plant – rose up beside the M5, increasing both Wainwright's geographical reach and its financial clout.

All major achievements that should one day feature in a chapter entitled "The Peter Barkwill Years" in Wainwright's next history book. Though he won't allow it to have that heading. He'll say it was a team effort, with everyone pulling together to build the company that's so admired today.

And he'll be right. Wainwright's success is about more than just one person. It's about a culture, an ethos, that has yielded arguably the most exciting period in its 132-year history. A period of growth, technological innovation and massive cultural change. A period of economic, political and social challenges, including the Global Financial Crisis, Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. And that's just in the last 15 years.

The consistent story of these events for Wainwright has been a reassuring constancy: an ability to weather the storm and stay strong. That is a team effort. But to use an image Peter himself may appreciate, it needs a cool head and a steady pair of hands on the bridge to steer the right course.

Peter is that person. He grew up with Wainwright, joining as Quarry Manager in 1986 at the age of 30, becoming Managing Director at 41, and evolving with the company until the title of "Chief Executive" seemed a more accurate moniker. Remember that he was the first MD not to be related to one of the three founders, and only the fifth in Wainwright's history. The pressure was on, and he rose to the challenge with aplomb.

Perhaps this brief survey is inadequate as a measure of Peter's impact on Wainwright. It merely scratches the surface of the changes in the business during his period at the helm. And while correlation doesn't imply causation, a simple fact emerges: by any measure, Peter Barkwill's reign has been immense.

Peter stays in the business, of course, as a non-executive director. So this is by no means a full stop. His influence remains, his energy still feeding the company, his wisdom still shaping its decisions.

But it is a moment to take stock. To note the thanks of so many, to register their admiration. The Barkwill effect has been profound. It will reverberate for generations.



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:: A MEETING OF MINDS

The 2023 Annual General Meeting took place on Thursday, 2 November. Despite the best efforts of Storm Ciaran to disrupt travel, it proved a successful event

**Wainwright's Annual General Meeting** is an important event in the company's calendar. It brings shareholders together with Wainwright's management team, enjoying a sociable luncheon as well as a formal business meeting.

As in many previous years, the 2023 event was held in a marquee erected outside the Somerset Earth Science Centre. Despite inclement weather, the guestlist was full, with shareholders travelling from across the country to catch up with the wider Wainwright community.

In addition to reviewing the company's financial performance during the 2022-23 trading period, the AGM was a chance to express appreciation for the leadership of Peter Barkwill as he stepped aside from his role as CEO. Guests were also able to welcome Tom Longland as Wainwright's new CEO – hearing from both men in the course of the meeting.

Here are some photographs from the event.







## MENTAL HEALTH IN FOCUS: TACKLING THE BIG ISSUES

Men's Health Week provided a chance to encourage the male members of Wainwright's workforce to think about their wellbeing – and signpost sources of support

**A week aimed at raising awareness** of men's health issues provided Wainwright with a welcome opportunity to support male staff in improving their physical and mental wellbeing.

Men's Health Week is a national initiative that focuses on male-specific conditions, or those to which men are particularly vulnerable.

With a high proportion of its workforce being made up of males, Wainwright was keen to embrace the initiative and support its team.

Each male member of staff was given a goodie bag that contained fact sheets from Orchid Cancer, a copy of The Man Manual, two stress balls, a Lighthouse Club contact card and a Yorkie chocolate bar.

"As well as the chance to share some really insightful literature, it was great to grab a few minutes to catch up with our male colleagues," says Wainwright's Office Supervisor, Debi Brooks. "We know that our industry has a largely male workforce, and that this brings particular challenges in relation to mental and physical health. Anything we can do to support our male staff in staying well and looking after themselves has got to be worthwhile."







### Men's Health: the facts

- Men are three times more likely than women to die of suicide
- On average, men die 3.7 years earlier than women
- In the UK, one man in five dies before the age of 65
- The peak age group for death from suicide is 45 to 49
- Men are 67% more likely to die from the common cancers that affect both sexes – with the exception of breast cancer
- The number of men dying from breast cancer each year is greater than those dying from testicular cancer
- Men are more than twice as likely as women to die prematurely from diabetes

Source: Men's Health Forum

### Help is at hand

**The Lighthouse Club:** the construction industry charity was set up to improve the emotional, physical and financial wellbeing of construction workers and their families. It offers a 24-7 helpline, e-learning to support wellbeing, and safe spaces for people to seek help. Find out more at: [constructionindustryhelpline.com](http://constructionindustryhelpline.com)

**Orchid Cancer:** raises awareness of male cancers, helping with their early diagnosis and effective treatment. It offers a confidential helpline, awareness-raising initiatives and research into diseases such as testicular cancer, penile cancer and prostate cancer. Find out more at: [orchid-cancer.org.uk](http://orchid-cancer.org.uk)





## LONDON TO PARIS: A RIDE TO REMEMBER

When Transport Planner Stuart Evans decided to embark on a Royal British Legion fundraising cycle ride, he knew he'd be in for an experience to treasure

**Imagine cycling from London to Paris** over four days: covering 75 miles a day as part of a peloton, travelling through scenery that is as beautiful as it is historic, forever linked with the horrors of the two World Wars and the memories of the fallen.

The journey is the prime event in the Royal British Legion's annual fundraising programme for keen cyclists. It captures everything the organisation stands for: camaraderie, respect for the fallen, and a desire to raise funds to support those who have served in their country's military.

That explains why the event held such appeal for Wainwright's Transport Planner, Stuart Evans. A cycling enthusiast since 2017 and former soldier and reservist, Stuart was drawn to the physical challenge as well as the chance to honour his brothers and sisters in arms.

To participate, he raised more than £2,600, including through sponsorship by Wainwright. He says it's an experience he will treasure for a lifetime – and can't wait to repeat.

### Memories to savour

The Royal British Legion bills the London to Paris ride as an experience like no other. Participants pass through enchanting French countryside and stop to pay their respects at military cemeteries along the route. The challenge culminates in a cycle in formation along the Champs Elysee, arriving at the Arc de Triomphe to celebrate in style. Even better, it is the only ride of its sort to close the roads as the peloton finishes – meaning cyclists can stop for photographs and savour the moment.

"I certainly did savour it," laughs Stuart, flicking through photos of him in his Wainwright jersey, bike held aloft and a look of profound fulfilment on this face. "It is hard to describe what it feels like to be in that place, knowing you've made it there under your own steam, and done some good for a worthwhile charity into the bargain."

### Tough miles

For all the satisfaction of reaching his destination, Stuart says the journey had some tough moments.

"We set off from Eltham Palace in South East London





at 5.30am on the first day. So we were tired and feeling apprehensive about what lay ahead. We soon found our rhythm, though, and were given refreshment along the way. Our stops usually coincided with Royal British Legion clubs or sports clubs, and we were always given the warmest of welcomes – both in the UK and once we were travelling through France.”

Stuart says the experience of riding in a large group through the French countryside is like no other. “France is a nation obsessed with cycling. We were treated like heroes as we passed through small towns and villages. It amazed me that people would stand beside the route, just to cheer us on.”

That encouragement gave Stuart and his fellow cyclists all the motivation they needed to grind through their daily ration of miles and keep on track.

“The formation broke into groups depending on how fast you wanted to go,” he says. “I moved between them, sometimes conserving energy and sometimes giving it my all and travelling as fast as I possibly could.”

It was in this context that Stuart formed friendships with the people cycling alongside him. “I signed up by myself for the event,” he reports, “and although someone I know did eventually join the same trip, I saw it very much as an opportunity to build new friendships. The feeling of kinship among us reminded me of being in the army. It was a very special time.”

### Another adventure

So rewarding did Stuart find the experience that he’s already planning to do it all over again. “I’m hoping to sign up to the 2025 trip,” he says. “The Royal British Legion offers other routes, but I found the London and Paris journey so captivating that I just want to do it for a second time.”

That means once again committing to a daily training regime that involves gradually building up his stamina so he can cope with the long days in the saddle. It also means raising the sponsorship money to secure his place – but Stuart says that’s all part of the appeal of joining the adventure.

“You could go off and complete trips like this under your own steam,” he says. “But, for me, the opportunity to support The Royal British Legion is a big part of this ride’s appeal.”

“As a former soldier, I’m pleased to honour the memory of those who died in service, and support those who need help once they return to civvy street. I’ve been lucky to have a great career with Wainwright, but others don’t find it as easy to build a life beyond their military experience. The RBL helps them on that journey.”

Find out more about the RBL’s fundraising challenges and other ways to support the charity: [britishlegion.org.uk](http://britishlegion.org.uk)

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“To participate, he raised more than £2,600, including through sponsorship by Wainwright.”



## WAINWRIGHT FUTURES FOUNDATION: FAST TRACK TO SUCCESS

In 2021, Josh Seviour applied to the Wainwright Futures Foundation to support his college motorsport team. Two years later, he's an apprentice at Red Bull F1, working on championship-winning race cars

**“What would I have done** if the Red Bull opportunity hadn't come my way? Life would be so different, but I know I'd still be working in motorsport, and loving every second of it.”

These are the words of Josh Seviour – a young man with wisdom beyond his years. He first made an impression at Wainwright in 2021, when he contacted the Wainwright Futures Foundation asking for a grant to fund his college motorsport team.

Josh needed £5,000 to set up a team from Frome College to participate in the Greenpower Education Trust race series. The money would pay for a kit to build an electric-powered car to compete against other students from across the UK.

“I remember feeling really nervous when asked to pitch the idea to Peter Barkwill and Joni Stoker [who administer the Futures Foundation],” says Josh. “I delivered a presentation and responded to their questions, and was delighted when Peter said they'd give us the full amount.”

### A growth opportunity

Josh saw the Greenpower initiative as a chance to develop his technical knowledge in the field of motorsport, in which he'd developed an interest during the Covid lockdowns. More than that, he understood it would also help grow his skills in leadership, communication and time management.

“I pulled together a team of fellow students to help design and build our car,” he recalls. “We had weekly meetings that I had to run, in which we made decisions about our bodywork design and race colours. It was a fantastic experience for me, during which I learned a huge amount.”

Sadly, Josh didn't get the chance to race in Frome's colours before leaving college, but he says the design and build experience laid foundations for everything that has followed.

“I learned to drive and did a few bits and pieces to my own car,” he says. “I also got involved with a race team in Bristol and enrolled on a one-year Motorsport Mechanic course at the National College for Motorsport in Silverstone.

“It was a good time, during which I gained a huge amount of experience, while paying the bills with a part-time job in Lidl. But I knew Formula One was where I wanted to be, so set my sights on securing an apprenticeship with one of the big race teams.”

### Opportunity knocks

So it was that Josh found himself in an interview with Red Bull, being asked to talk about both his technical and his soft skills.

“I drew on my Greenpower experience a huge amount to illustrate my answers,” says Josh. “One of the biggest





### **The Wainwright Futures Foundation**

The Wainwright Futures Foundation was established in 2016 to celebrate the company's 125th anniversary. It is funded by a donation made for every tonne of material sold by Wainwright. Grants are awarded to local charities and organisations that contribute to education, environmental care, or flourishing communities.

To date, the Wainwright Futures Foundation has given more than £200,000 to charities and causes across its operating areas.

To find out more, visit [www.wainwright.co.uk/communities](http://www.wainwright.co.uk/communities) or email [joni.stoker@wainwright.co.uk](mailto:joni.stoker@wainwright.co.uk)





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## “I’m so grateful to the Wainwright Futures Foundation for making it all happen back in 2021.”

things was that the interview involved a practical assessment, where I was required to work from an engineer’s drawing to strip and rebuild a component from a past car. The only time I’d ever worked from a drawing was while building our Greenpower car, so that experience came in very useful at that particular moment!”

While it would be overstating things to say his involvement in the Greenpower project landed Josh the Red Bull job, he’s clear that it made all the difference to his application.

“I really do think it was a major factor in demonstrating my credibility, and I was proud to name it as my biggest achievement to date. I’m so grateful to the Wainwright Futures Foundation for making it all happen back in 2021.”

### The road ahead

Josh’s apprenticeship as an assembly technician lasts three years and involves a mix of college-based learning and on-the-job experience – with the former tailing off as the latter increases over the duration of the apprenticeship. Once it is finished, he hopes to secure a job with the Red Bull F1 race team, which will have him hot-footing across the globe to support the drivers from the pitstop.

“It’s definitely my ambition to join the race team,” says Josh, “but I’m making sure I relish every opportunity that comes my way in the meantime. Working at Red Bull’s headquarters is brilliant. I’ve enjoyed the experience of moving away from home and becoming more self-sufficient, having to find accommodation and cook for myself. I’ve made loads of friends at work. I’m having the time of my life!”

With his measured attitude and innate enthusiasm, it is easy to see why Josh is succeeding in his new role, and why he made such an impression on Peter and Joni in 2021. One of the purposes of the Wainwright Futures Foundation is to help the next generation thrive. Josh Seviour is a fine example of how that can be done.







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