



2023

**OUR YEAR
IN REVIEW**

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Executive Summary

It's been an important year for **Moray Chamber of Commerce**. We secured funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to fund our Town Centres Development Manager and our recently launched GreenPath programme.

Town centre regeneration and reducing carbon usage are two important priorities for the Chamber but they are over and above our business as usual role.

We've increased our digital presence, we've hosted more events and we're offering our members more ways to engage. We're focusing on specific sectors and supporting them in more bespoke ways, whilst still being an all inclusive organisation. We are here to be the voice of business for all shapes and sizes of businesses in Moray.

Our Annual Dinner sold out in under an hour and we raised a record £13,600 for Outfit Moray, this year's chosen charity. The dinner is our main fundraiser, to support our wider event calendar and membership subscriptions, which funds our core Chamber work.

On the Scotland stage we've been pushing hard on the Deposit Return Scheme, Alcohol Advertising Regulations, VAT, Non Domestic Rates and of course energy. Working with you, our members, gives us knowledge. This knowledge gives us an evidence base which in turn gives us the confidence and ability to represent you.

There is no doubt 2024 is going to be a difficult year, we are committed to you and confident that we can continue to deliver on what matters to you.



View from the Chief Executive



We've been across all corners of the region ensuring that we are supporting all sizes and sectors of businesses in Moray and beyond.

Sarah Medcraf

If the past 12 months have shown us anything, it's that we need to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. This is a tough realisation for some, but we cannot keep waiting for things to 'calm down' or 'get better.' We need to play with the cards we are dealt and make the best decisions we can with the information we have at the time. We as businesses won't always get it right, but we are in business to take risks – sometimes they will pay off, and others well, we will certainly learn from.

The world stage impacts us on the ground here in Moray, yet we have no control. From the chaos in Gaza to interesting developments in technology such as AI, the uncertain and complex world we now operate in will ever change and we need to continually adapt.

We at Moray Chamber are adapting too. The results from this year's membership survey were overwhelmingly positive – thank you – but with some suggestions of ways we can improve our service. We are listening, we will act. This is your **Chamber of Commerce**; we are proud to support you and are delighted you are part of our network.

Sarah



Your Chamber Team

SARAH MEDCRAF
DIRECTOR
& CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AIMEE WALKER
OPERATIONS MANAGER

ANNA ROGERS
TOWN CENTRES
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

We're delighted to welcome Anna in to our team on a funded post through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support the development of Moray's Town Centres. Anna brings with her a wealth of experience and enthusiasm for community engagement and business acumen.

Anna will be working on behalf of the Town Centres Task Force to support the improvement and regeneration of Moray's Town Centres. Her role will be pivotal in fostering collaboration and driving initiatives that enhance the vibrancy and sustainability of our local town centres.

Our Board is made up of member businesses from all parts of Moray. The Board and Executive Team have been under the strong leadership of President Kirsty Dagnan, Operations Director at Johnstons of Elgin and Vice President Ewen Mackintosh, Managing Director at Gordon & MacPhail.

Our Board



[View the Board of Directors](#)



“It’s been a busy year for Moray Chamber of Commerce. From leading on the Town Centres Task Force and GreenPath, to hosting our best Annual Dinner and focussing on regional issues that matter to Moray such as transport and childcare, we thank our members for their ongoing support so in turn, we can support you.”

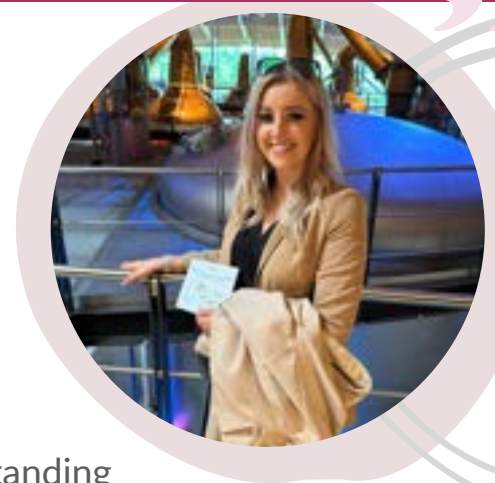
Kirsty Dagnan, President



At Moray Chamber, we are nothing without the support of our members. We’re evolving as a Chamber, making sure we’re more relevant and connected to the needs of the business community than ever before. The more we can do to raise the profile of the inspiring organisations across the region, the more people will take a route into becoming a part of the future workforce.

Businesses are increasingly realising the importance of understanding and mitigating their carbon footprint. Every business, no matter the size or industry has the power to make a positive impact on the environment and our community. In September, we launched GreenPath, our fully funded sustainability assessment designed to guide businesses through the process of becoming more environmentally friendly.

Outside of keeping you all updated, we also delivered features and information to help you. We’re consistently inspired by the work and resilience of our members, and we can’t wait to continue to serve you all and watch you grow in 2024!



Aimee

#TogetherWeGrow



REPRESENTING YOUR INTERESTS

Moray Chamber of Commerce has supported hundreds of businesses with thousands of employees throughout the year. We have engaged across the region, with different sizes of businesses from sole traders to multi-national brands, across all sectors. We pride ourselves on being an all-inclusive organisation and the work we do over the year aims to benefit our members and the wider Moray business community.

We have over **220 members** across Moray and beyond and they all have a voice. We represent this voice at local and national government, on policy and legislative items that matter. Whether you are a sole trader or a world-renowned brand, your contribution to Moray is important and our aim to ensure Moray is a vibrant place to live, work, study, and visit.

50 +
PRESS MENTIONS
INC. RADIO

12
ARTICLES IN THE
NORTHERN SCOT
BUSINESS SECTION



NEW DEAL FOR BUSINESS

Following Humza Yousaf's appointment to First Minister earlier this year, a New Deal for Business Group was established. This forum is to provide government and business leaders an opportunity to explore how best to support businesses and communities and to actively work together to achieve common goals - aligning Scottish Government policy with business.

Business representation of the partnership group is made up of a number of Scottish membership organisations and trade bodies. Moray Chamber is represented in this group by Shan Saba, Moray Chamber Director.

A workplan has been developed with a series of recommendations with short, medium, and long-term timescales which include business engagement at every stage of policy development with constant review and long-term culture change for Scottish Government civil servants to allow for more practical relationships and understanding of the business environment.

SECTOR SUB GROUPS

Following the success for the Moray Hospitality Group, we are in the process of creating other subgroups relevant to businesses across Moray. IT/cyber security and HR/People are the focus for the coming months, keep an eye on our website for further developments on these groups.

MORAY'S HOSPITALITY SECTOR

The Moray Hospitality Group, established by the Chamber around 18 months ago, has been a driving force in addressing challenges faced by the local hospitality sector. The group has created a strong network locally and has been consistently liaising with local and national government, and local organisations such as DYW Moray and UHI Moray to highlight the importance of the hospitality industry to the local economy.

In response to the Moray Hospitality Group, the Moray Chamber of Commerce has actively supported a VAT reduction campaign, working in tandem with Scottish Chambers to communicate the impact on local businesses to MPs and MSPs. Whilst this was not supported in the Chancellor's Autumn Budget, he did extend the NDR discount for this sector so we are pushing hard for Scottish Government to pass on this support in its December budget.

REPRESENTING YOUR INTERESTS



INFRASTRUCTURE

Moray Chamber of Commerce has been continuing the discussions surrounding the A96 and A9, collaborating with Scottish Chambers and engaging with political representatives to advocate for infrastructure improvements that benefit the community. Through sustained efforts, the Chamber seeks to ensure that transportation enhancements positively impact our region and economy. But infrastructure doesn't stop there, we need effective, reliable trains & other public transport and digital connectivity in all corners of our region.

DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEME

We all witnessed the Deposit Return Scheme chaos earlier this year. Whilst it has been postponed until October 2025 at the earliest, we can't take our eye off it. We need to work hard to ensure that business trade and operations are being considered when looking at a nation-wide scheme. **Moray Chamber** will continue to gather data from businesses on the ground affected by any proposed schemes and feed in potential issues as well as practical solutions to help Scotland move towards its Net Zero goals.

ENERGY CRISIS

Whilst the headlines about energy troubles have settled, in reality we still have many businesses tied in unmanageable contracts, have poor communication with their suppliers and there is still no cap on wholesale prices. All businesses need support on this and whilst 'greening' their business may help this, this is a medium-long term, and sometimes costly solution. We've been sharing case studies government and urging people to share their stories to create an evidence base.

CHILDCARE

Suitable, affordable, flexible childcare should be standard infrastructure across Moray and beyond. However, we know this is not the case. We've been working with partners such as RAF Lossiemouth and Moray Council to understand the full scale of the challenges locally and work to find solutions to get parents back to work. From child poverty to employers not being able to fill vacancies and the gender pay gap, there are a range of reasons why childcare is so important to us, and we need to invest in it.





We've had another year of military engagement activity thanks to our funding from Amazon and Highland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association. The support received enables us to work towards our aim of the military and the rest of Moray working together for the good of our region. This has been on talent, reservists, spousal employment, supply chain, childcare etc. We hosted a group of employers on to RAF Lossiemouth for a tour of its facilities and to educate them on the role of the base and its importance in Moray.



Moray needs YOU! New Town Centre Task Force reveals the seven towns it will focus on and asks for help

New details have been revealed about the coalition which will push forward regeneration.

Plan to boost town centres is the focus of major summit

More than 70 Moray town centre stakeholders attended a summit in Moray, Tuesday, November 14, to discuss the future of town centres and the formation of a coalition of town centre regeneration groups, including Moray.

The aim of the summit was to bring already established groups together and also discuss how to improve the future prospects of high streets throughout Moray.

A new 'coalition' is set to be formed in the aftermath of the summit, with Moray Chamber of Commerce - which formed the event - to take the lead on this front.

The Chamber's CEO Sandy Macdonald says the event had three objectives.

She said: "We had more than 70 people engaged in a summit along with a clear commitment that people have to making things happen."

The purpose of the day was to establish that everybody was working in pull to the same goals.

She said: "Moray's town centres are the heart of our communities and the strength of our economy. Moray Chamber of Commerce and Council and the PFI managing authority, understand that town centres face significant challenges, but also opportunities to regenerate."

"We want to make our towns really great to live in and make them work for us."

"None of these towns are competing with each other."

"I'm looking to go to these towns and spend more money in the high streets."

"They will want to get out and about with their families."

"We will also be offering a vibrant and welcoming town centre because people will want to visit."

Empty units on high streets will be the area with a talking point during the summit.

TOWN CENTRE TASK FORCE



Following our Moray's Town Centres Summit that we held in June, we've worked with Moray Council and the UK Share Prosperity Fund to create a Task Force. This Town Centres Task Force is chaired by the Chamber and we've employed Anna (see Your Chamber Team) to help achieve the aims of the Task Force. More on this over 2024 and you can keep up to date on the [Chamber website](#).

The Town Centres Task Force aims to improve living, working, and visiting in Moray's main towns – Aberlour, Buckie, Dufftown, Elgin, Forres, Keith & Lossiemouth. **Moray Chamber of Commerce** encourages all members and town centre businesses to reach out and welcome Anna.

Let's work together to make Moray's Town Centres even more vibrant and prosperous.

Embrace Sustainability with GreenPath

Are you ready to make a positive impact?

Is your business based in the Moray Council boundary and has fewer than 100 employees?

Apply now for a FREE green assessment and action plan!

GreenPath is a fully funded sustainability assessment designed to guide businesses through the process of becoming more environmentally friendly. Whether you're a small start-up or a well-established company, GreenPath offers tailored resources and support to help you achieve your sustainability goals. Through strategic partnerships with leading experts and industry professionals, we are dedicated to ensuring that GreenPath delivers the resources and personalised guidance tailored to the requirements of your business.



MORAY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

GreenPath



Funded by
UK Government

Ready to take the first step on GreenPath?



MORAY

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

TOWARDS FUTURE PROSPERITY AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

MORAY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP MORAY ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Last year, **Moray Chamber of Commerce** contributed to the refresh of the Moray Economic Strategy which was the simple part. The challenge now is to work with the partnership, and all pull together to deliver this for Moray.

We represent the private sector voice. It is important we represent the business community at these forums and influence the strategies to be enabling for our community. From housing to childcare, to infrastructure, the private sector voice is heard in this forum.



[CLICK HERE](#)

IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE...

Moray Chamber of Commerce also represents the private sector on other regional groups such as the Moray Business Resilience Forum, Moray Climate Assembly, Moray Growth Deal Programme Boards, the Business Enterprise Hub and Bus Revolution and Partner Employability Group. Delivering these transformational projects in Moray is key to our economic viability.

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC INDICATOR

A huge *THANK YOU* if you spend time each quarter completing our surveys. This quarterly economic indicator is important to ensure that we get our messaging to governments correct. We can see the dip in trends, and compare across the country between sector and geography, and we collect strong data to forecast potential issues before they arise.

We do this survey with the support of Scottish Chambers of Commerce (SCC). SCC not only work with us on the survey, but they are instrumental in the support they give the Moray Chamber team and the lobbying work they do across the country. They have extraordinary reach in Scotland, in to both Governments and in to countries across the world for topics such as international trade. They are a great resource to us and one that our members can benefit from too.

The QEI focuses on key industrial areas – **Manufacturing, Construction, Finance and Business Services, Tourism and Retail**, measuring a number of indicators including business optimism, investment and performance to provide comprehensive understanding of the Scottish business landscape. The QEI plays an essential role in setting the business agenda and informing the most senior levels of government and policy making of the needs of members.

LATEST QEI RESULTS

Cost pressures remain significant, but have generally eased compared to last quarter:

70% reported increased cost pressures from labour costs, including salaries

68% reported increased cost pressures from energy costs

48% reported increased cost pressures from raw material prices

36% reported increased cost pressures from fuels such as diesel and petrol

[View the latest results here](#)

"Whilst it is positive to see some of these indicators moving in the right direction, there are still so many challenges which are dampening confidence and hindering investment. We need to see support coming through from both governments to support our businesses in ways which are best for them."

Sarah Medcraf

QUARTERLY
ECONOMIC
INDICATOR

**#Together
WeGrow**



SCOTTISH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

We are fortunate to be supported by Scottish Chambers of Commerce (SCC), the umbrella organisation for the 26 Chambers across Scotland. SCC have weekly meetings with governments to ensure that the Scottish business voice is represented and considered when making policy decisions.

The Chamber network hosts monthly meetings because although we are all autonomous and funded and run differently, there is huge strength in sharing best practice, collaboration, and support.



INTERNATIONAL GROWTH

Through the Scottish Chambers International Trade Partnership 2 (ITP2), Chambers across the country have been partaking in virtual and physical trade missions to countries across the world. From New Zealand to Germany to Canada, our network is offering opportunities for Scottish businesses like you to get your name, brand, and product or service out to the rest of the world.

You can learn more here:



Being part of **Moray Chamber of Commerce** has been excellent for us over a number of years. Firstly it has given us the assurance of a voice both locally and at a national level.

It has also allowed both myself and my business to feel supported through challenging circumstances. It has done this by allowing us to discuss communal issues with other local businesses and this gives a certain reassurance. The support offered both by the local Chamber staff and the various helplines means that most issues can be tackled head on and I feel fully justifies the cost of membership.

As well as all the serious stuff the Chamber is a fun way to meet new business people in a variety of settings. For me more than any other reason this is why I am a member.

David Robertson, Pozzi



RAISING YOUR PROFILE

We welcome all businesses to be part of our network.

From really exciting sole traders to world renowned, multi-national brands. From Cullen, to Brodie, to Glenlivet (and even further afield!), all genders and business sectors. Our all-inclusive approach gives great value to those within the membership as there is strong collaboration and networking opportunities.

220+ MEMBERS

ALL INCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP

Whilst we represent your interest and what matters to you when business is tough, we are also your biggest supporters – cheerleaders as we like to call ourselves – when things are going great! We love to celebrate good news, expansions, award wins and everything in between. Remember to tell us your good news so we can share with the business community – **you deserve it!**



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Our annual membership survey shows what our members think of us and what you value from our Chamber membership:

We pride ourselves on making the right connections and where we don't know an answer, we have a great network we can reach in to, to find it. From seagulls to CRM systems, biofuel to office space, we've connected members across the region for mutual gain.

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH MCC AS A SOURCE OF USEFUL BUSINESS INFORMATION?

2.9/3

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH BEING A MEMBER OF MCC?

4.7/5

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH HOW THE CHAMBER REPRESENTS YOUR NEEDS ON LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES?

4.4/5

MEMBER INSIGHTS

Each month we interview a member to find out more about their business and share it to the network. We share it through social media, our website and via email to members.

We've interviewed 16 members this year and will continue running this through 2024, if you'd like to be featured, please get in touch.



MEMBER INSIGHTS

OUR MONTHLY NEWS

As our members will know, when the 1st of the month hits, a jam-packed e-newsletter lands in their inbox. This gives us opportunity to share your news, funds that are available, events we have coming up, policy changes etc.

Whilst we know this is a big read, we have a really high open and engagement rate on this because the content is of interest and of value to you.

This service is included in your membership as the e-newsletter does not get shared out with the membership.

Request to join
[our exclusive mailing list](#)





@moraychamber

The Chamber team are have always been a great support to my business. Ever present and interested, the chamber really has my business and our region's interests at heart. The added value is the networking and community spirit which comes from the various ways in which you can engage

Richard Cumming, Sirolgy

Moray Chamber of Commerce is an essential point of reference for our daily business queries, and also offer fantastic networking opportunities throughout the region. It's hard to believe that such a small team can facilitate and manage so much!

Lee McGrath, Reboot

37%

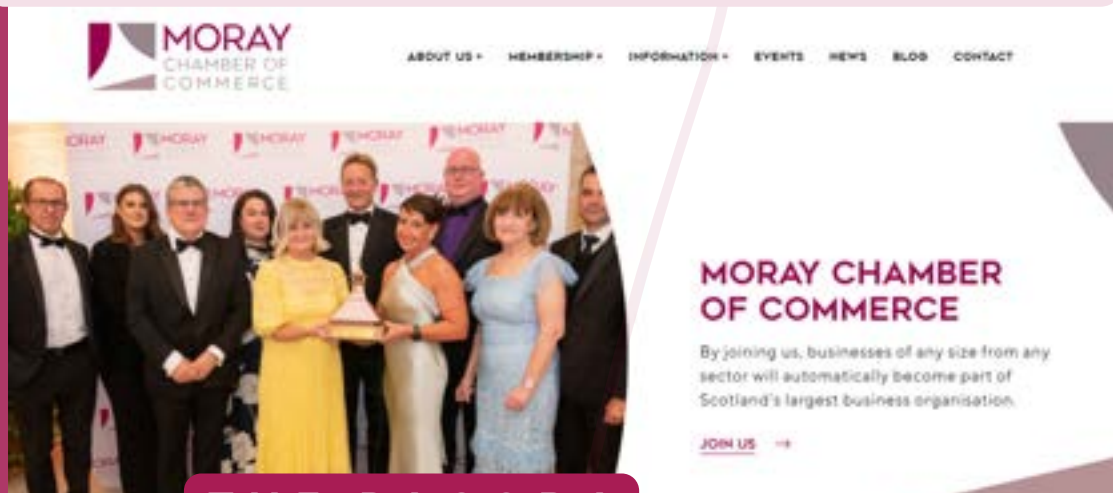
increase in followers across all social media platforms in 2023.



MORAYCHAMBER.CO.UK

Our easy to navigate website is updated almost daily to ensure that current information is at the tips of your fingers.

Our newly added search function to our news page allows for quick locating of historic news articles.



THE PAGODA

The Chamber's bi-monthly blog. This a quick way to catch up on the Chamber activity. Short enough to read with a cuppa but still useful content for you to learn about what we are doing for you. These will be available on the blog section of the website, but we will also be sharing it on social media too. 



The Pagoda
by Sarah Medcraf



The Chamber's bi-monthly blog



“Moray Chamber under the expert management and guidance of Sarah are going from strength to strength gaining many new members creating innovative member groups and spreading the word that “Together We Grow” we have found the chamber invaluable as a sounding board and source of information about the Moray Business Community and wider.

We particularly like Sarah’s approachability and willingness to help in any situation. As a group we are stronger and Moray Chamber brings us together.”

Mark Dunscombe
MJD Systems

EXECUTIVE MAGAZINE

We’ve worked hard to maintain additional exposure for you in Executive Magazine. We have a supplement every quarter which enables us to share your news to a wider audience. Executive is available quarterly in The Northern Scot as a magazine and as an e-magazine each month. In The Northern Scot, you’ll also see our editorial on pressing issues. You can see our latest supplement



[VIEW HERE](#)

BUSINESS SCOTLAND

In addition to the Executive Magazine, Business Scotland, the official publication of Scottish Chamber of Commerce is issued every quarter and usually themed – international, skills etc. As a Chamber member you have the opportunity to share your news in this too which is shared both digitally and in print, across Scotland.

[VIEW HERE](#)

EVENTS

From celebrations to finance networking to roundtables and educational and informative, we've had a range of events to suit all businesses.

Remember, we are nimble enough to be offering events that suit you and your business. Please feed back to us what topics you are looking for so we can add them to our calendar.

11

CASUAL DRINKS

20+

EVENTS

34+

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

400 GUESTS

AT MORAY'S BIGGEST,
FASTEST SELLING,
BLACK TIE EVENT

27.09.24

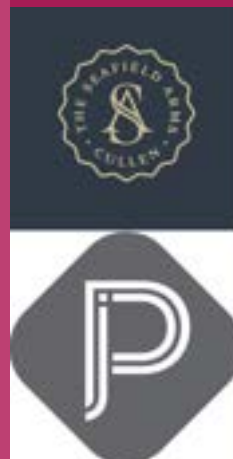
SAVE THE DATE

AWARDS



MORAY BUSINESS AWARD 2023 Awarded to Gleaner Ltd.

Recognising Gleaner's huge contribution to Moray both economically and in its support of local projects, Gleaner Ltd is a deserving winner of this year's award.



SAVING YOU MONEY

Cash is King. We understand that. You need to see the value for your membership. What is the return on your investment? Your membership fee enables us to do everything you've read so far, thank you. But also, we have some great cost saving benefits that you can use free of charge.

Our most popular service is our HR & Legal portal and phone line. With over 400 documents and someone at the end of the phone it's no wonder that this service is vital to many of our small businesses. From employee contracts and handbooks to health & safety the portal is great tool for businesses with limited resources.

Moray Chamber of Commerce is affiliated to [Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce](#) which means that you can benefit from:



- Attending their events at member prices
- Attending their training courses at member prices
- Discounts on trade documents and export help

MEMBER BENEFITS



4 Services

- HR
- Legal
- Health & Safety
- Tax

which include

5 Advice Lines

- HR
- Legal
- Health & Safety
- Tax
- VAT



3 Document Libraries

- HR
- Legal
- Health & Safety

containing almost **800** templated documents



£1,000,000

Legal Expenses Insurance

includes employment cover & Tax Enquiry cover

FREE One2One

meeting to understand how these services can support you



MEMBER TO MEMBER OFFERS



PRIVATE HEALTHCARE WITH WESTFIELD HEALTH

Health cover for working life and beyond
For healthy happy staff.



Westfield Health

Webinar

HOW EMPLOYERS CAN SUPPORT WORKING PARENTS AND THOSE WITH CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Thursday 19th April 2023
11:00 am - 11:30 am



PREMIER

Thank you to Our Partners...



GOLD

OUR PARTNERS

Our Gold & Premier Partners aim to make a difference. By working together, we can achieve what we could not individually. Thank you for supporting **Moray Chamber of Commerce**. We're delighted to have seen such an uptake in our Partner Packages over 2023, this additional commitment from our members enables us to resource the Chamber to deliver for Moray.

Finally, a huge thank you to you our members, for continuing to invest in us, to work with us, to believe in us. You're the reason we do what we do and without your support, there would be no Chamber in Moray. We know that 2024 will be a really uncertain year for many. We know that planning will be difficult, but we are here for you.

Sarah, Aimee & Anna

Together We Grow.



01343 543344



info@moraychamber.co.uk

INDIVIDUALLY WE ARE UNIQUE,
 COLLECTIVELY WE ARE STRONG.

