



The Richmond Communication Directors' Forum



7 - 8 NOVEMBER 2024

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The **Richmond Communication Directors' Forum** brings together over 200 of the UK's most senior Comms professionals, as well as industry experts and innovative suppliers, for 1½ days of conference, networking and new business opportunities. The Forum is held at the stunning 5* Grove Hotel, Hertfordshire on 7th-8th November.

The world around us has undoubtedly changed. Predicting the future has never been an exact science but now, for much of society, the horizon is positively opaque.

As well as new and emerging threats, the Comms Function still faces age old challenges, but as we've witnessed throughout the decades, those that spot opportunity in the face of adversity more often than not prevail.

Our 2024 Forum aims to help Comms Leaders reimagine the art of the possible, equipping you with fresh ideas, introducing you to new innovations and connecting you to leaders and practitioners with one foot already in the future.

We'll meet you there!

KEYNOTES

Scene setting keynote addresses bookending the Forum.

OPENING KEYNOTE: ACCIDENTAL ACTIVIST: GRASPING THE IMPORTANCE OF A MOMENT, CAPITALISING ON YOUR STRENGTHS, AND CREATING A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

Jamie Klingler

Activist and Founding Member, Reclaim These Streets

INDUSTRY SESSIONS

Fresh Industry thinking and motivational case studies.

SUPERCHARGE YOUR SUSTAINABILITY COMMS

Tess Longfield

Head of Sustainability Communications
Sabre Corporation

CASE STUDY: REIMAGING BRAND STRATEGY AT HSBC AND THE ROLE OF THE COMMS LEADER: 'OPENING UP A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY'

David Cunningham

Communications Director, HSBC

CASE STUDY: STANDING STRONG AT THE NATIONAL TRUST: CULTURE WARS, THE POLITICS OF POLARISATION, AND THE ROLE OF A COMMS FUNCTION

Mark Funnell

Communications & Campaigns Director, National Trust

TRENDS, TRIP HAZARDS AND TECHNOLOGY: WHAT THE COMMS LEADER NEEDS TO KNOW TODAY, TO TAKE ON TOMORROW

Daniel Rowles

Programme Director Imperial College, CEO Target Internet & Host of the Digital Marketing Podcast

CASE STUDY: EXECUTING A VALUES-LED COMMS STRATEGY: CCO INSIGHTS FROM INSIDE THE SAFEST COMMERCIAL BANK IN EUROPE

Pernille Sahl Taylor

Chief Communications Officer UK, Handelsbanken

AN ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR THE COMMS DIRECTOR: 2025 - THE ROAD AHEAD

Simon French

Chief Economist, Panmure Gordon

THE AGE OF PERSONALISATION: TAILORING THE FLOW OF COMMUNICATION TO MASTER EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE BRAND AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT - POWERING UP FOR 2025 AND BEYOND

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

Take the opportunity to focus on individual learning and improvement.

THE ANSWER TO MENTAL HEALTH AND COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE LIES IN YOUR GUT

Dana Chapman

Nutritional Therapist
DC Nutrition

GAINING INFLUENCE AT THE TOP: THE COMMS DIRECTOR GUIDE TO NAVIGATING BOARD LEVEL INTERACTIONS

Andrew Kakabadse

Professor of Governance and Leadership, Henley Business School,
Emeritus Professor at Cranfield School of Management

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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS CONTINUED

Take the opportunity to focus on individual learning and improvement.

THE COMMS DIRECTORS' GUIDE TO BURNOUT: A BLUEPRINT FOR SELF-PROTECTION AND PREVENTION

Charlène Gisèle Bourliout
Burnout Prevention Advisor & High-Performance Coach

ONE-TO-ONE EXECUTIVE COACHING

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Share experiences and learn more about strategies being used in other organisations.

STRENGTHENING THE COMMS AGENDA: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND MANAGING UPWARDS TO INFLUENCE OUTCOMES

Mark Burley
Group Director of PR, Communications and Marketing, Harrow, Richmond, and Uxbridge Colleges

ZOMBIE COMMS: WHAT'S NO LONGER FIT FOR PURPOSE AND HOW CAN COMMS LEADERS BE BRAVER AND BOLDER IN THEIR APPROACH

SUPPLIER SESSIONS

Benchmark innovative solutions and discover the latest products and services.

TBC

ACTIVITIES

And now for something completely different - take a break and experience something new.

TBC



Keynote

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Cutting edge thinkers and inspirational leaders talking about big ideas to set open your mind to what is possible.



Industry Sessions

TANGIBLE ADVICE

These sessions are led by practitioners such as yourself, sharing real-life examples and experiences on specific industry-related issues. Hear their story and pick their brain on projects you are about to embark on.



Professional Development Sessions

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

These development sessions give delegates the opportunity to focus on their individual learning and improvement.



Discussion Groups

PEER NETWORKING

Join your peers in these intimate and practical conversations around topics that we are all facing. Come armed with questions, concerns, and real-life experiences to engage the group and hopefully solve some issues together!



Supplier Presentations

EFFICIENT SUPPLIER SOURCING

Targeted, requested and focussed conversations, all aimed at finding solutions to projects you need help on. Investigate potential suppliers in a time-efficient manner while building relationships for the future.



TAILORED EXPERIENCE

All of this adds up to a 5-star experience that is created just for you, your needs and preferences.

Thursday 7th November

Registration (anytime between)	12:15 - 13:00
Pre-seated Lunch - hosted by a supplier + fellow clients	13:00 - 14:00
Opening Keynote - Jamie Klingler, Activist and Founding Member, Reclaim These Streets	14:00 - 14:15
Break	14:45 - 15:00
Conference Sessions & Business Meetings	15:00 - 18:00
Free Time (Feel free to use the hotel facilities)	18:00 - 19:30
Networking Drinks	19:30 - 20:30
Dinner	20:30 - 22:00
After Dinner Networking (optional)	22:00 - onwards

Friday 8th November

Pre-seated Breakfast - hosted by a supplier + fellow clients	08:00 - 09:00
Conference Sessions & Business Meetings	09:00 - 11:00
Break	11:00 - 11:15
Conference Sessions & Business Meetings	11:15 - 12:15
Pre-seated Lunch - hosted by a supplier + fellow clients	12:15 - 13:00
Keynote Address - TBA	13:00 - 13:45
Break	13:45 - 14:00
Conference Sessions & Business Meetings	14:00 - 16:00
End of forum - Feel free to use the hotel facilities if you don't need to rush off	16:00



Opening Keynote

Accidental Activist: Grasping the Importance of a Moment, Capitalising on your Strengths, and Creating a Revolutionary Movement!



Jamie Klingler
Activist and Founding Member
Reclaim These Streets

Jamie became an accidental activist during lockdown. When she tweeted about a vigil, she had no way of knowing that it would change her entire life...

Jamie is one of the founders of Reclaim These Streets, an organisation that was created when a young woman, Sarah Everard, was abducted, raped and murdered by a serving police officer. The organisation was catapulted into public view when it tried to hold a vigil for Sarah. The Metropolitan police forbade it, but they would not silence them. Reclaim These Streets defiantly fought against the violation of their human right to assemble, and they won. Their victory and their voice reverberated in the High Court, representing the collective outrage of so many unheard victims and shining a light on a culture that would no longer be tolerated. As well as holding the Metropolitan Police to account, Reclaim These Streets went on to raise half a million pounds for women and girls.

Jamie will share just what it was like being swept up in the eye of that storm, her propensity for spotting opportunity for radical change and how to capitalise on a nation's attention. Fuelled by the outpouring of her own grief, and that of those around her, she used her professional toolkit of film production, media, publishing, event management and marketing, and channelled it to achieve real impact for both the women of London and for her personally. Jamie wants to motivate organisations and leaders to think more carefully about their place in the world, and to recognise the platform they have for social good. She believes that if we all used our expertise to benefit causes and communities, we could create lasting societal change, benefitting not only those around us but also ourselves.

Jamie Klingler is a writer, consultant & campaigner for women's safety and police reform. As co-founder of Reclaim These Streets, she was part of the group that successfully sued the Metropolitan Police for breaching her human rights after they banned a vigil for Sarah Everard.

Jamie brings a wealth of experience to her speaking and media engagements, with a successful track record in film production, media, publishing and marketing. She launched ShortList Magazine in the UK as its Photo Director and Finance Manager and in ten years, rose to the Head of Publishing for the whole group. She invented National Burger Day and won Marketeer of the Year in 2016. Through her own creative agency, Jamie has worked with major brands, garnering millions of views and international media attention.



Keynote



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Industry Session

An Economic Outlook for the Comms Director: 2025 - The Road Ahead

Simon French
Chief Economist
Panmure Gordon



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We welcome esteemed Chief Economist Simon French to address Comms Directors and provide a detailed overview of the state of the UK economy.

Simon will be discussing the key economic events of 2024, from the UK political landscape to global geopolitical unrest, carefully considering their impact on the 2025 outlook. Simon will distil the upshot for the future of the UK economy and the explore the key factors driving this emerging picture. He will zoom in on the economic challenges shaping the future outlook and predict what they mean for the cost of living, interest rates, earnings, inflation and beyond.

Join Simon for an insightful closeout to 2024 and hear his expert predictions for the 2025 road ahead.

Simon French is the Chief Economist at the UK investment bank, Panmure Gordon. He is a top-ranked economist in the City of London's II/Extel rankings, writes a monthly column for The Times newspaper and is a regular guest host on BBC TV and Radio, CNBC and Bloomberg.

Prior to joining Panmure Gordon he was a Senior Civil Servant, latterly at the Cabinet Office as Chief of Staff to the UK Government's Chief Operating Officer. He holds degrees in both Economics & Finance from Durham University and is a member of the Government Economic Service and the Society of Professional Economists.

Industry Session

Supercharge your Sustainability Comms



Tess Longfield
Head of Sustainability Communications
Sabre Corporation

In this industry case study session, Tess Longfield, Head of Sustainability Communications at Sabre Corporation, a software and technology company that powers the global travel industry, will be examining the end-to-end considerations for effectively executing a credible sustainability comms strategy.

A deep dive into the fundamentals for success - from working with internal stakeholders and fully understanding the nuances of all organisational sustainability goals, to deploying an inside out approach and working consultatively to mobilise employees as advocates, Tess will draw upon lessons from leading sustainability comms for a NASDAQ listed company, in a hard to abate sector, as well as her broader experience and successes as a seasoned sustainability comms professional.

Tess has strong credentials when it comes to large scale sustainability comms – her current role at the world's largest provider of airline and hotel technology has seen her play a pivotal role in crafting a holistic sustainability comms strategy, collaborating with other travel industry players as well as working closely with C-Level colleagues to shape their role in the sustainability narrative. She is highly experienced in sustainability employee engagement campaigns and helping organisations to supercharge their sustainability messaging. Notably Tess has also held the role of Chief Marketing Officer at Travalyst, a sustainability initiative set up by Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, executing a substantial PR campaign on sustainable travel and achieving global coverage.

Tess has two decades of PR and communications experience, in house and in global agencies, in the UK and internationally. Tess held the role of Chief Marketing Officer at Travalyst, a sustainability initiative set up by Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, which brings together a coalition of some of the biggest companies in travel and technology. Her PR agency experience includes Ogilvy in the Middle East, LOTUS (part of W Comms) and her comms career started at bgb communications (now Four Travel). Destinations have been a major part of her comms career, as Head of Global PR for VisitBritain and more recently, the Jordan Tourism Board.

Tess now leads sustainability communications for Sabre, a leading software and technology company that powers the global travel industry. As part of the Sustainability team, she plays a pivotal role in crafting a holistic sustainability strategy, collaborating with other travel industry players as well as working closely with C-Level colleagues to shape their role in the sustainability narrative. Tess is also an ambassador for inclusion and diversity in EMEA, aiming to shift the needle forward and help foster a more diverse and inclusive culture at Sabre.



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Industry Case Study

Reimagining Brand Strategy at HSBC and The Role of The Comms Leader: 'Opening Up a World of Opportunity'

David Cunningham
Communications Director
HSBC



HSBC have been on a journey to assess why it exists, what it's uniquely brilliant at and what it wants to be known for – playing an instrumental part in this journey has been Communications Director, David Cunningham and his Comms team.

Having started the process some 4 years ago, the bank has successfully completed the first stages of this transition, and David will share his experience of helping to develop and introduce a renewed sense of purpose and values to the bank.

From uncovering how their customers perceived them, to building a new and common language that unites and energises colleagues, David will share how the Comms function has worked hand in glove with senior leadership and the wider network to realise the bank's ambition, recounting the approach they took as a function and sharing insights and learnings from the journey thus far.

A Senior Communications Professional with over 16 years' experience working in-house and agency side in both permanent and consultancy roles. With broad experience that spans a portfolio of sectors including banking, telecoms and media, for brands including HSBC, Barclays, Skype and Deutsche Post.

Highly skilled in brand and reputation management with a more recent focus on the scoping and delivery of impactful leadership communications using excellent influencing skills at all levels from Board to employee.



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Industry Case Study

Executing a Values-Led Comms Strategy: CCO Insights from inside the Safest Commercial Bank in Europe



Pernille Sahl Taylor
Chief Communications Officer UK
Handelsbanken

Handelsbanken is Europe's safest commercial bank, with roots in local communities throughout Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom. Its way of doing business is based on trust and respect, both for its customers and its 12,000 employees across all of its home markets. It is consistently rated top for customer satisfaction, and having reached its corporate goal of a higher return on equity than the average of its peers for the last 49 years, it is clear the Handelsbanken approach is also good business.

Hear from Chief Communications Officer UK, Pernille Sahl Taylor, on how she places Handelsbanken's culture at the heart of the bank's comms strategy, making sure it permeates through all internal and external messaging.

Handelsbanken is founded on trust, respect and a fundamental belief in human nature and people's natural ability to do good things – through a proactively curated comms strategy Pernille finds ever creative ways to help the bank communicate all that it stands for.

Pernille Sahl Taylor is Chief Communications Officer at Handelsbanken UK, a role she has held for over 7 years.

Prior to joining the bank Pernille enjoyed a successful career in PR and Communications, including a 13 year tenure at Lansons, a renowned communications and reputation management consultancy.

Pernille holds an MAc in Danish and Communication Studies from Roskilde University.



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Industry Case Study

Standing Strong at the National Trust: Culture Wars, The Politics of Polarisation, and the Role of a Comms Function



Mark Funnell

Communications and Campaigns Director
National Trust

Known best for their role as Europe's largest conservation organisation and the wide variety of places and spaces they bring to life, The National Trust has been catapulted into the media limelight over the last three years.

You're unlikely to have missed the right-wing critique of the Trust's proud and progressive values, and have no doubt witnessed the media outlets wading in on the 'Trust bashing', with their hyperbole fueled headlines. Equally, you'll be aware of the publicly played out left-wing counter-narrative, calling out the attacks and unpeeling the motives of the political perpetrators pedaling what has been described as a 'desperate, divisive and damaging' narrative against civic institutions.

Equipped with the Trust's effervescent purpose and refusal to remain passive, hear from Mark Funnell, Communications and Campaigns Director, as he explores the impact on the Comms Function and his role in shaping how they've responded. Mark will share how they've turned adversity into opportunity by reaffirming what they stand for on the public stage, resulting in a stiffening of corporate resolve and the building of advocacy support far and wide.

Mark is the Chair of Avon Needs Trees. He is the Communications and Campaigns Director at the National Trust, looking after external communications, internal communications, policy and advocacy and content and publishing.

He has specialised in environmental communications and campaigns for over 20 years. His previous roles include interim Director of Communications at Defra, Head of Communications at the Forestry Commission and Head of External Relations at the Environment Agency. He also led transformation to a new operating model for Defra group's 250 Communications staff, who came together from five different arm's length bodies.

Mark started out in editorial and publishing roles, working for five years at a consumer magazine publishing company. His specialist areas include environmental campaigns, corporate communications, operational and crisis communications, change management, staff engagement, stakeholder relations and public affairs.



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Industry Session

Trends, Trip Hazards and Technology: What the Comms Leader Needs to Know Today, to Take on Tomorrow

Daniel Rowles

Programme Director Imperial College,
CEO Target Internet & Host of the Digital Marketing Podcast



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If the last couple of years left you with a serious case of AI fatigue you weren't alone. Media outlets far and wide jumped at the chance to hype up emerging tech capabilities, blurring the lines of fact and fiction in favor of sensationalised headlines brimming with dystopian predictions. Many of us hunkered down and have been waiting tentatively to see what emerges once the hysteria dissipates.

So what will 2025 hold? Can we expect a more measured narrative?

Back by popular demand, join Daniel Rowles, authority on all things tech, for a sneak peek into what awaits us in the new year. He'll be giving Comms Leaders a head start, sharing what has been learnt so far, the use cases they can build on, and making sense of what we can learn from those brave early adopters paving the way to tech transformation.

Daniel Rowles has been working in the field of digital skills for the past 25 years, helping organisations of all types to use digital effectively, working with a wide range of businesses, from start-ups through to global clients like the BBC, Sony, Tesco, Vodafone, Mercedes, Oracle and McKinsey.

Daniel is a Programme Director at Imperial College Business School; he is the voice of the Digital Marketing Podcast, a worldwide top-ten business podcast in iTunes, CEO of TargetInternet.com and an award-winning author for publisher Kogan Page (Mobile Marketing, Digital Branding, Building Digital Culture and Podcasting Marketing Strategy).

Professional Development

The Comms Directors' Guide to Burnout: A Blueprint for Self-Protection and Prevention

Charlène Gisèle Bourliout
Burnout Prevention Advisor
High-Performance Coach



We all know about the consequences of burnout - the impact on our careers, our organisations and not least on us as individuals (and the ripple effect on those closest to us). But what many of us are less familiar with is how we can avoid it. No one consciously makes the decision to burn out, but you can be conscious in your decision to prevent it.

Rest assured; this won't be an education in merely doing less – quite to the contrary. Ex Lawyer turned Burnout Prevention Advisor and High-Performance Coach, Charlène Gisèle Bourliout, will instead share her distinct formula for achieving peak performance, all whilst preventing burn out.

“Chronically Over Doing And Chronically Under Being Is The Fastest Track To Burnout.”

Shining a light on how our choices, decisions and mindset can be realigned to protect and prevent burnout, Charlène's 3-pronged approach focusses on Preparation, Performance and Recovery. Drawing comparisons from the world of sport, Charlène, who can count 'athlete' to her string of accolades, will examine how the requirements for athletic peak performance mirror what is needed to succeed in the executive world.

Charlène Gisèle is a former Big Law litigator turned High-Performance Coach and founder of the unique Charlène Gisèle® Coaching method. Charlène empowers high-achieving professionals to prevent and recover from burnout without having to sacrifice their career.

The power of her approach is not to work less, it is about recovering more, which is why her expertise has been featured in major publications and is sought after by world leading organisations and professionals.



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Professional Development

The Answer to Mental Health and Cognitive Performance Lies in Your Gut

Dana Chapman
Nutritional Therapist
DC Nutrition



Gut health is currently a hot topic and with good reason. There is an intriguing link between the gut and the brain, known as the gut brain-axis with research showing that 80% of signals go from the gut to the brain, illustrating its effect on cognitive performance and mental health.

This talk will explore the gut-brain axis, emphasising its relevance to office professionals. We will delve into how a balanced gut microbiome can positively impact cognitive function and mood regulation. I will illustrate how to maintain good gut health through diet and lifestyle, so that you may experience heightened focus, improved productivity, and enhanced overall well-being.

Come and join me in a journey of scientific revelation as the talk unveils the pivotal gut-brain axis, a game changer for professionals.

Before embarking on her Nutrition career Dana had a successful corporate career working as a consultant for PwC. During this career she saw the far-reaching impacts of stress and poor food choices on the performance and health of those around her. This led her to studying the links between stress, gut health and mental health. Dana is now a qualified Nutritional Therapist, working with Functional Medicine to improve people's health.

With a degree in Financial Accounting and a degree in Nutritional Science, Dana has blended her beliefs and passions with a Big 4 consulting background to provide tailored advice to individuals and corporates seeking to understand better how to fuel their day, perform at their best, build resilience and overcome mental health challenges. Dana helps you understand what normal is, what it isn't and the corrective action you can take.

Today, Dana works throughout the UK running programmes and courses for reactive and preventative responses to stress and the impact on the gut. Dana has been featured in many publications, regularly speaks on podcasts, the radio and at conferences.



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Professional Development

Gaining Influence at the Top: The Comms Director Guide to Navigating Board Level Interactions

Andrew Kakabadse

Professor of Governance and Leadership, Henley Business School
Emeritus Professor at Cranfield School of Management



Whether you're an aspiring or current member of the Board, report to them periodically, or simply just want to gain greater insight on Board practice and governance, this session will explore how to navigate Board level interactions as a Comms Director, and crucially how to build gravitas and influence at the very top.

As well as covering the basic principles of operating at Board level, Professor of Governance and Leadership at Henley Business School, Professor Andrew Kakabadse, will also delve a little deeper into the nuances of power and influence at Board, exploring the behavioural science insights that shape how leaders and roles are perceived.

Looking specifically at the role of Comms Director, he will spotlight some of the challenges typically encountered by Comms and PR Leaders, as well as the unique opportunities bestowed on them to gain influence, shape decisions, and drive forward the Comms agenda.

Andrew Kakabadse is Professor of Governance and Leadership at Henley Business School and Emeritus Professor at Cranfield School of Management. He was Visiting Professor at the University of Ulster, Macquarie University, Australia, Centre for Creative Leadership, USA as well as at other European, USA and Chinese universities. Andrew's research covers boards, top teams, and the governance of governments.

He has published over 47 books, 88 book chapters, over 240 articles and 18 monographs. He is Advisor to the UK Parliament and numerous corporations, NGOs and other governments.



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Discussion Group

Strengthening the Comms Agenda: Building Relationships and Managing Upwards to Influence Outcomes

Mark Burley

Group Director of PR, Communications and Marketing
Harrow, Richmond, and Uxbridge Colleges



In this discussion group Delegates will explore how comms leaders can utilise relationship building and managing upwards to progress their comms strategy. The comms agenda can come up against multiple challenges, determined by both the internal and external environment. For Comms Leaders, factors including low trust environments, low organisational appetite for risk and lengthy decisions making processes, can all impede and undermine the comms agenda.

Curated by experienced Comms Director and Leader Mark Burey, Delegates will be encouraged to explore the individual challenges they are facing, as well as strides they've made and approaches that have been successful. Mark will draw on both his own expertise and the collective wisdom in the room, asking questions and evoking considered discussion. Come prepared for open and honest dialogue that taps into the experience and knowledge in the room.

Mark is a seasoned communications professional currently serving as the Group Director of PR, Communications, and Marketing at Harrow, Richmond, and Uxbridge Colleges – one of the largest college groups in England. With a proven track record in enhancing the reputations of high-profile organisations,

Mark has amassed a wealth of experience throughout his career. His journey includes pivotal roles at esteemed institutions such as the BBC as part of its news and current affairs publicity team, London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, and University of East London, along with successful appointments in local government.

Mark's expertise spans strategic communications, public relations, digital content and engagement, schools, and community outreach, as well as event management. His career has seen him in senior positions in Tower Hamlets, Newham, Waltham Forest, and Havering. Beyond his professional pursuits,

Mark harbours a passion for the creative arts, with a particular fondness for film, photography, and documentary programmes. Notably, Mark extends his commitment to education by providing ongoing support to students through various mentorship programs. His dedication to nurturing the next generation underscores his belief in the power of mentorship and its positive impact on students' academic and professional journeys.



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The Richmond Communication Directors' Forum

Interested in speaking?

Contact: Fay Watkin

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on 020 8487 2206



Interested in being a delegate?

Contact: Vicki Barford

vbarford@richmondevents.com

on 020 8487 2202

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