



# Perspectives: Celebrating 100 years of UHY Hacker Young



Helping you prosper

## Foreword

In 2025, UHY celebrated an extraordinary milestone, 100 years since the founding of our firm. A century of service, of people and of progress. 100 years of helping businesses, communities and individuals prosper.

When I reflect on this moment, I'm struck not just by the longevity of our story, but by the spirit that has carried it forward. From a single office in London to a trusted national and international network; what has endured is not simply our technical expertise, but our shared sense of purpose.

At its heart, this anniversary is a story about people. It's about the generations who built this firm and the values and principles they passed down. It's about those who came before us, who had the vision to create something lasting, and those who continue to build upon that legacy today. Every audit, every piece of advice, every conversation, every new relationship and opportunity has added another chapter to our story. Together, those moments have shaped a firm that is both proud of its history and energised for its future.

This publication, Perspectives: Celebrating 100 years of UHY, brings together many of those voices, from across offices and departments, to reflect on who we are, what we have achieved and where we are heading next. It's a celebration of people and purpose, told through the lens of those who live it every day.

Our centenary year gave us the rare opportunity to pause, reflect and look forward with fresh clarity. We have honoured the past, the resilience that has carried us through economic shifts, global crises and changing regulations, and celebrated how we have continually evolved. Because the measure of a century-old firm is not that it has stood still, but that it has moved with the world around it.

From our earliest days, innovation and adaptability have been part of UHY's DNA. The tools, technology and expectations of our clients have changed beyond recognition since 1925, yet the essence of our work remains the same: building trust, delivering insight and helping people achieve prosperity through informed decision making. Today, we do that in a more connected, data-driven and globally aware world, one that demands new skills and perspectives.

What makes me most proud, however, is that our people have embraced this evolution with such passion and commitment. Across our London and Nottingham offices, across each department, we are united by a culture that values growth and curiosity. It is this very culture that makes UHY such a special place to work. We are a firm that believes prosperity should be shared; that when our people prosper, our clients do too.

Over the last year, I've had countless conversations with people across our offices, many of whom have been with the firm for decades, others who are relatively new on their UHY journey. Their reflections, regardless of how long they have been with the firm, are deeply personal yet remarkably consistent – UHY is a place where people are seen, heard and valued. That, to me, is the greatest achievement of our 100 years. The strength of our community, built on trust and shared ambition.

Looking ahead, I'm more confident than ever that the next century of UHY will be defined by opportunity. The pace of change in our profession is extraordinary, from digital transformation to sustainability and ESG accountability, from the evolution of advisory services to the reimagining of what clients need from their advisers. But with change comes opportunity, and at UHY, we have never shied away from that.

Our goal is not simply to respond to the future, but to help shape it. To lead with purpose, invest in our people and ensure that as the profession evolves, so too does our ability to add value in new and meaningful ways. We are already seeing that in how we integrate technology to deepen insight, in how we nurture emerging leaders and in how we embed sustainability and social value into our decisions.

The celebrations of our centenary, from our global conference in London to this very publication, are all about connection. They remind us that prosperity is not built in isolation, but through relationships. Relationships between colleagues, clients, communities and countries.

But even as we grow and adapt, we remain grounded in our core values: **live empathy, be present, make progress** and **enjoy it**. They are not just words; they are the cornerstones of how we work. These values will carry us into UHY's next century.

Personally, I feel incredibly privileged to lead this firm at such a defining moment in its history. A centenary is an incredible achievement, but it is also just the beginning of a new chapter. My ambition is for us to maintain the same energy and optimism that has always defined UHY; to be bold in our ideas, compassionate in everything we do and steadfast in our purpose.

To every individual who has been a part of our journey – our people, our clients, our partners and our friends – thank you. You are the reason we have reached this milestone. Together, we have built something that endures.

**Here's to the next 100 years of UHY and to building a future where we keep helping people, businesses and communities prosper.**



**Subarna Banerjee**  
Managing Partner  
UHY Hacker Young LLP

# UHY Hacker Young turned 100!

2025 was a huge year for UHY Hacker Young as our London and Nottingham firm celebrated our centennial year. The journey of our UHY Hacker Young London office began in 1925, with a simple and yet impactful mission: to help people facing financial challenges get back on their feet with the right support and guidance. This formed the foundations of our purpose, **helping you prosper**, a purpose that has always been at the heart of everything we do.

Join us as we reflect on our amazing journey over the last 100 years and as we consider what lies ahead for the next 100 and beyond. Looking back over the past century, it's clear that this commitment to people and communities has been integral to our success and longevity.



## A firm is born!

Johnny Rubens & Mark Hacker launch our London firm as Hacker Rubens & Co, just one year after they both qualify.



## New faces



Johnny & Mark retire, a merger means Michael Phillips & Stuart Young (later Chairman of the BBC) take over. The firm moves to Moorgate, London. Offices are opened in Manchester and Nottingham – the UK Group begins!

1925

1960s



## The launch of UHY

London merges with Farr Rose & Gay and the UK Group continues to grow, with 8 offices by the end of the decade. 1986 saw the founding of UHY International by our London and New York firms.



## A new name

Another merger in 1970, this time with Summers Greenbury, and the firm grows to almost 60 people and rebrands to Hacker Young in 1973.



## A new MP

Ladislav Hornan becomes the London office managing partner in 1995. Another merger adds 5 partners, taking the firm to 26 partners and 150 people across London & Nottingham.



1990s

1980s

1970s



## New name, new look

In 2004, the UK and US firms lead an international UHY rebrand. All UK firms now prefix their names with UHY, and a new corporate identity follows. The London office relocates to St Katharine Docks, near Tower Bridge.



## Sector specialists

UHY become renowned sector specialists in the automotive, education, not for profit sectors and with the capital markets, and celebrate 90 years in business in 2015, hosting the UHYI AGM in London.



## A new MP and strategy

The firm starts the decade at £19m fee income. Subarna Banerjee takes over as MP, and leads the firm in the development of a new strategy to be a £31.5m fee income firm by 2026.



2000s

2010s

2020s

# James Simmonds

There's an easy confidence about the way James Simmonds talks about his work - the kind that only comes from years of experience, balanced with a genuine curiosity that hasn't faded. As partner at UHY Nottingham, he has built a reputation for his client-focused approach and ability to see both the bigger picture and the finer detail. His career has spanned assurance, corporate finance and advisory work across multiple sectors, but at its heart lies a simple principle: relationships matter.

For James, success is much more than transactions. It's about trust, with clients, with teams and with the profession itself. Throughout this interview, James captures the essence of what has allowed the firm to prosper: adaptability grounded in integrity, and ambition guided by purpose.



**James Simmonds**  
Partner, Nottingham

**1. James, you've worked on a wide range of clients including owner-managed businesses, international and AIM-listed groups, and in the past charities and solicitors. With that breadth of experience, what one piece of advice would you give someone starting their career in audit or assurance at UHY right now?**

Stay curious and build strong communication skills. Technical knowledge will always matter, but the ability to ask good questions, the right questions, and connect with people is what sets you apart. In audit and assurance, curiosity is your greatest asset. It drives understanding, sharpens judgement and ultimately builds trust with clients.

When I think back to the early days of my own career, the people who thrived were those who didn't shy away from asking 'why'. It's a mindset that encourages learning and innovation. UHY is a brilliant environment for that. It's supportive and full of people who want you to succeed. If you make the most of that, you'll go far.



**2. You've mentored and trained countless people through the early stages of their careers. What qualities separate a good accountant from a great one, and how do you help people unlock that potential?**

A good accountant understands compliance. A great one brings commercial insight and sound judgement to the table.

I always encourage our teams to think beyond the numbers, to ask what those numbers actually mean for a client's strategy, people and future. Great advisers are the ones who interpret, not just calculate.

That kind of confidence comes with time and exposure. My role is to create those opportunities early, bringing people into complex projects, encouraging them to contribute ideas and helping them build the courage and confidence to trust their instincts. Both technical excellence and personal confidence take practice, and developing both is what turns potential into real strength.

**3. How do you approach maintaining the balance between strategic leadership and day-to-day client engagement?**

For me, it comes down to clarity and prioritisation. As a partner, my role involves setting direction, predominantly with client assignments; making sure our teams have the resources and focus they need to deliver exceptional work. But staying connected to clients is equally important. That's where real insight comes from: understanding the day-to-day challenges they face and the pressures shaping their decisions.

I make a point of keeping communication simple and consistent. A quick call or short conversation is often more effective than a long report. The more approachable and responsive we are, the stronger those relationships become. That balance between strategy and accessibility is what keeps our leadership grounded and our relationships strong.

**4. You've worked closely with clients of all sizes, from start-ups to established enterprises. How has that breadth of experience shaped your understanding of 'client service' at UHY?**

It's taught me that client service is all about adaptability. Working with start-ups, SMEs and international groups has given me a real appreciation for how different clients define value. For some, it's the reassurance of a smooth audit process; for others, it's strategic or transaction support.

There's no one-size-fits-all approach. The best service comes from listening first, then tailoring how we work to each client's needs. That's something UHY does well, combining the personal relationships of a local firm with the resources and expertise of a national and international network. It's a rare balance, and it's what keeps clients with us long term.

**5. UHY's purpose is helping you prosper. How do you personally interpret that, both in how you lead internally and in how you support clients?**

For me, **helping you prosper** is about shared success. It applies as much to our people as it does to our clients.

Externally, it means understanding what success looks like for each client. Not just the financial outcome, but the bigger ambition behind it. Whether we're helping a business owner through succession planning or guiding a fast-growing company through its next phase, our role is to support that journey with honesty and expertise.

Internally, it's about opportunity. I've always believed that if we create the right environment and culture for people to grow and develop, the firm prospers too. Prosperity isn't a one-way street; it's built on mutual investment.

**6. You're Treasurer and a former President of the Nottingham City Business Club. What parallels do you draw between your external leadership roles and your internal work at UHY, and how do those sides of your profile shape your approach to client service and team leadership?**

Whether you're leading a professional network, supporting a local business group or heading a team within UHY, the same principles apply. Leadership, in any setting, is about connecting people and creating a sense of shared purpose. My external roles have reinforced just how powerful that can be. When you bring people together around common goals, whether that's business growth or community development, the results are always stronger.

Those lessons feed directly into my work at UHY. A big part of leadership is helping others see how their contribution fits into the bigger picture and creating the conditions for them to prosper.



**7. The profession is evolving rapidly, particularly through technology, regulation and changing client expectations. What do you see as the biggest opportunities, and responsibilities, for those leading the next generation of UHY professionals?**

Technology presents incredible opportunities. Automation and data analytics are transforming how we deliver assurance, insight and advice. They are freeing up time for professionals to focus on what can't be automated: judgement, interpretation and human connection.

But with these opportunities comes responsibility. We have to ensure that innovation doesn't come at the expense of integrity or professional scepticism. The next generation of leaders will need to balance progress with professionalism, embracing new tools while staying grounded in ethical decision-making.

Our role is to help them find that balance early. It's not just about technical training, it's about nurturing curiosity, confidence and communication skills that will last a career.

**8. As we celebrate UHY's centenary, how do you see the firm's culture and identity evolving from its origins to today? What aspects of our heritage are most important to you, and which do you think will define the next 100 years?**

Our principles have always been rooted in trust and personal service, and that remains unchanged. What has evolved is how we deliver that service.

Today, we operate in a digital and global environment, but at the heart of it, the relationships are still deeply personal. Whether through virtual collaboration or face-to-face meetings, the essence of UHY remains the same. It's about real connections and real understanding.

As we look to the next 100 years, I think our success will be defined by our agility and our ability to stay ahead of change while staying true to who we are.

**9. The firm is celebrating its 100th year, a huge milestone. When you think about UHY's legacy, what do you believe has allowed it to stand the test of time, and what lessons from the past still guide us today?**

The two things that have defined UHY from the beginning are consistency and adaptability. The firm has always been driven by long-term relationships and a commitment to doing things the right way. Integrity has anchored UHY throughout its first 100 years, and it will continue to do so in the next.

At the same time, the firm has never been afraid to evolve. Every generation has brought new ideas and new approaches and that should be both encouraged and embraced, but the foundations have remained constant. That balance is what allows UHY to keep growing, decade after decade.

**10. As we mark our centenary anniversary, what personal reflection would you like to share about your career with UHY so far - perhaps a moment or project that stands out.**

Looking back, I'm proud of the journey we've taken as a firm and the part I've played in that. Working with such a diverse range of clients has been incredibly rewarding. Seeing them grow, overcome challenges and achieve their ambitions gives real meaning to the work we do.

But just as rewarding is seeing our people develop. Watching team members grow in confidence and become trusted advisers in their own right is one of the best parts of the job.

Every project, every client, every team success teaches you something new. That constant evolution is what keeps the role exciting. I feel fortunate to be part of a firm that not only values collaboration but continues to look ahead with ambition and purpose.



## Priti Mistry

As director in business advisory services (BAS), and a leading figure in both UHY's financial reporting team and hospitality sector group, Priti Mistry combines technical excellence with strategic insight. Since joining UHY in 2016, she has played an important role in shaping how the firm supports clients through evolving regulation, digital transformation and sector-specific changes. Her work brings together a rare blend of assurance, advisory and people development, bridging the gap between compliance and commercial value.

With a background that spans audit, reporting and sector leadership, Priti represents the next generation of UHY leadership: thoughtful, collaborative and focused on helping both clients and colleagues prosper.



**Priti Mistry**  
Director, London

**1. Priti, you have built an impressive career in accountancy and now lead both UHY's financial reporting team and our hospitality sector group. Can you tell us a bit about your journey into the profession and what first sparked your interest in this area of work?**

My journey began with a fascination for how numbers tell a story, how they reflect the decisions, risks and ambitions that shape a business. That curiosity led me to study Accounting and Mathematics at university, which gave me both the analytical mindset and commercial understanding that drew me toward audit.

My early career gave me exposure to a wide range of industries and company types, from owner-managed businesses to complex international groups. Those experiences cemented my passion for helping clients interpret financial data in a way that drives confidence and growth.

When I joined UHY in 2016, I found a firm that shared that ethos, one that values both technical quality and genuine client understanding. Today, as a director in BAS, audit remains at the core of my work, but my roles leading our financial reporting team and our hospitality sector group allow me to combine precision with perspective, connecting the dots between compliance, strategy and real-world impact.

**2. Before joining UHY, what experiences or milestones helped shape your professional outlook and approach to leadership?**

My earlier roles taught me that technical knowledge alone isn't enough; the real skill lies in understanding each client's world and adapting accordingly. Working with both small business owners and large group structures exposed me to vastly different priorities and challenges.

Those experiences shaped how I now lead, with a focus on empathy and empowerment. At UHY, I've applied that mindset to everything we do, building strong service lines, encouraging knowledge sharing across departments and ensuring that **helping you prosper** applies just as much to our teams as to our clients.

For me, leadership is about creating an environment where people feel trusted to contribute ideas and challenge convention. That's how innovation grows.

**3. What do you find most rewarding about leading a team that plays such a vital role in helping clients present their stories with clarity?**

The most rewarding part of what we do is helping clients navigate technical change with confidence. Whether it's preparing group accounts, adopting a new standard or advising on a transaction, every piece tells part of their story.

Seeing clients gain clarity and confidence in their numbers, and then using that information to grow, is hugely fulfilling. Equally, watching my team develop their own confidence and judgement is just as rewarding. Financial reporting, for example, is a discipline that demands both rigour and creativity, and I love seeing people balance those two skills.

Through my work with UHY's hospitality sector group, I see first-hand how industry context adds another dimension. The challenges are unique, from cost pressures to post-pandemic resilience, but the goal is always the same: to provide insight that helps clients prosper.

**4. Over the past decade, the accounting and financial landscape has evolved dramatically. What major changes have you seen, and how has UHY adapted to stay ahead of the curve?**

The pace of change has been extraordinary. We've seen increased regulatory demands, a growing emphasis on sustainability and ESG and a major shift toward digital reporting and real-time insight.

What's changed just as much is client expectation. Businesses today want more than compliance; they want insight and clarity.

UHY has embraced this evolution by combining technical excellence with business intelligence. We take a proactive approach to achieve this, sharing knowledge across service lines and using our sector teams to translate technical requirements into commercial solutions.

In the hospitality sector, for instance, that means sharing knowledge to help clients navigate challenges like rising costs, understand budget impacts etc. Our strength lies in agility and staying close to what matters most to our clients.



**5. Your team often translates complex standards into clear, practical insight for clients. How do you strike the balance between technical precision and commercial understanding?**

For me, the balance starts with listening. Before we look at the numbers, we focus on understanding the business: its model, pressures and ambitions.

From there, it's about tailoring our approach. In audit, that might mean identifying risk with the client's strategy in mind. In financial reporting, it means explaining technical requirements in language that helps decision-making, not hinders it.

Ultimately, our role is to make sure compliance becomes an enabler, not a barrier. By translating complexity into clarity, we help businesses move forward with confidence.

**6. Your diverse role means you work closely with teams across audit, tax and advisory. How important is collaboration within the firm, and how does it strengthen the overall client experience?**

Collaboration sits at the heart of everything we do at UHY. Few client challenges exist in isolation. For example, an audit finding might have tax implications; an accounting treatment might inform financial planning.

When we work together across service lines, clients receive advice that is joined-up, technically right and commercially relevant. It also means we can anticipate issues earlier and offer a more holistic view of the business.

Working as both BAS director and sector lead has shown me firsthand how cross-functional teamwork builds stronger outcomes. The best client solutions come when we bring together different expertise under one goal: helping clients prosper.

**7. What qualities do you value most when developing your team, and how do you help newer professionals build confidence in such a specialist area?**

I value curiosity, adaptability and integrity. Every client and every challenge is different, and one size rarely fits all. The ability to stay curious and open to learning is what separates good professionals from great ones.

I encourage the team to ask questions and share opinions. I always want our teams to think beyond the technical and consider commercial implications. Creating a space where people feel safe to express their views and explore the 'why' behind their work helps build real confidence.

We also make development a collective effort, through mentoring and shared learning. I've found sessions like our 'Lunch and Learn' training on various technical and non-technical topics particularly impactful. Additionally, our training and mentoring workshops, often delivered by internal team members, have helped our people tackle audit or accounting issues with confidence. That blend of trust and guidance is how confidence and capability grow.

**8. You have seen both UHY and the profession evolve over time. From your perspective, what do you think makes UHY's culture distinct today, especially as we celebrate 100 years of the firm?**

What makes UHY's culture distinct is that 'helping you prosper' isn't just a line, it's something we live every day. It applies as much to our internal teams as it does to our clients.

Our centenary year is a chance to reflect on how far we've come while reaffirming what defines us: a people-first, values-led approach built on trust and ambition.

When clients choose us, they're not just getting technical expertise; they're joining a firm that genuinely cares about their success. That same care shapes how we operate internally and how we develop our people. That dual focus on client and internal prosperity is, I think, what truly sets UHY apart.

**9. Trust and transparency are at the heart of prosperous relationships. How do they guide your approach to clients and your team?**

Trust and transparency are the foundation of everything we do. Our role isn't just to interpret standards, it's to guide clients through complex decisions with honesty and professionalism.

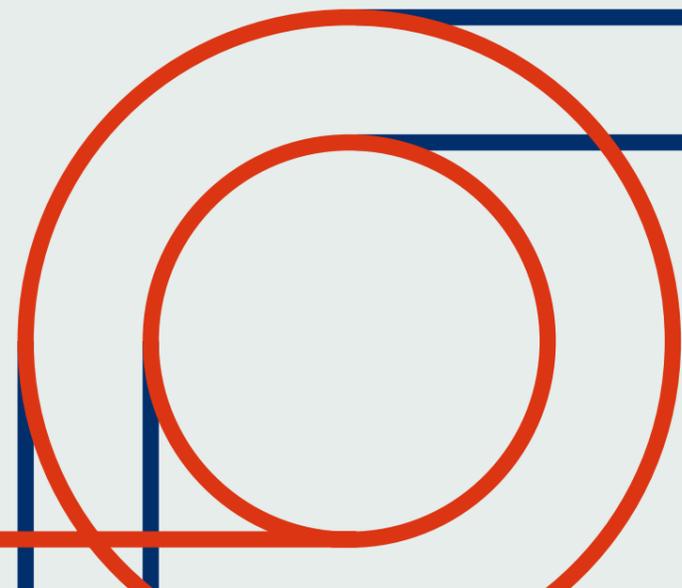
Sometimes that means having difficult conversations or giving advice a client might not expect to hear, but that is where trust is built. They know if we say something isn't viable, it's because we are safeguarding both their interests and our professional integrity.

Within my team, I encourage the same principles, approaching every situation with trust, transparency and empathy. Leadership, for me, is about consistency, it's doing the right thing, in the right way, every time.

**10. Looking to the next decade, what excites you most about the future of UHY, both for your team and the wider network?**

It's an incredibly exciting time to be part of UHY. Our centenary year has reminded us of the strong foundations we've built, while also highlighting the huge opportunities ahead.

The future will be shaped by technology, data and innovation, but also by the human insight we bring to these tools. As Subarna said when reflecting on our 100-year milestone, it's about "honouring our past while shaping our future". That is exactly what drives me: continuing to evolve, stay true to our values and help both our people and our clients prosper, now and in the future.



Helping you prosper isn't just a line. It's something we live every day. It applies as much to our internal teams as it does to our clients.

## Rebecca Roberts

Named as one of Accountancy Age's '35 Under 35' in 2024, Rebecca Roberts has carved out a reputation as one of the UK profession's rising stars. Since joining UHY in 2018 as an assistant manager, she quickly advanced to senior manager in 2020 and became a director in 2023.

As UHY's national head of cloud accounting, Rebecca has played a pivotal role in driving the firm's digital transformation, leading UK-wide initiatives that have reshaped how teams and clients embrace emerging technologies. Her desire for innovation and approach to strengthening our national service offering has earned the firm industry-wide recognition, with UHY shortlisted for National Partner of the Year at the 2024 Xero Awards under her leadership.



**Rebecca Roberts**  
Director, Nottingham

**1. Since joining UHY in 2018, you've enjoyed brilliant progression, rising through the ranks to become a director. What have been the key ingredients to that success, and what has the journey meant to you personally and professionally?**

Looking back on my time at UHY so far, I credit my progression to four core factors: the team I'm so appreciative of, the supportive environment we work in, the incredible opportunities that come from being a part of a forward-thinking, national and international network, and my hard work and dedication to achieving prosperity.

From the moment I joined UHY, I felt part of a team that not only valued collaboration but celebrated our shared successes. There's a real sense of togetherness and unity across the firm, which creates an important space for people to grow and thrive. Professionally, I've been tasked with leading projects that have pushed me beyond my comfort zone. I've been encouraged to challenge myself, taking ownership of new ideas and clients, and leading on the formation of exciting new groups across our network. Personally, it's given me confidence and a strong sense of belonging.

Being supported every step of the journey has made it even more meaningful. It has helped me develop both technical skills and softer skills, such as leadership capabilities. All of which have helped me step into my role as director with clarity and purpose.

**2. You've taken the lead in building and managing UHY's UK-wide cloud accounting team. What challenges and successes have stood out during that time?**

I joined UHY at a pivotal time, just as Making Tax Digital (MTD) for VAT was being introduced. That rollout wasn't just a turning point for clients who now needed to comply with new legislation, but for us as a firm to help them embrace cloud technology more widely. It gave us the opportunity to demonstrate the real, meaningful benefits of digital transformation that go beyond compliance, including improved efficiency, better data visibility and real-time insights.

Of course, like anything, there have been challenges. Change management always brings its own hurdles to overcome. Encouraging clients, and colleagues, to adapt to new systems required both the technical know-how and patience, empathy and clear communication.

What stands out as a real success is the level of engagement we now see, both within our office and across the wider UHY network. Our cloud accounting offering is helping clients run better businesses. Knowing that we've played a key role in making this difference to their financial clarity and decision-making is extremely satisfying and rewarding.



**3. As a female director in the profession, how do you reflect on the progress made in supporting women in accountancy, and what role do you think UHY plays in continuing to drive positive change?**

I feel incredibly fortunate that, perhaps due to the timing of my career, I've never seen being a female as restrictive in any way. My experience at UHY has always been one where I've been valued on the contribution I make, not defined by anything else.

UHY brings an inclusive, diverse working environment where people are judged on the value they bring and the impact they make. That inclusivity extends far beyond gender; it's about ensuring everyone feels supported, respected and able to succeed.

I think the firm is very well placed to continue leading by example, driving equality of opportunity across all areas of the business.

**4. How would you describe the culture at UHY in three words, and why?**

Progressive, empathetic and ambitious.

Progressive because the firm isn't afraid to adapt and keep pace with change. Empathetic because there is a genuine focus on people, understanding and empowering them. And ambitious because there's clear drive to grow and prosper, both as individuals and as a firm. Together, they capture the essence of UHY; a firm that moves forward with ambition but never loses sight of its people. In my opinion, those three qualities underpin everything we do.



**5. UHY supported you fully during your maternity leave, helping you 'reset and refocus' your career. How did that support influence your leadership and outlook on work-life balance?**

The support I received was invaluable and something that has had a lasting influence on my leadership style. Returning to work after maternity leave can be a vulnerable time, and the empathy shown to me then really shaped how I approach leadership now.

That experience really reinforced to me that leadership isn't about hierarchy. It's about humanity. It reinforced my view that the best leaders are those who remember what it feels like to need support and create space for others to prosper through change, both professionally and personally.

It also made me more aware of how important balance is. That people can only give their best when they feel supported in both their work and personal lives. That is something I definitely now prioritise in how I lead my own team.

**6. You now oversee a 16-strong hybrid-working team in the accounting and business services team. What have you learned about leading a flexible, diverse team in today's work environment?**

Trust is fundamental. It takes time to build, yet it can be lost so easily, so maintaining it is at the heart of everything we do. Within our team, trust underpins growth and performance. Hybrid working has also reinforced the importance of clear communication and maintaining a sense of connection. We make a conscious effort to bring people together, whether through regular check-ins, in-person team days or shared learning sessions. Those moments remind us that flexibility doesn't mean working in isolation. It's about giving people the confidence to work in a way that suits them best, while still delivering a quality service to clients.

Ultimately, the goal is to create an environment where people feel empowered and trusted, wherever they are working from.

**7. How do you cultivate a performance-driven culture within your team?**

The culture we have established promotes transparent communication, where feedback is open, regular and two-way. We consistently provide and seek feedback from the team to drive performance and ensure we're always learning and improving.

That feedback isn't just shared; it is acted on. For example, through peer meetings and Gallup discussions, we make sure that every piece of feedback, from or to any member of the team, is acknowledged and addressed. That openness helps us keep moving forward and reinforces our shared accountability.

I'm proud that our culture empowers everyone to take ownership of their growth. Feedback isn't about criticism; it's about helping each other become better. That sense of shared improvement creates real energy in the team. In my experience, people want to improve because they feel supported, not judged.

**8. What do you find most rewarding about helping clients migrate their accounting to cloud, and how does UHY support that?**

It is extremely rewarding to see the transformation when clients move to the cloud and start to understand their numbers in real time. Providing meaningful, accurate insights that allow clients to make confident management decisions is where we add real value.

Our approach at UHY is always collaborative. We don't just hand over a system and step away, we work closely with clients to make sure the technology genuinely supports their business goals. That ongoing partnership is what makes the process so effective.

There is nothing more satisfying than seeing a client's confidence grow as they gain visibility and control over their finances. It's those lightbulb moments, when they realise how technology can empower better decisions, that make the work so fulfilling.

**9. Looking back on the firm's centenary, how have you seen the culture at UHY evolve during your time here, and what do you feel makes it distinct today?**

The launch of our values was a huge turning point for me. From the process of how they were created, involving people across our offices, to how they are now celebrated and lived every day, it's something that feels genuinely embedded into our culture.

Those values having given us a shared language and focus, and they're a big part of what makes UHY distinct. They have also shaped the way we serve clients, support our teams and celebrate achievements. There is a real sense of connection and shared purpose across the firm, which makes it a genuinely special place to work. **Helping you prosper** truly is at the heart of everything we do.

**10. What excites you most about the next decade at UHY, both for Nottingham and across the wider UK network?**

The first word that comes to mind is opportunity. UHY is an ambitious firm, and that ambition creates opportunities for both our people and our clients. We have a strong foundation to build from, a clear culture, strong values and the right infrastructure, and that puts us in an incredible position for the next stage of growth. I'm particularly excited about seeing our people continue to develop, pushing boundaries in technology and advisory services and helping even more clients prosper.

Personally, I'm most excited about helping the next generation of talent find their voice and make their mark. Mentoring others and seeing their confidence grow is one of the most rewarding parts of leadership. The next decade will bring huge change across the industry, but I'm confident UHY will keep leading with the same ambition and integrity that has defined our first 100 years.



## Zoë Paradine

There is a real clarity in the way Zoë Paradine talks about UHY; a steadiness and commitment that comes from genuinely understanding the firm and its people. That is what 26 years at UHY has resulted in – a deep knowledge of who we are, of her professional roles and what is needed to keep UHY growing and prospering. Thoughtful and grounded in a people-first approach in everything she does, Zoë is always connected to the bigger picture, something that shines through in every part of this interview.

Her journey from marketing assistant fresh out of university, to a leading, strategic voice across our network wasn't mapped out in advance. It grew organically through trust, consistency and a willingness to step in wherever she could make a difference.

What makes her story remarkable is not just the years or the seniority of her roles, but the steady, collaborative way she has built them, and the meaningful, lasting impact she has had on the firm.

This interview is quietly powerful. Zoë speaks with the confidence of somebody who has seen the firm evolve over multiple eras and who has played a key part in steering that evolution, never losing sight of our purpose and commitment to prosperity.



**Zoë Paradine**  
Marketing & BD Partner and National Executive Director, London

### 1. Zoë, your career at UHY began as a marketing assistant fresh out of university in 1999. Looking back, what were the pivotal moments, or mindset shifts that helped you on that journey?

If I look back, my journey wasn't a straight line, it was built on moments of trust and stepping into spaces where I thought I could add value. When I joined UHY, relatively new to the business world post-university, I didn't come in thinking one day I would become a partner, national head of marketing and business development (BD) and national executive director of the UK group. I focused on doing the job well, learning from those around me and staying open to whatever opportunities emerged.

The pivotal moments were often the unexpected ones, like being asked to take on new projects or responsibilities because someone believed I was the right fit, or volunteering myself because I could see a gap that needed filling. Those moments built up gradually, and together they became the foundations of a career that grew alongside the firm.

From early on at UHY, I was much more involved in areas beyond what people would consider traditional marketing. Together with our team, we supported the Group Board and Group Executive in the UK, helping to establish and run our national sector and working groups: talent, technology, cloud accounting, tax, corporate finance, and all of our sector teams. That experience gave me a much broader perspective than I might have expected at that stage of my career; a deeper understanding of the firm, our growth opportunities, the challenges we face and what matters to our clients.



### 2. You occupy a triple role as national head of marketing & BD, national executive director of the UK Group committee and partner of the London and Nottingham firm. How do these roles intersect, and how has your background shaped your approach to strategy and growth for the firm?

What's interesting about these roles is that they don't sit in separate boxes, they overlap naturally. Each one gives me a different lens on the firm, but all of them feed into the same core purpose: helping the firm, our people, clients and communities to prosper, and supporting UHY's long-term direction.

My marketing and BD role keeps me close to how we present ourselves: our brand, messaging and what we want people to experience when they work with us. But marketing isn't just external. A strong brand starts internally, because you can't have a strong brand without an engaged team behind it. That's why things like our Gallup surveys and wellbeing initiatives matter so much; they sit at the centre of how we position ourselves as a firm.

My national executive director role broadens that picture. It takes me into quality, risk, people, operations and practice management, and involves working closely with our Group Chairman and the Group Board to shape national strategy. And then, being a partner and member of the Executive Committee of the London and Nottingham firm brings me into the day-to-day realities of running the business and supporting our teams. Together, these roles give me a 360-degree view of the firm, which helps keep strategy people-focused and aligned with who we are and want to become.

### 3. You were the first support-team professional to become a partner in our London firm. What does that milestone say about the evolution of UHY's culture and the career pathways available today?

What stood out to me at the time, and still does, is how forward-thinking the firm was in making that decision. When I became a partner eight years ago, it wasn't typical in our profession for someone from a support-team background to be invited into the partnership. It showed that UHY genuinely recognised the impact and value of its support teams, not just in theory but in action.

City AM wrote at the time that my appointment was "significant as it recognises that the success of modern accountancy firms is created through

their support teams as much as through traditional practice areas"; and I think that captured something important. At UHY, partnership wasn't being defined by billable hours; it was being defined by contribution, leadership and the wider success of the firm.

And I certainly wasn't the last. We now have partners across people and culture, IT and operations, and technical and training, which shows how far the firm has come in broadening what leadership looks like. For our people, I hope it sends a clear message: there isn't just one route to progression here. There is your route, and a place for you to grow, whichever part of the firm you're in.



**4. Marketing and BD have undergone tremendous change, from traditional channels to digital, content and data-driven outreach. How has UHY adapted, and what are you most excited about in the next phase?**

When I first joined UHY, we weren't even using email and had only just launched our first website. Reaching people meant big advertising spends and large in-person events. Marketing was slower, more traditional and far more costly.

Today, everything about the landscape is different. We can reach large, highly targeted audiences instantly and for very little spend, which has completely changed how we think about visibility. What has made the biggest impact for UHY is our focus on thought leadership, sharing insight freely and becoming leaders in our core sectors. That consistency has played a huge role in both growth and client retention.

We have also worked hard to keep pace with new technologies and new platforms. Clients expect to engage with firms in a variety of ways, and we've adapted to that, ensuring our communication is accessible, relevant and centred around the audiences we want to reach.

What excites me most about the next phase is the move towards genuinely personalised content - insight delivered in a way people want to consume it. With advances in AI and digital tools, the potential for tailoring content meaningfully is greater than ever.

There's also a growing recognition across the profession that marketing and BD have to operate as one. It's something we have always done at UHY, but the wider shift, including the rise of Chief Growth Officer roles, really underscores how closely brand, communication and growth now sit together. That alignment is where I think the most exciting opportunities lie for the future.

**5. 'Helping you prosper' runs through everything we do. From your viewpoint, how do marketing and BD contribute to that purpose, not just for clients, but for our people and the wider firm?**

For me, **helping you prosper** genuinely reflects who we are as a firm. If someone spent even a day with our teams, they'd see it in how we work, how we communicate and how we support our communities. Having that clarity has made our work in marketing and BD far easier, because it gives us a consistent message that truly differentiates us.

Everything we create is designed to help clients stay informed, prepared and able to make confident decisions. Prosperity, for us, is about giving people the knowledge and clarity they need, not just selling services.

It also applies internally. Every meeting begins with a **'helping you prosper'** moment, which reinforces how we support each other and celebrate the positive impact teams have across the firm. And the **helping you prosper** case studies we are building shows how this purpose extends to our people and our communities, not just our clients.

Marketing and BD play a central role in bringing that message to life. We make sure it's visible and authentic, and that it reflects the fact that prosperity at UHY is shared: across teams, across offices and across everyone connected to the firm.

**6. You've been an advocate of flexible working and balanced career-and-life success. How has UHY supported that journey, and how does that experience feed into how you lead your teams?**

For me, balance is about working in a way that allows you to be fully present, both at work and at home. UHY has always supported that. Long before hybrid working became standard, the firm was already open to flexibility when it was needed and trusted people to deliver. That trust has been a constant throughout my career.

Becoming a parent, progressing through senior roles and navigating different stages of life have all been made easier because I've always felt able to have an honest conversation about what I needed. That's shaped the way I lead. I want my team to feel they can do the same, to speak up early, to ask for support and to work in ways that allow them to thrive rather than stretch themselves thin.

Hybrid working has strengthened that even further. What matters most to me is outcomes, not optics. If someone is engaged, delivering great work and feels supported in the process, that is prosperity. And I think that approach reflects what makes UHY such a people-first place to work.

**7. As someone who leads national marketing & BD, you're heavily involved in shaping the firm's brand, client proposition and growth across different service lines. What are the key qualities you look for in people who thrive in that space?**

For me, it always starts with attitude. Skills can be developed, tools can be taught, but the way someone approaches their work, and the way they treat people, is what really makes the difference. I look for people who live our purpose and values naturally; those who are kind, collaborative and genuinely want to help others prosper. Living empathy, being present, making progress and enjoying it aren't just our values on paper, they are the qualities that make someone thrive in our team.

While technical skills will always grow, what you can't teach as easily is the willingness to step in, be supportive, stay grounded and work with a sense of purpose. Those are the people who truly make an impact at UHY.



**8. The firm is celebrating its 100-year anniversary. From your perspective, how have you seen the firm's brand and culture evolve over time, and what elements of our heritage do you believe will define the next decade?**

While our visual identity and digital presence have modernised significantly, we've never lost the foundations the firm was built on. That's something I've always valued. The brand has broadened to truly reflect who we are today, a national and global network with deep expertise, while still retaining the familiarity and stability that so many clients recognise and trust.

I've been part of two global rebrands, and each time the aim was the same: to ensure our identity honestly reflects the quality of our people, our capabilities and the strength of our international network. The most recent brand update, including our move towards a greener, more contemporary visual identity, feels like it really captures where we are now: focused on growth, responsibility and sustainability.

But for me, the biggest evolution hasn't been visual; it's cultural. People have always been what makes UHY different, and that's what has kept me here for 26 years. The focus on being a truly people-first firm has only strengthened over time, and you can feel its impact day-to-day. Our purpose, **helping you prosper**, isn't a marketing line, it's embedded in how we work with clients, how we support our teams and how we show up for our communities.

As we look to the next decade, I think the elements of our heritage that will continue to define us are exactly those: the strength of our relationships, the consistency of our values and the commitment to doing things the right way. Those qualities have carried us through 100 years of change, and they'll continue to guide the firm as we grow, evolve and support the next generation of UHY.

**9. In your role, you must balance national strategy with local relevance. How do you maintain that balance, and what lessons have you learned about scaling culture and brand across a diverse network?**

For me, it starts with recognising that UHY is a group of like-minded firms, but each with its own identity, strengths and communities. The goal isn't to make every office the same, but to create a strong national direction that still allows local teams to prosper in a way that reflects who they are.

Our purpose gives us that shared anchor. It means we're all moving in the same direction, even if the way we express that locally looks slightly different. At national level, my role is to keep the strategy clear and consistent; at local level, it's about supporting offices so they can make that strategy meaningful for their people and clients.

What I've learned is that scaling culture isn't about uniformity, it's about alignment. When you celebrate the similarities, embrace the differences and stay connected through our values, the brand becomes stronger everywhere, not diluted.

**10. Finally, as UHY looks to the future, what excites you most, and what role do you see marketing and BD playing in the next chapter of the firm's story?**

What excites me most is the direction we're moving in as a firm. We have big, ambitious goals, but what stands out to me is that those goals are grounded in purpose, not just numbers.

Marketing and BD have a huge part to play in that next chapter. Our role is to continue to bring our purpose to life through how we communicate, how we show up for clients and how we help the firm grow in a way that feels authentic. It's about continuing to produce thought leadership that genuinely helps people, strengthening the connection between our brand and our culture, and making sure everything we do reflects the high standards we set for ourselves.

But above all, I believe that if we stay true to our purpose, the rest will follow. We've said it many times, but it feels truer than ever as we enter our second century: if we truly deliver on our purpose, that growth will just come.



## Veronica Nieto

As an assistant manager in our HR department, Veronica sits at the heart of the firm's culture – supporting people, guiding teams and helping shape the environment that allows UHY's values to thrive day after day.

Her journey into HR has taken her through financial services, education, charity work and now professional services, but a constant thread runs through it all: a deep commitment to people. Veronica approaches HR not as a process-driven function, but as a human one, rooted in empathy and a belief that when people feel supported, they can achieve remarkable things.

In this interview, she reflects on her career, UHY's culture and the firm's continued evolution as we celebrate our centenary. There is a calmness about the way Veronica speaks, a steadiness that instantly puts people at ease, and what emerges is a perspective defined by care.



**Veronica Nieto**  
HR Assistant Manager, London

### 1. Veronica, you have been part of UHY's HR team for a number of years. Can you start by telling us a little bit about your journey into HR and what drew you to the profession?

My journey into HR really began long before I ever worked in the profession. I've always been drawn to people, understanding what motivates them, what challenges them and how workplaces can help them grow. After completing my degree and master's in human resources, I started my career as a Bond Settlement Manager in a small financial company, but I knew very quickly that I wanted to be closer to people than processes.

That led me to move into a startup in 2017, and from there I gained experience across different sectors, including education and charity. Each role taught me something different about people, behaviour and organisational culture.

I joined UHY in November 2022, just after returning from an eight-month maternity break. It felt like the right place and the right time; a firm with strong values and a genuine people-first ethos. HR has always been my passion, and UHY has given me a place where that passion can truly make a difference.



### 2. Your role focuses on supporting people and helping them develop within the firm. What do you find most rewarding about working in HR, and particularly within a people-first culture like UHY's?

What I find most rewarding is being able to support people through difficult moments. When someone is struggling, whether personally or professionally, I make it a priority to give them time, listen properly and find the right support for them.

The best feeling is seeing someone come through a challenging period with their confidence restored. Those moments remind me why I chose HR. It isn't just about processes or policies; it's about being there when people need you, offering empathy and reassurance, and helping them see a way forward.

UHY's people-first culture makes that possible. Here, care isn't an afterthought, it's part of how we work. That gives me the space to do HR in the way I believe it should be done, with kindness, patience and integrity.

### 3. UHY has always placed great emphasis on its culture and values. From your perspective, what makes the firm's culture distinct, and how have you seen it evolve over time?

What stood out immediately when I joined was how genuinely people live the firm's values. Everyone, from junior team members to partners, is approachable and respectful. You don't feel intimidated speaking to senior colleagues; you feel encouraged.

That sense of openness creates a culture where collaboration isn't forced, it happens naturally.

At UHY, our values aren't just 'tick-the-box' statements. They show up in everyday behaviour: how we communicate, how we solve problems, how we support each other. I'm proud to be part of the Values Forum, and I hope we continue to share those principles with every new colleague who joins.

Even something as important as the Gender Pay Gap analysis reflects that culture of honesty and progress. The firm doesn't shy away from evaluating itself and having difficult conversations when needed. That transparency is a big part of what makes our culture strong.

### 4. As someone involved in both people development and operational HR, how do you balance supporting the firm's strategic goals with ensuring every individual feels valued and heard?

For me, it starts with understanding the firm's goals and then building HR initiatives that support them. But just as important is making sure every person feels seen and listened to.

I try to create space for open conversations, whether through formal meetings, informal check-ins or wellbeing calls. Listening properly is one of the most powerful tools in HR.

When employees feel respected and supported, their motivation naturally increases. That engagement helps the firm move closer to its strategic objectives. It's not a trade-off; it's a balance where supporting the business and caring for people actually strengthen each other.

### 5. Learning and development have been big priorities in recent years. How has UHY's approach to training and professional growth changed, and what new initiatives are you most proud of?

UHY's approach to learning and development has evolved significantly in the last few years. Although L&D sits outside my direct remit, I see every day how development opportunities shape confidence and progression across the firm.

There's now a much stronger focus on structured development: clearer learning pathways, more accessible training programmes and more opportunities for people to build both their technical and interpersonal skills. We also invest a lot more in leadership development, helping managers grow into confident and supportive leaders.

One of the areas I'm particularly proud of is how inclusive the firm's approach has become. Training isn't limited to certain teams or levels; everyone is encouraged to grow. Whether someone is newly qualified, returning from a career break or stepping into leadership for the first time, there are opportunities to support their journey.

It reflects something important: learning isn't a one-off event; it's an ongoing part of our culture.



**6. HR often sits at the heart of organisational culture. How do you and your team help embed the firm's values and purpose into the day-to-day experience of everyone across UHY?**

We embed our values throughout the entire employee lifecycle, from recruitment and onboarding to performance reviews, wellbeing and day-to-day employee relations. But most importantly, we live these values in how we show up for people.

For example:

**Live empathy:** taking the time to really listen, especially when someone is going through a difficult moment, and making sure they feel supported, not rushed.

**Be present:** being attentive in our conversations, giving people our full focus and responding proactively when they need guidance.

**Make progress:** helping teams grow through coaching, feedback and fair processes that support continuous development.

**Enjoy it:** creating a working environment where people feel comfortable, connected and able to bring their whole selves to work.

These values aren't posters on a wall; they guide how we behave every day.



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**7. Recruitment and inclusion are key themes across the industry. How is UHY working to diversify its recruitment and ensure opportunities are accessible to everyone?**

Although recruitment is primarily managed by our Talent and Recruitment team, I've seen first-hand how committed UHY is to making our hiring processes more inclusive and accessible. The firm is actively working to broaden its talent pool and ensure recruitment reflects the diversity of our wider society.

We're expanding our recruitment pathways by looking beyond traditional routes and welcoming individuals from a variety of backgrounds, education levels and career journeys. This includes recognising and finding talent in places where it might otherwise be overlooked. There is also a stronger emphasis on inclusive job design, fair selection processes and structured interview training to minimise bias.

Our partnerships play a vital role in creating equal opportunities and increasing our reach within the community. Collaborations with organisations such as Future Frontiers, Access Accountancy, the Sutton Trust and Target Jobs enable us to connect with talented individuals who may not have considered a career in accountancy. These partnerships help us open doors, provide mentoring and guidance and ensure that opportunities are accessible to all, regardless of background.

We are constantly reviewing our recruitment processes, taking on board internal feedback, candidate feedback and insights from others in the industry, to ensure we remain progressive and responsive. This continuous improvement approach helps us refine our practices and stay aligned with the firm's goals.

As a firm, we're increasingly leveraging recruitment data, such as diversity metrics and insights from Gender Pay Gap reporting, to identify areas for improvement and create more equitable opportunities.

It's an ongoing journey, but one that UHY is genuinely committed to.



**8. Employee wellbeing and flexibility have become more important than ever. How has UHY adapted to support balance, wellbeing and connection across teams?**

Since COVID, UHY has embraced a hybrid working model where employees can work from home two days a week and spend three days in the office. That balance helps people manage family commitments, personal priorities and wellbeing more easily.

To keep teams connected, all meetings can be held either in person or via Microsoft Teams. Collaboration doesn't depend on where you're working; everyone has the tools to stay engaged.

The Wellbeing Group, which includes volunteers from across the firm, has also been a huge support. Their role is to make sure people feel valued, supported and able to prosper. It's a collective effort, and it shows how deeply UHY cares about the whole person, not just the employee.

**9. What qualities do you think make someone thrive at UHY, and what advice would you give to someone starting their career here today?**

I believe the qualities that help someone thrive at UHY are ownership, integrity and a proactive attitude. Taking responsibility for your work and doing it to the best standard you can is essential.



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# Amber Harper-Stone

In 2024, Amber Harper-Stone celebrated an incredible milestone, a decade at UHY. Having joined the firm straight from school as an 18-year-old with no prior office experience, she has progressed through three different roles to become operations assistant manager, playing an essential part in keeping the firm running smoothly every day. Her story is one of growth and belonging, and a reminder that success often begins with opportunity and the right environment to prosper.



**Amber Harper-Stone**  
Operations Assistant Manager, London

### 1. In 2024, you celebrated 10 years at UHY; an amazing milestone for somebody still so young. Looking back, what does that milestone mean to you personally and professionally?

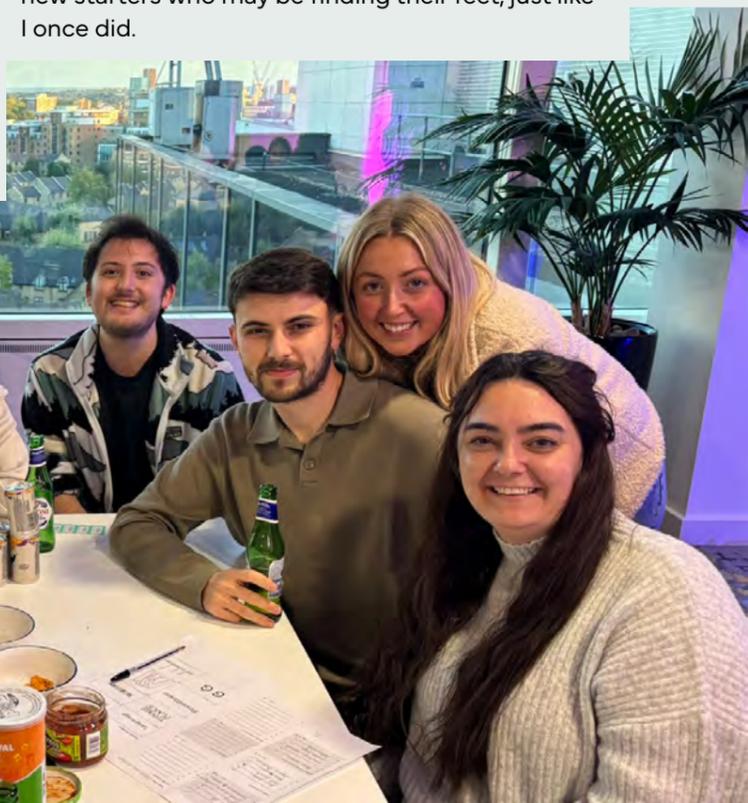
Celebrating ten years at UHY means a great deal to me, both personally and professionally. On a personal level, it reminds me how far I've come and how much I've grown since walking through the door on my first day as a nervous 18-year-old. I've built both strong professional relationships and personal friendships and found a real sense of belonging here. I've made lifelong friends, both past and present colleagues, and that's all thanks to UHY.

Professionally, it shows that progression is possible when you're surrounded by the right people and given the chance to learn. My role has evolved so much over the years, and I've had the opportunity to be part of some amazing projects. For me, this milestone isn't just about time, it's about growth. It reflects how UHY invests in its people and creates an environment where long-term careers can prosper, while also showing how our people invest in the firm in return, committing to shared success and a lasting future together.

### 2. You joined UHY at 18 with no prior office experience. What were those early days like, and what do you remember most about finding your feet in such a new environment?

Joining UHY at 18 was both exciting and slightly overwhelming. Everything was new. I was straight from college to UHY, and there was so much to learn: the systems, the processes, the pace of office life. I remember those feelings well; a mix of nerves and curiosity, eager to learn and soak up as much as I could.

What made all the difference was how welcoming everybody was. People were patient and kind, always willing to listen and guide. I never felt alone, like I was left to figure things out myself. That support really shaped my confidence early on and made me realise I'd joined somewhere special. It is also something I carry with me today; I always try to offer the same patience and encouragement to new starters who may be finding their feet, just like I once did.



### 3. Over the past decade, you've held three different roles. Can you tell us a bit about how your responsibilities have evolved and what you've learned along the way?

Over the last ten years, my career has evolved through three roles, each one has taught me something new. I started as a team administrator in the turnaround and recovery department, where I learned the fundamentals of insolvency and business administration. In 2017, I moved to reception, which suited me perfectly because I love working with people. I love getting to know people, chatting and creating a real welcoming space at UHY. This role gave me the chance to do so, to meet clients face-to-face and build strong relationships across the firm.

Then, in 2020, I took one of my biggest challenges yet, helping to run the operations team remotely during the pandemic. It was a steep learning curve, but it really pushed me to grow and develop my organisational and leadership skills.

Each step of my UHY journey has not only built my confidence but also expanded my understanding of the firm and the services we deliver. Most importantly though, it has shown me how each individual department and each individual person plays a vital role in the success of the firm. Together, we each play our part in helping UHY, and our people, prosper.

### 4. Your role in operations and administration is vital to keeping the firm running smoothly. What does a typical day look like for you, and what do you find most rewarding about your work?

My role is all about making sure everything behind the scenes runs smoothly, whether that's managing the office, supporting different teams, coordinating supplies or simply being the person people turn to when something needs sorting out.

No two days are ever the same, which is one of the things I love most. Some days I'm helping plan events; others I'm solving problems or finding ways to make things more efficient. What I find most rewarding is knowing that my work helps everyone else do theirs. When things run well, it benefits the entire firm, and that gives me a real sense of pride.



### 5. Operations teams often work behind the scenes to support all departments. What do you think people might not realise about the role you and your team play in the firm's success?

I think a lot of people don't realise just how much planning, coordination and problem-solving goes into what we do. The operations team is often the first port of call when something needs fixing or improving, whether that's a practical issue in the office or helping a department streamline how they work.

We might not always be front and centre, but our work touches every part of the firm. We're the people who make sure everything runs efficiently and with as little disruption as possible. It's rewarding to know that what we do quietly in the background plays such a big part in keeping things moving forward.

**6. You've seen the firm grow and change significantly during your time here. What moments or developments stand out most to you from your decade at UHY?**

There have been so many positive changes over the past decade, but a few really stand out. We've welcomed two new managing partners, which brought fresh perspectives and energy to the firm. We've also introduced firm-wide initiatives like the Values Forum, Wellbeing Forum and EDI Forum, which have greatly impacted our culture.

Those developments are just a few examples of what has changed during my time at UHY. In my opinion, each of these has given our people the chance to have a voice, to be involved and share ideas, and to feel genuinely supported and supportive of others. Seeing that level of care and progress over the years has made me even prouder to be part of UHY.



**7. What do you think makes UHY's culture unique, and how has that culture supported your own growth and progression?**

For me, UHY's culture is defined by its friendliness and support. From day one, I felt comfortable asking questions, learning from others and taking on new challenges. People genuinely care and want you to do well; they're approachable and always happy to share knowledge.

That environment has helped me grow enormously. I've had the space to learn, the encouragement to step outside my comfort zone and the trust to take on more responsibility. It's that combination of trust and opportunity that makes the difference. If you're willing to learn and show initiative, people will notice and champion you.

**8. You previously described your colleagues as your 'UHY family'. What does that sense of community mean to you, and how has it shaped your experience at work?**

Describing my colleagues as 'my UHY family' really sums up how I feel about working here. It's not just about teamwork; it's about genuine care and connection. We celebrate each other's successes, look out for one another and pull together when challenges arise.

The sense of community across the firm, and our wider networks, makes such a difference. Knowing you're surrounded by people who truly want you to prosper, both personally and professionally, creates a positive atmosphere that I genuinely believe you'd struggle to find elsewhere. It's one of my main motivations for staying with the firm for so long, and why I can't imagine working anywhere else.

**9. What advice would you give to someone joining UHY today, perhaps starting out in an administrative or support role as you once did?**

I'd say: be curious and proactive, and don't underestimate yourself. When I joined, I didn't know what my long-term goals were, but by asking questions, getting involved and, importantly, showing a willingness to learn, opened the doors to some great opportunities.

I'd tell a new starter to get to know people across different departments and take advantage of the learning and training opportunities available. UHY is a firm that really champions progression, so if you put the effort in it will be noticed and celebrated. And always remember, every role across the firm is important. What you do contributes to the bigger picture and prosperity of the firm.

**10. As UHY celebrates its 100-year anniversary, what excites you most about the firm's future, and about your own next chapter within it?**

What excites me most is being part of a firm with such a strong history and such exciting plans for the future. It's inspiring to see how much we've grown and to know we are constantly evolving. I'm excited to see what the next chapter will look like for UHY.

Personally, I'm looking forward to developing my knowledge and skills even further and taking on new challenges. I love being part of a firm that values its people and invests in their futures.



# Chris McKain

With nearly two decades in the accountancy world, Chris McKain has built his career on the principles of empathy, collaboration and growth. As a partner at UHY Nottingham, Chris has seen first-hand how much the profession, and UHY as a firm, has evolved. From technological transformation to the deepening of client relationships, his journey reflects both personal and professional development.

We sat down with Chris to discuss his journey, leadership philosophy and reflections on UHY's centenary year, exploring what has inspired him so far and what the next 100 years could hold.



**Chris McKain**  
Partner, Nottingham

## 1. Chris, can you tell us about your journey into accountancy and what first attracted you to the profession?

I studied Economics and Finance at university, and when I graduated, I wanted to start a professional qualification rather than go down the further academic studies route. I was eager to gain practical, hands-on experience; to start working, learning and applying what I'd studied in a real-world setting.

During my university studies, I'd taken an accounting module and found it both logical and rewarding. I'd always been interested in understanding how businesses operate, considering what drives them, what challenges they face and how financial decisions underpin growth and prosperity. Accountancy seemed to sit perfectly with a mixture of analysis, personal skills and business understanding.

For me, it was about finding a career that combined structure and purpose. I realised quite quickly that I was better suited to accounting than law. It gave me the opportunity to use numbers to tell a story and to make a tangible impact on the businesses I worked with.

## 2. You have spent a significant part of your career with UHY in Nottingham. What is it about the firm and the team that's made it the right place for you to grow and prosper over the years?

Without a doubt, it's the people. From the very beginning, I've been surrounded by people who are welcoming, approachable, friendly and incredibly generous with their time. There's a culture here that encourages collaboration rather than competition. People genuinely want to see each other succeed.

The partners have always placed a huge amount of trust in the team, and that trust has been crucial to my development. They've supported me, pushed me beyond my comfort zone and created an environment where everyone has the freedom and support to flourish.

That combination of autonomy and backing has been invaluable. It's helped me grow not just as a professional, but as a person. And then, there are the clients; we're fortunate to work with some fantastic businesses and charities, full of passionate, entrepreneurial people and an inspiring purpose. Building long-term relationships with them has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career.

## 3. Over the years, what changes in the profession have had the biggest impact on how you work with clients?

Technology, without question. The pace of change has been remarkable. When I first started, everything was manual, from data gathering to communication. Now, the tools and systems we use are far smarter, faster and more connected.

Online meetings, for example, have completely changed how we interact with clients. It's made our interactions more flexible and frequent, while maintaining that personal touch. We can have quick, meaningful conversations that keep projects moving and relationships active.

Beyond communication, the advances in audit technology have really enhanced the quality of what we do. We now have tools that allow us to analyse data more effectively, identify trends earlier and deliver insights that go far beyond compliance. It's made the audit process smoother which has been a huge benefit to our clients.

## 4. What has been the most valuable lesson you've learned in your career so far, and how has it shaped your approach to leadership?

The biggest lesson for me is the importance of empathy; always putting yourself in somebody else's shoes. That applies just as much to colleagues as it does to clients. When you take the time to understand someone's perspective, it changes how you communicate, how you problem-solve and how you lead.

In my opinion, empathy builds trust. It helps create a culture where people feel heard, supported and valued, and that is where the best work happens. I've learned that leadership isn't about having all the answers, it is about creating an environment where others can find them.

I also believe in the power of communication. By discussing challenges openly, whether they are personal or professional, we can use our shared experience and network to find better solutions. Sometimes it's not about solving everything immediately, but about listening and easing the pressure where you can. That approach makes everyone's day-to-day just that little bit better.

## 5. What is your approach to building strong, lasting relationships with clients? Is there a particular moment or client success that stands out?

For me, it always comes back to time. The more time you spend with your clients, the better you understand them. Not just their business, but their values, motivations and what prosperity really looks like for them. That deeper level of understanding is what allows us to add real value.

I'm a big believer in face-to-face interaction. As much as the digital world has enhanced the accessibility and availability of meetings, sitting across the table from someone, hearing their challenges first-hand and working through solutions is what really strengthens relationships.

One of the things I really appreciate about UHY is that while we may not have all of the answers, the strength of our network means there is always someone, somewhere, with the right expertise to help. The key is knowing when to bring others in and having the humility to do so. Collaboration is what helps us **make progress** and what delivers the best outcomes for clients.



**6. What qualities do you look for when mentoring or developing junior staff within the team?**

There are three key qualities I look for: self-reflection, good communication and pride in their work. If someone can be honest with themselves about what has gone well and what could improve, that is a sign of real professionalism and maturity. Combine that with the ability to communicate clearly and a genuine care for the quality of what they deliver, and you have a great foundation for growth.

I also really value curiosity. Accountancy is constantly evolving – new standards, technologies and ways work working are always emerging. Those who stay curious, who ask questions and want to understand the ‘why’ behind what they are doing, are the ones who prosper and thrive.

Ultimately, my role as a mentor is to help people believe in themselves. When you show trust in someone’s potential, you often see them achieve more than they thought possible.

**7. You have witnessed UHY evolve over time. How would you describe the firm’s biggest strengths today?**

I think the biggest strength of UHY is our collaboration and teamwork, both within offices and across the wider network. There is a real sense of unity, even though we are spread across different locations and services. We share ideas, refer work and lean on each other’s expertise to make sure our clients get the best possible advice.

It is also the breadth of what we offer. We truly have specialists and experts across our network of accounting and advisory services, and that allows us to support clients at every stage of their journey. Our balance of local knowledge and national and international capability is something I’m very proud of.

**8. If you could go back and give yourself one piece of advice on your first day at UHY, what would it be?**

Just say “yes”. Even when something feels a bit daunting or out of your comfort zone, go for it. You are far more capable than you think, and you will have the full support of your colleagues along the way.

Some of the best opportunities in my career have come from saying yes, even in those moments before I felt fully ready. And, in a firm like UHY, you’re never taking that leap alone.

**9. UHY is celebrating 100 years. What does the milestone mean to you personally, and what do you think it says about the firm’s legacy?**

Reaching 100 years is an incredible achievement, and it says a lot about the strength of the firm’s foundations. It shows that we have been doing the right things, for our people, our clients and the communities we serve.

That kind of longevity doesn’t happen by accident. It comes from consistency, trust and a willingness to evolve. We have built a culture that values long-term relationships and sustainable growth, and that is why we, along with our people and clients, continue to prosper.

For me, personally, it is a real privilege to be part of the story, to contribute to a legacy that has been a century in the making and to help the set the course of what comes next.

**10. Looking to the future, what excites you most about the next chapter for UHY, both in Nottingham, nationally and internationally?**

The most exciting thing is the opportunity to keep growing, not just in size, but in the impact we can have on people’s lives and businesses. We know who we are as a firm and what makes us unique, and that clarity gives us a great platform for the future.

In Nottingham, our team has almost doubled in size in the past 15 years, which is a testament to our success and culture. I’d love to see that continue; to bring in more talent, nurture the next generation and grow alongside our clients.

Both nationally and internationally, I think the future will be about deepening collaboration even further. We have already benefited from sharing expertise and resources across our offices, and I believe that will only continue to strengthen over time. While the profession will continue to change, UHY’s people-first ethos will always be our constant.

We have achieved so much over the past 100 years. The exciting part is knowing that the best chapters are still to come.



## Harriet Hodgson-Grove

Harriet joined our London office as a graduate trainee in 2011. Over the following decade, she not only committed to client prosperity, but her prosperity too, rising through the ranks to become a partner. In recent years, she has played a pivotal role in driving the firm's fast-growing in-house commitment to becoming a sustainable business and our approach to operating as a responsible organisation, as well as developing our sustainable business service line offering. Led by Harriet, we advise businesses on how to measure, reduce and report correctly, as well as how to align with frameworks such as the UN SDGs and build credible sustainability strategies that meet stakeholder expectations and can even help with investment opportunities.



**Harriet Hodgson-Grove**  
Partner and Head of Sustainable Business Services, London

### 1. Harriet, your career at UHY started in 2011, not long after you'd graduated university with a degree in English Language and Literature. What initially drew you to accountancy and how did you find your start in this profession?

I wasn't completely sure what I wanted to do post-university, and didn't have a clear career pathway I wished to pursue. It was a friend who suggested a professional qualification, and after some research, I considered accountancy. After some initial work experience and an introduction to UHY, I joined the firm's graduate intake in November 2011, and the rest is history, as the saying goes. From the very beginning, the supportive environment, welcoming teams and comprehensive training were defining aspects that made my transition a smooth one.

### 2. What aspects of UHY's culture and values have been most instrumental in your professional development?

Our purpose, **helping you prosper**, is something that truly resonates with me. From the beginning, I was given significant responsibility and exposure to clients, which helped me understand the importance of meeting the bespoke needs and requirements of each individual organisation or person. This was a key element that helped accelerate my learning and the importance of keeping our people, whether that's clients, colleagues or communities, at the heart of everything we do.

The firm's supportive atmosphere and commitment to employee growth and career development have been pivotal in my journey from trainee to partner. This is something that remains at the epicentre of who we are as a firm today and, more specifically, for me in my role as a partner; that we continue to **make progress** (one of our core values) and invest in our people, their skills and their future as we continue to embrace change and develop our business and the way we serve our clients.

Another of our values, **live empathy**, is something I pride myself on. I am an avid champion of people and delivering exceptional professional services, encouraging others to commit fully to enable us to deliver above and beyond.

### 3. What motivates you in your role, and what do you find most rewarding?

I'm passionate about people, so working with clients and colleagues is something that I find incredibly fulfilling. Building relationships, understanding individual needs and mentoring UHY team members brings me great satisfaction. Seeing others grow and succeed, both externally with clients and internally across our firm, is a huge motivator for me and is one of the things I enjoy most in my role (another of our core values '**enjoy it**'). I want to ensure everybody is seen, heard and valued, and, importantly, has the opportunity to discover what prosperity looks like for them and then outline how we can collaborate to ensure this is achieved.

### 4. Can you share a memorable experience that you feel highlights UHY's commitment to its purpose and values?

Last year, 60 team members from across our UK network joined together to take on the London Royal Parks Challenge in support of our then national charity, Teenage Cancer Trust. Collectively, our team raised an incredible £45,000 for the charity, the most for any national charity to date.

It was an unforgettable day and stands out as a memorable experience because it captured our firm's dedication to teamwork, helping others and community engagement. The day reflected our core values in action and there was a real sense of togetherness for everybody involved.

### 5. What advice would you give to someone starting their career at UHY?

My advice to anybody starting their career would be to embrace opportunities and be confident enough to step out of your comfort zone and challenge yourself.

At UHY, keeping our teams happy and engaged is extremely important, and it's our ongoing mission to maintain a positive environment where taking initiative and seeking growth are encouraged. I'd suggest that you absorb every experience, even the difficult challenges you may face, as they will ultimately contribute to your professional development.



## 6. How do you balance your professional responsibilities with personal commitments?

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance has always been important to me, but even more so since I had children. The firm places great emphasis on employee wellbeing, which is great, as our flexible and hybrid approach to working allows me to not only succeed at UHY, but at home with my family too.

From the outset of my career at UHY, I always felt trusted to manage my time in a way that works for both the firm and my personal life. That trust, and the culture that underpins it, has allowed me to flourish not just as a professional, but as a person, a mother, a wife and a friend. Whether it's being able to do the school run, have quality time with my husband and children or attend a pilates class, the flexibility has given me the chance to be fully present in all aspects of my life. I wholeheartedly believe that has made me better at what I do.

## 7. Reflecting on your journey, what has been your proudest achievement at UHY?

Progressing from a trainee to a partner is something I am particularly proud of. When I joined the graduate programme, I had no idea how much I'd grow, not only in my career, but as a person. So much of this is owed to UHY and my colleagues of the past and present.

Becoming a partner was a real milestone moment; it was the culmination of everything I'd worked toward since joining the firm. Now, I'm proud to play a part in helping others shape their future at UHY, staying true to our core values and behaviours, and supporting others on their prosperity journey.

I'm also particularly proud of developing and leading our sustainable business services offering for clients. It's been incredibly rewarding to help build this service line, taking something I'm genuinely passionate about and committed to and turning it into a key area of strategic focus for the firm.

## 8. How did you transition into your current position as Head of sustainable business services?

I began this transition by reviving our internal wellbeing group in 2021. I returned to work, having spent the majority the COVID lockdown at home, as we all did, but with a newborn following the birth of my youngest daughter on 7 April 2020. I returned to a fully remote working world in 2021, that everyone had settled into by then, but I could see the impact it had had on my peers and colleagues, and I really wanted to do what I could to help. Following its revival, I worked with a dedicated wellbeing team between 2021-2024 with the core purpose of helping our teams prosper, be that with physical, mental or financial prosperity. Employee wellbeing is the core of a sustainable business. Without a happy, healthy and prospering team we would be unable to help our clients, our communities or our planet prosper.

When our internal ESG working group was formed in early 2023, I was eager to join. Sustainability is genuinely important to me, both professionally and personally. It quickly became apparent that many of my colleagues and the wider firm shared this same commitment to building a better world for others, and so we joined together to outline how we could make a real difference. This group was expertly led by a former colleague and when the opportunity came up to chair this group, I jumped at the chance.

The group meets every six weeks to discuss progress, outline our ambitions and plans and to monitor and review our growth going forward. This ensures our work continues to become more than good intentions and there is always substance to what we do. Additionally, our action group mapped our plans against recognised frameworks, notably key parts of the UN's SDGs. This ensured that from the very beginning, our efforts were credible and consistent. There is still a lot of work to do, and areas where we can improve. This is an iterative process as a sustainable business is not static, there will always be more we can do.

As well as being passionate about progressing our sustainable business journey internally, I also started to look at what we could do to help our clients prosper and build sustainable businesses.

## 9. How is UHY supporting clients on their sustainability journeys, and what sets your ESG service apart?

We listened to our clients and developed a service line shaped by understanding how individual business needs connect with regulations and reporting requirements. As more clients sought support navigating these regulatory requirements, sustainability disclosures and stakeholder-driven strategies, we made it our mission to enhance our understanding and capability of sustainable business strategies to help clients at various stages of their journeys. The service line we now offer grew from such conversations with internal and external stakeholders as we committed to helping clients overcome any challenges or knowledge gaps they were experiencing. Our work continues to evolve as we deepen our understanding and expand our impact.

Our service offering gives clients an opportunity to improve efficiency, reduce waste and strengthen relationships, which can help organisations gain a competitive edge. We advise businesses on how to measure, reduce and report correctly, as well as aligning with frameworks such as the UN SDGs and building credible sustainable business strategies that meet stakeholder expectations and can even help with investment opportunities.

What sets us apart is our ability to go beyond compliance. We help clients align sustainable practices with their wider strategic goals, creating long-term value that benefits their business and the planet.

## 10. Why do you believe sustainability is such an

## important area for businesses to focus on today?

I believe in today's business world, despite the ever-evolving regulations and changes, sustainable business practices are intrinsic to long-term success and prosperity. The opportunities and risks linked to sustainable businesses are becoming central to business performance and resilience, which is why, more than ever, it is an important area of focus for organisations across all sectors.

At UHY, our contribution to building sustainable businesses is structured around an ongoing dedication to investing the right time to develop specialist skills and knowledge that maximise the positive impact we have as a firm. We are well aware that sustainability commitments and requirements are ever-changing, so our initiatives are fluid and thus allow us to remain progressive in our determination to make a real difference.



# Liz Searby

With over 15 years at UHY and more than two decades in practice, Liz Searby has helped shape the growth of UHY Nottingham, particularly through her work in a wealth of industries, including the education and academy sector.

Known for her clear-headed approach and commitment to delivering practical, high-quality advice, Liz has built long-standing relationships with clients who value her insight and integrity.



**Liz Searby**  
Partner, Nottingham

## 1. Liz, you joined UHY Nottingham in 2008. What originally attracted you to the firm, and how has your journey shaped your approach to leadership and client service?

From early in my career, I realised how much I enjoyed working with businesses where I could see the direct impact of the advice we give and the services we deliver. I enjoy the variety of work that you are exposed to in our industry. Particularly, I find owner-managed businesses and SMEs incredibly energising – they're dynamic and ambitious in their desire to grow.

After qualifying and spending time working at larger firms, I knew my passion was with delivering a more personal, hands-on service. At UHY, I joined a network that gave me the opportunity to build long-term professional relationships where I'm seen as a trusted adviser all year round. That sense of partnership has always been part of UHY's DNA. We grow alongside our clients, and that long-term trust is what has kept me here for over 15 years.

## 2. You've worked with businesses across a range of sectors. How do you adapt your approach to different industries, and how does UHY's 100-year heritage strengthen that work?

Whatever sector our work takes us, whether it's technology, hospitality, manufacturing or academy schools, businesses face ever-evolving financial and compliance challenges. I love being right there with the client, guiding them to discover what prosperity looks like to them and collaborating to ensure it's achieved.

Every sector has its own nuances, but the principles are the same: listen, understand the pressures clients are facing and tailor our approach accordingly. For example, in manufacturing there may be stock and supply-chain pressures, while in professional services it's about utilisation and cash flow. And for academy trusts, it's a different landscape altogether, with funding compliance, governance and public accountability playing huge roles.

Having the heritage and collective knowledge of a firm that's been trusted for a century gives us real depth of experience to draw upon, and that's invaluable when clients face unfamiliar challenges.

## 3. You've developed deep expertise in the academy sector. How did that journey begin, and what continues to motivate you about working with academies?

The academy sector has had a significant impact on my career and, interestingly, it all started by accident. When the government began encouraging maintained schools to convert to academies in 2010, I happened to answer the phone to the business manager at a local secondary school. I sent a message around to the UHY partners at the time to see if anyone had experience auditing in the education sector. One of the partners responded, we went to meet the school leadership team, and we ended up winning the work.

That initial enquiry set the course for what has become a major focus of my career. Since then, I've worked with more than 30 academy trusts in the East Midlands, some of which have remained clients for over a decade.

As a firm, we now have a strong presence in the education space, and I sit on UHY's national academies working group to help ensure we stay ahead of regulatory and Department for Education (DfE) changes. I'm genuinely enthusiastic about the sector and the people who operate within it.

For me, it's about contributing to something that genuinely shapes future generations, ensuring funding is used effectively, governance is strong, and the right outcomes are achieved for pupils.

## 4. Can you share an example of where UHY has really made a difference for a client?

One great success story is SmartSentry, a technology start-up based in Nottingham. The organisation approached our office in 2016, a few years after its founding, and has been our client ever since.

To begin with, like many start-ups, SmartSentry was still using paper records and Excel for forecasting. Following impressive growth, data input had become far too time-consuming. On the advice of our team, the organisation's accounts were migrated to Xero.

Beyond this, one of our managers recognised that there were some issues in relation to the generation and posting of invoices and felt there was more the organisation could be doing with Xero to improve efficiencies. They contacted founder Mike Gardner and set up a training session to run through additional functionality she was sure would make his life easier.

During the two-hour session, our team went through each section of the software and took a deeper dive into the areas that would benefit SmartSentry most, from setting up bank rules to recommending the best bolt-on apps for their needs. In these two hours, Lucy and Mike made sure the system was set up to work as efficiently as possible.

This is just one example of how we help our clients achieve prosperity and add real value to their organisations. For me, these stories epitomise what UHY has done for 100 years, making complex challenges manageable and helping clients take the next step forward.

## 5. You're known for building strong, enduring relationships with your clients. What's your approach to those partnerships?

My role often begins with compliance, ensuring financial records are clean and accurate, but it's so much more than that. I make it a priority from the outset to stay close to our clients and maintain ongoing, transparent communication.

I regularly check that the systems we've implemented continue to work for their evolving needs and offer proactive suggestions – whether that's introducing forecasting tools, helping to plan for Making Tax Digital deadlines, or exploring new efficiencies. Consistency and communication build trust, and that's at the heart of every lasting client relationship.

**6. What do you see as your core strength when working with clients?**

I bring a steady, results-focused mindset. Our clients know they will always get an honest opinion and practical recommendations. I think one of my strengths is listening carefully and then asking the right questions, challenging where needed and offering guidance where things could be done more efficiently.

That could involve process automation, better use of digital tools, or simply helping a client prepare for change. It's about being a true partner, not just a service provider, something I believe has defined UHY's success for a century.

**7. What traits and qualities do you value most in your team?**

Curiosity and genuine interest in the work are vital. It shows in the questions people ask and the pride they take in what they do. Good communication, accountability, and collaboration are equally essential.

Alongside that, we really value people who embody our firm values and behaviours, especially **live empathy**. We want our people to walk in our clients' shoes, understand their challenges and anticipate issues before they arise. That empathy is the foundation of both our client relationships and our internal culture, it's what keeps UHY human.

**8. UHY's culture has clearly evolved over your time here. As we celebrate 100 years, what stands out to you as most distinctive today?**

The launch of our shared values was a real turning point for me. From the way they were produced, with input from across the firm, to how they are now lived and celebrated, they have helped embed a culture that truly reflects who we are.

There's a genuine sense of collaboration, trust, and progressiveness. People care about each other and about doing the right thing for clients. It's a culture that honours our history but looks firmly to the future - and that balance is what makes it special.

**9. Looking to the next 100 years, what excites you most about UHY's future, both in Nottingham and across the wider UK and international network?**

There's a huge amount of opportunity ahead. We've got ambitious growth plans; a strong foundation and a culture rooted in the right values.

What excites me most is seeing how our people continue to develop. Investing in behavioural skills and leadership development, alongside technical excellence, is what will future-proof our success.

We have come a long way, but there's still so much potential to build on. The next chapter will be about continuing to evolve, just as UHY has done for the past 100 years, always focused on helping our people and clients prosper.

**10. Looking back over your career so far, what are you most proud of, and what kind of legacy do you hope to leave at UHY?**

I'm proudest of the relationships I've built, with colleagues, clients and the wider UHY network. Those connections are what make our work meaningful. Watching people I've mentored go on to achieve great things, or seeing clients reach major milestones knowing we've supported them along the way, is incredibly rewarding.

If there's a legacy I'd like to leave, it's one of consistency and care; being someone who always delivered to a high standard and supported others to do the same. UHY's longevity is built on people who care deeply about doing the right thing, and I hope to be remembered as one of them.

# Colin Wright

For Colin Wright, leadership is not about authority, it is about stewardship; a responsibility to develop people, strengthen culture and prepare the firm for the future. His years at UHY have been built on that principle, shaped by an innate belief that success and prosperity are not measured solely by financial performance, but by the legacy we leave behind for the next generation.

Across his roles as Audit Partner and Chairman of the UK Group, Colin has helped steer UHY through periods of growth, global crisis and regulatory change, while upholding the values that define the firm. He talks about strategy and culture as inseparable forces, about building infrastructure that enables prosperity, and about investing in people so they can lead with confidence.

As we celebrate 100 years, Colin offers a perspective rooted in experience and optimism. He reflects not just on where the firm has come from, but on what it must become. As UHY enters its second century, the generational mindset feels more relevant than ever; focused not just on performance, but on building capability, culture and opportunity that will sustain the firm long beyond the tenure of today's leaders.



**Colin Wright**  
Partner and Chairman of the UHY Group, London

## 1. You have been with the firm for many years and serve as both Partner and the Chairman of the UK Group. How do you see these roles contributing to the long-term prosperity of the firm?

It is a great privilege to serve both roles, and they complement one another in meaningful ways.

As a partner, I'm close to the day-to-day realities: client delivery, team development, operational challenges. It keeps me grounded in what matters now, and in the importance of leading by example, setting the tone and developing people who can step into leadership roles in the future.

As Chairman of the UK Group, I can focus on the bigger picture: governance, strategic direction and collaboration across the national network. That includes bringing firms together, sharing strengths and developing initiatives that enhance quality, capability and opportunity.

UHY has always had a long-term mindset. We co-founded the international network almost 40 years ago with our US office because we believed scale, shared knowledge and cross-border collaboration would be vital to future prosperity. That belief still guides us today.

Holding both roles gives me the ability to balance immediate priorities with long-term vision; ensuring we innovate and build a firm that is sustainable, adaptable and ready for the next generation.

The nature of professional services has changed significantly. Clients increasingly operate internationally and they expect joined-up capability, consistent quality and a coordinated advisory approach wherever they do business. Being part of the international network gives us the platform to meet those expectations and holding both firm-level and network-wide responsibilities enables us to align strategy, invest in shared capability and anticipate areas of opportunity or risk. It allows us to think big picture while staying connected to the realities of day-to-day delivery.



## 2. Your background spans audit, financial reporting and advisory across multiple sectors. How have those experiences shaped your perspective on what a modern-day accountancy firm should be?

Working across different sectors gives you a broad appreciation of the challenges organisations face: operational, regulatory and commercial. You start to see patterns, like where businesses struggle, where they thrive and how the environment around them shapes behaviour.

It also gives you perspective on economic cycles and external pressures, because whatever affects our clients affects us also. A modern firm needs to be agile, adopting quickly to economic shifts and embrace technological advances. Technical excellence is fundamental, but it must be matched with advisory capability; helping clients interpret change, navigate complexity and plan with confidence.

No two clients are the same, so firms must combine rigour with flexibility. That mindset has shaped how we think about service, capability and talent, and how we build teams who can bring insight, judgement and creativity to what we do.

## 3. As Chairman of the UK Group, you have worked with the UK member firms through major external shifts, from the pandemic to regulatory change and technological disruption. What moments stand out, and how did they both test and strengthen the firm?

The past few years have been defined by uncertainty: global conflict, rapid technological advancement and economic volatility. These forces created market pressures for both our clients and our profession.

The pandemic was a defining moment. Overnight, we had to move to remote audits and digital collaboration. Our IT infrastructure held up remarkably well, and our leadership teams met frequently to share knowledge and support clients through unprecedented circumstances.

Regulatory change has been just as significant, particularly in audit quality. The levels of scrutiny, expectation and accountability have increased dramatically. We made audit quality a core strategic priority to ensure we met the highest standards.

Technology continues to reshape the profession. We have had to invest heavily in tools, training and processes to equip our teams, improve efficiency and maintain quality.

Each challenge tested resilience but also strengthened capability. We grew during a period when the profession saw growth slow dramatically, which reflects the adaptability and quality of our people.

One of the most important lessons from that period was the importance and dedication of people. The rapid shift to remote working placed enormous pressure on teams, both professionally and personally, and we had to respond thoughtfully, with flexibility, communication and support. Clients, too, needed more than technical compliance; they needed clarity, reassurance and partnership at a time when nothing felt certain. Those experiences strengthened relationships within the firm and with the businesses we support, and they have had a lasting influence on how we think about leadership, wellbeing and resilience.

## 4. You have often spoken about strategy and culture needing to work hand in hand. How has that been embedded that into UHY's leadership approach, and why does it matter?

Strategy and culture are inseparable. You can have the best strategy in the world, but if it isn't grounded in values and lived behaviours, it won't work.

At UHY, our strategy is built on culture. We have defined our values clearly, and we have embedded them into leadership, development and decision-making. When values drive behaviour, they create trust – internally and externally.

A core responsibility of leadership is to create an environment where people can succeed and prosper: where their strengths are recognised, developed and aligned with opportunities. That is how you build sustainable growth, not just revenue growth, but our team's capability growth.

We have made significant investments in people development, leadership training and new services lines, particularly in areas like sustainability assurance, technology and advisory.

These aren't short-term initiatives. They are foundations for the next generation, equipping people to lead in a profession that is changing rapidly.

**5. In a firm celebrating its 100-year anniversary, continuity matters, but so does evolution. What do you believe UHY has done particularly well in adapting to the future while preserving its core identity?**

We have stayed true to the principles that define us: strong client relationships, personal service and a commitment to quality. That sense of continuity matters. Clients trust us because we know them, understand their history and support their ambitions.

But UHY has also evolved significantly. We have embraced digital transformation, broadened advisory capability, developed new service lines and strengthened collaboration across the UK and internationally.

We have recently launched a new five-year strategy, which sets a clear direction for continued growth, innovation and investment, while keeping people, culture and quality at its core.

What makes me proud is that we have modernised without losing the humanity that defines us.

Continuity matters not only to clients, but to our people. In a profession experiencing constant disruption, having a clear sense of identity provides stability and trust. At the same time, evolution is essential for attracting and retaining talent. Younger professionals want purpose, growth and modern capability, and our investment in technology, advisory services and cross-border collaboration allows us to offer meaningful career paths. Preserving our core identity while deliberately modernising how we work has been key to sustaining both culture and competitiveness.

**6. How do you balance audit compliance with commercial realities, and how do you work with the Technical Partner to deliver that?**

Audit quality is non-negotiable. The regulatory environment has changed dramatically, and firms must meet high expectations around governance, documentation, risk assessment and professional scepticism.

My audit compliance role is to ensure that quality and compliance are embedded in how we operate, not treated as regulatory burdens but as the foundation of trust.

I work closely with our Technical Partner to achieve that. Together, we oversee audit methodology, regulatory readiness, risk management and quality monitoring. It is a collaborative approach, combining technical depth with operational responsibility to ensure consistency across teams.

But audit quality isn't just about process; it is about people and the firm's culture. We need teams who exercise judgement, communicate clearly and understand the impact of their decisions.

The balance we aim for is technical rigour, delivered with integrity, clarity and commercial awareness. Clients deserve assurance they can rely on, and regulators expect excellence, so a high-quality audit isn't just a requirement, it is a responsibility.



Ultimately, leadership is stewardship. If we deliver on our purpose, growth will follow. Our job is to leave the firm better than we found it, so the next generation can take it further.

**7. What have been some of your most memorable client engagements, and what have they taught you about value beyond compliance?**

The most rewarding engagements are those where we have helped clients grow and prosper, sometimes from start-ups into major businesses. Many of our clients have been with us for decades, and seeing their journey unfold is incredibly fulfilling.

In some cases, growth leads to sale or exit, and while that can end a client relationship, it is a privilege to know we played a part in their success.

Value beyond compliance often emerges during moments of transition, uncertainty or opportunity. It is about being a trusted adviser, not just a service provider; helping clients navigate risk, make informed decisions and build prosperity for their business, their teams and their families.

**8. Talent, development and diversity are front of mind at UHY. How are you seeing the next generation of professionals emerge, and how is the firm preparing them for long-term success?**

The next generation has a different mindset, and I mean that positively. They are tech-savvy, purpose-driven and want careers that reflect their values. As a father of two young adults, I see that reality up close.

Our responsibility is to create an environment where people can build meaningful careers, with opportunities to grow, specialise and lead.

We focus heavily on talent retention, development and diversity. We want people to progress in roles they are passionate about, not just roles that follow a traditional route.

I'm incredibly grateful to our teams for their talent, drive and contribution to what UHY is today. Their ambition and creativity are what will shape the firm's future.

**9. Having witnessed so much change throughout your career, what continues to inspire you about the profession, and what personal principles have guided you through each stage?**

This will always be a people profession. Our teams are our greatest asset, and firms that invest in them will see that reflected in the quality of service clients receive.

I have always been inspired by seeing people grow, from trainees to leaders, whether at UHY or beyond. It is rewarding to stay connected with alumni and see their careers flourish, knowing our firm played a part in their development.

The profession keeps evolving, which keeps it challenging and meaningful. For me, principles like integrity, curiosity and commitment to people have been constant. They have guided every stage of my career.

**10. UHY operates with our purpose 'helping you prosper' at the heart of everything we do. As we mark this 100-year milestone, what is your personal vision for the firm's next chapter? Both for the business and for the people who make it what it is.**

We have achieved significant growth in recent years, reaching our five-year revenue goals a year ahead of plan, but what makes me proud is not just the outcome, it is how we achieved it.

We have embedded values and behaviours that have strengthened our culture, and we have aligned all UHY UK member firms around a shared purpose.

As we embark on our next five-year strategy, with nine key pillars of growth, I'm confident the firm will continue to evolve – new services, new sectors, new technology – while staying true to what defines us.

We are also operating in an environment where sustainability, diversity and responsible growth are increasingly central to business. Our next chapter will need to reflect that, not only in the advisory services we provide, but in how we structure teams, create opportunity and measure success. Global collaboration will continue to play an important role, enabling us to share knowledge, maintain quality and build capability in areas that are becoming strategically important to clients. As we evolve, the challenge will be to balance innovation with the values that have sustained us for a century.

My vision is for UHY to combine personalised service with cutting-edge capability; for our people to feel empowered to grow, lead and make an impact; and for us to continue building a network that enables prosperity across firms, clients and communities.

Ultimately, leadership is stewardship. If we deliver on our purpose, growth will follow. Our job is to leave the firm better than we found it, so the next generation can take it further.



## We asked our teams what helping you prosper means to them

"Prosperity in my younger years represented money and ensuring I was able to provide for my family. Prosperity now represents a quality of life, health not just wealth, living for and enjoying the now and good moments. Being happy with what you have not what you don't!"



"It means achieving a healthy work-life balance while growing professionally in a safe, supportive and non-toxic environment. It's about being empowered to reach my career goals, continuously develop my skills and contribute meaningfully to the firm's success."

"To me, **helping you prosper** means having the freedom to think creatively, the trust to take ownership of important projects and the opportunity to have a meaningful impact across the firm."

"Being beneficial for everyone in every way."

"Having a good work/life balance for good health. Working from home has made a difference for me in this area."

"To me, **helping you prosper** means being part of an organisation that invests in and cares for its people, enabling me to do work I enjoy alongside colleagues whose values I share - while maintaining a healthy work-life balance."

"UHY provides the trust, autonomy and resources necessary for me to excel in my role while remaining present for my daughters. The culture here is exceptional, grounded in collaboration, respect and integrity."

"Helping, encouraging and enabling you to be the best you both in terms of personal and professional development."

"**Helping you prosper** to me means having a happy and healthy team who work together to **make progress** and develop the firm so we can help our clients prosper. I want my team to do what they love, and love what they do so that they are motivated to deliver above and beyond for each other and our clients."

## We asked our teams to describe UHY in three words

Good, supportive, successful.

A great firm.

Collaborative. Trusted. Forward-thinking.

Friendly, motivated, ambitious.

Helping. You. Prosper.

Supportive. Ambitious. Evolving.

Really great people.

Commitment. Inclusive. Prosperity.

Connected, progressive, ambitious



**A note from Charlotte Tappin,  
Partner and Head of People and Culture**

Celebrating 100 years of UHY is a proud milestone for all of us. Our history has been shaped by a clear purpose, **helping you prosper**, and that purpose has influenced not just what we do, but how we work together every day.

To be part of this legacy, alongside so many talented and committed colleagues, is an honour. What I value most is the continuity of purpose: our belief in people, relationships and shared success has remained constant through every era of our firm.

As we look ahead, we continue to build on foundations that have stood the test of time, united by values that will guide the next generation, just as they have guided the last.

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