YOU'RE HIRED!

THE ACA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE **01** - SPRING 2020

Women In Finance

Diane Craig, Corporate Finance Partner and UK Head of Equity Capital Markets at *RSM*, shines a light on gender diversity in the Finance sector.

SPOTLIGHT: Page 4

British Heart Foundation

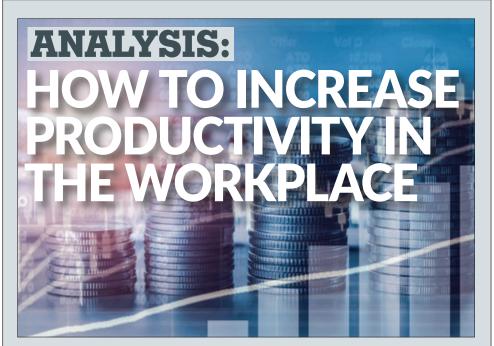
ACA were delighted to bring our Charity of the Year partners the British Heart Foundation (BHF) to a special lunch at the London Sporting Club.

SUPPORT: Page 5

The Interviewing Process

Our sister company Hunter Gibson share their expertise on the Interviewing process with tips for both Interviewee and Interviewer...

INSIGHT: Page 9



ow can we get the best out of the human workforce? What makes them happy and productive? Reviewing the latest research shows two key trends: the first relates to greater flexibility and fewer hours, and the second to wellness-focused working environments.



Read the in-depth analysis on page 6

FIRST ISSUE



OPINION:

What are Your Thoughts on the National Living Wage Increase?

Kelvin Trott CEO of Alexander Charles Associates appeared live on BBC News to share his views on this raise - *Page 5*



NETWORK:

Sporting Heroes David Smith and Eoin Morgan share their Lessons for Success - Page 8

ALEXANDER CHARLES ASSOCIATES







FINANCIAL RECRUITMENT

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We are giving away 2 tickets to the London Sporting Club's Damon Hill lunch on 26th March at Berkeley Square, London See Page 3





THE ALEXANDER CHARLES QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE **01** - SPRING 2020

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with GDPR and our membership of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO membership number ZA260691). Full details can be found on the Legal and GDPR page on our website

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WELCOME

ALEXANDER CHARLES
ASSOCIATES FINANCIAL
RECRUITMEN

Welcome to the first ever issue of You're Hired!



to provide a platform for our clients and candidates to share expertise in the realm of finance careers. We hope that You're Hired! will provide an opportunity for sharing opinions and thoughts on best practices, topical news items, emerging issues and similar. We'll also be sharing our own insights and advice on the recruitment process and career matters.

ur motivation for creating this magazine is

It's been an unsettled couple of years politically and economically for the UK and we start a new decade with the challenges and opportunities that Brexit brings. The UK has slipped six places in the World Economic Forum's latest gender equality rankings and in our Spotlight feature Diane Craig of RSM Corporate Finance shares her advice for women working in finance (page 4). The National Living Wage has also been in the headlines after the government announced a 6.2% rise from April. Kelvin was asked to provide his views on this rise, live on the BBC's evening news (page 5) and we'd be very interested to hear your opinions too.

Maintaining staff morale during periods of uncertainty is important, so our Analysis feature (centre pages) rounds-up the latest research relating to staff productivity; because a happier workforce is a more productive one. Networking is also critical to business, we were recently able to leverage our network at the London Sporting Club to both support our charity of the year the British Heart Foundation and to broker introductions for others (pages 5 and 8).

Finally, for those of you currently making new hires, or looking for a new role, you might like our Insight feature where we share a few tips on the interview process (page 9).



Do share your feedback on You're Hired! with us and let us know what you'd like to see more of in future issues. We'd also welcome letters on any topical issues that you'd like to share.



Kelvin Trott

CEO Alexander Charles Associates
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Dr Sabina Michnowicz Award winning journalist e: editor@alexander-charles.co.uk



Are you an F1 fan? Do you want meet Damon Hill?

We are giving away 2 tickets to the London Sporting Club's Damon Hill lunch on 26th March at Berkeley Square, London.

You will have the opportunity to meet Damon Hill and have your photograph taken with him, then enjoy drinks and a three-course lunch whilst listening to Hill's story. Hill was the first man in history (and remains one of only two) to win a F1 world title following in the footsteps of his father. He won 22 Grands Prix in total, including eight in 1996 that saw him beat his greatest rival of the mid-90s Michael Schumacher. He is currently a popular pundit on Sky Sports F1. To enter yourself into the hat, email your name to editor@alexander-charles.co.uk with 'Damon Hill' in the subject line. Winners will be contacted at the start of March.

YOU'RE HIRED!

SPOTLIGHT

WOMEN IN FINANCE



In our first Spotlight feature Diane Craig, Corporate Finance Partner and UK Head of Equity Capital Markets at RSM, shines a light on gender diversity in the Finance sector. Here, she shares her best advice drawn from her 20-year experience of working in the City...

y role involves me working in a traditionally maledominated environment. I work with companies who wish to list on one of the UK stock exchanges and my role involves me working with investment bankers, stockbrokers, other corporate financiers

Although in my 20 years in the City, gender diversity has improved, it is often still the case that I can be the only female sitting at the meeting table. I am a firm believer that there is no reason why women cannot fulfil such senior roles, and in fact, there are many well-documented advantages that women bring to leadership roles and particularly so when part of a gender balanced wider team.

Whilst I haven't experienced a gender glass ceiling to my development, there have been, and still are situations where I am set apart due to my gender. Given I can't change this, very early in my career, I learned that instead of dwelling on such inequalities, I needed to focus on the qualities that I do have and embrace these to be the leader I knew I could be.

I mentor many women at various stages of their careers at RSM and they often ask for advice and some of the lessons I share with

Embrace the skills which set you apart Studies show that women bring a different perspective to problem solving and decision making as they are more likely to consider the impact on people including

staff and clients. This can be a very effective quality when managing others and being a respected leader.

Build and use your network In my experience, women build networks with other professional women that are highly supportive and collegiate and can be incredibly valuable throughout your career.

Never compromise on your integrity Regardless how difficult it may be, you have to maintain your professional integrity, it is, in my opinion, the cornerstone of gaining respect from your peers.

Confidence, and self-belief are common traits that I see in successful female leaders and is an area where women can often underestimate themselves

,,,

Ask for what you are worth Having managed teams for several years, men are traditionally better at asking for promotions and pay rises. Other people aren't always focussed on your career or

successes so make sure you tell them about them and ask for suitable recognition.

Believe in your abilities and your performance. Confidence, and self-belief are common traits that I see in successful female leaders and is an area where women can often underestimate themselves.

Don't be afraid of having to say no It is important to have quality time away from work and women particularly can be guilty of seeing saying no as a failing. Very rarely is something so urgent that it needs immediate attention so if you need to be at home or are on leave, then do say no. Generally, clients are respectful of personal time provided it's communicated in advance.

Quite simply, use them, lots of them, both male and female. Try to learn and draw experiences from as many leaders as you can to build your skills, experiences and network. It is also vitally important to invest the time to mentor others using your own experiences.

Be pro-active in your career development Consider what skills you need to progress and go and find opportunities to develop these, don't wait for opportunities to be given to you. Very early in my career I understood the importance of building my contacts and I went out and did this which was fundamental to my progression.

Finally, stop looking for a glass ceiling Focus on your development and your goals.

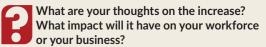
What are Your Thoughts on the National Living Wage Increase?



The government recently announced that the national living wage is to rise by 6.2% from April 2020

his rise represents more than four times the rate of inflation, bringing the hourly rate for those over 25 to £8.72. The announcement has elicited a range of opinions, Kelvin Trott CEO of Alexander Charles Associates appeared live on BBC News to share his views on this raise.

You can view a video of this on the Alexander Charles website news page.





Let us know by emailing editor@alexander-charles.co.uk and we will publish them in the next issue.

SUPPORT

PROUDLY SUPPORTING THE **BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION**

Alexander Charles Associates were delighted to bring our Charity of the Year partners the British Heart Foundation (BHF) to a special lunch at the London Sporting Club.

tar of the lunch was the amazing double Olympic decathlon champion Daley Thompson CBE. Thompson regaled attendees with a humorous and candid account of his glory days; the hard work and dedication required to prepare for, and compete in, two back to back Olympics.

This was followed by a presentation from our Charity Partners BHF about the work they do and its wider importance. Sporting Club chairman Ian Stafford then ran a fundraiser, leading the attendees present to raise an amazing £1,000 for the BHF!







ACA CEO Kelvin Trott with Daley Thompson CBE

Sporting Club Chairman Ian Stafford fundraising for the British Heart

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ANALYSIS: Article by Sabina Michnowicz INCREASING • 1 PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE



These are unsettled times for UK plc, the ongoing uncertainty of Brexit trade agreements has shaken confidence in markets and investment.

This is set against a rapidly changing employment landscape, This is set against a rapidly changing employment landscape, characterised by the challenges and opportunities of disruptive technologies such as AI, automation and self-regulating systems...

he 4th industrial revolution is changing how we produce goods and services, and what it means to work (see also our review of A World Without Work on page 10). So, how can we get the best out of the human workforce? What makes them happy and productive? Reviewing the latest research shows two key trends: the first relates to greater flexibility and fewer hours, and the second to wellness-focused working environments.

> There are a range of methods which employers can implement to boost productivity; from small, cost-effective measures such as plants through to cutting-edge buildings designed for employee wellness.

Fewer Hours Yield Productivity Gains and Cost Reductions

A growing body of evidence indicates reduced working hours lead to higher productivity. Microsoft Japan conducted a month-long experiment as part of their project "Work Life Choice Challenge 2019 Summer." To promote productivity and creativity, employees were paid for a five-day week but had Fridays off during August. The 2,300 office workers were asked to communicate using an online chat tool instead of meetings and emails. Essential meetings were capped at 5 participants and 30 minutes duration. This resulted in a 40% increase in sales per worker, despite the 20% reduction in hours. There was also a decrease of

At Microsoft Japan a 20% reduction in hours yielded 40% more sales

59% in paper use (printing and copying) and 23% in electricity consumption compared to the same period last year. Overtime hours were kept the same as usual. Feedback shows that 92% of employees view the 4-day scheme positively.

A similar 4-day week study was conducted at Perpetual Guardian, a NZ estate planning firm, over an eightweek period. Monitored by academics from the University of Auckland, results revealed a maintenance of productivity and an increase in wellbeing. The 240 staff reported on stress and work-life balance, before and after the study. Stress levels fell from 45% to 38%, whilst work-life balance increased from 54% to 78%. The trial was considered so successful that the 4-day week has now been adopted permanently, staff who prefer to work 5 days are permitted do so and with greater flexibility.

British businesses that have successfully switched to a four-day week include: Elektra Lighting, Think Productive, Portcullis Legals, Lara Intimates, Synergy Vision and the Intrepid Camera company.

Happy Workers are More Productive

It has long been suggested that happier workers are more productive. This assertion is most recently supported by research from Oxford University's Saïd Business School. Their study was conducted over a six-month period in British Telecom (BT) contact centres and workers were asked to rate their happiness each week using a simple emoji system. Results conclusively reveal that happier staff were 13% more productive, they worked faster by making more calls per hour and converted more calls to sales.

The Power of Plants

The positive power of nature on an individual's mood and physiological factors (e.g. heart rate, blood pressure) has long been known. Scientific research now also shows that workers who have a view of nature have better cognitive function.

A study conducted into 'attention restoration theory' (sustained attention is vital for successful cognitive functioning) asked 150 participants to take a 40 second micro-break and view either a roof-top meadow, or a plain concrete roof. The researchers

found that participants who viewed a meadow made fewer omission errors and showed more consistent responding to the task given.

Improvements in mood, wellbeing and cognitive function make a solid argument for plants or natural areas in office spaces. Some have also argued that plants clean the air of volatile organic compounds which are released by copying, printing, faxing etc. This theory has recently been debunked by a study from Drexel University, US, which showed that up to 1,000 plants per square metre of floor would be needed to clean the air more efficiently than a ventilation system.

Temperature and Cognition

Despite the gender 'battle for the thermostat' publicised in popular media; there haven't been many scientific studies looking at the effects of temperature on the cognition of men and women. A recent study involved 543 participants in Berlin, Germany who were given the same set of tasks (mathematical, verbal and cognitive reflection tests) each session with monetary incentivisation based on performance. The temperature was varied from 16.19 to 32.57°C between sessions. Results show that when temperatures were warmer, women did better (more questions attempted and more answered correctly) on mathematical and verbal tasks.

When temperatures were cooler, men did better on mathematical and verbal tasks, although this correlation was not as strong as the converse correlation was for women. Temperature had no impact on the cognitive reflection tests, for either gender. The authors recommended that (because the effect was greater for women) in gender-balanced workplaces, temperatures should be set significantly higher than current standards.

Offices of the future

The type of research detailed here is feeding in to how work spaces are being designed and built. The WELL building standard is an international rating system that provides guidelines for healthier indoor environments.

Workers who have a view of nature have better cognitive function

It focuses on 11 concepts: air, water, nourishment, light, movement, thermal comfort, sound, materials, innovation, mind, and community. The standard is gaining traction and since 2014 there have been 3,850 WELL projects in 58 countries. The American Society of Interior Designers had circadian (24hour daily cycle) lighting installed in their WELL Certified office and found that 25% of employees attributed better sleep quality to the changing light patterns. There have also been a range of projects incorporating nature, known as 'biophilic design' from garden roof terraces with beehives to indoor nature areas with seasonally changing soundscapes.

Tips to Take Away

There is a wealth of research indicating several factors which make the workforce more productive. Repeated studies show that reducing working hours can decrease overhead costs and make staff more productive with increased sales. These studies have only been conducted in the short-term (a month or two) meaning that the effect might not be sustained longer-term; however, several smaller UK companies have successfully implemented permanent 4-day weeks.

Certain factors also make work environments more conducive to wellness and productivity. Having a purpose-built new office is a huge investment, however; there are also cost-effective tweaks which can yield results. The presence of plants or 'natural environments in a workplace increases both wellbeing and a worker's ability for sustained concentration, which leads to

Offices with a gender-balanced staff can also benefit from increasing the thermostat, as women perform better in warmer temperatures.

Ultimately, the nature of work is evolving; so too should working environments.

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NETWORK

Champion Captain Eoin Morgan Shares Leadership Lessons

Alexander Charles Associates (ACA) CEO Kelvin Trott appreciates the networking benefits of membership of the London Sporting Club and recently brought some of ACA's valued clients to one of their sporting lunches...

aralympian David Smith we have great pleasure in sponsoring (jointly with Link Financial) his participation in the world pursuit cycling championships in 2020-2024 for the Great Britain team.

Overcoming Challenges and Achieving Sporting Success

The principal guest and speaker Eoin Morgan, Captained the World Cup winning England Cricket team. Also present was England rugby world cup winner lain Balshaw who spoke about the journey leading to the team's success. He was followed by an inspirational speech from London Paralympic rowing champion David Smith who received a standing ovation after describing how he defied cancer four times and went on to succeed on the world stage in rowing and cycling.

Eoin Morgan's Leadership Lessons

Eoin Morgan is a left-handed batsman who plays county cricket for Middlesex. He has also played for England's Test, One Day International and Twenty20 International teams. This year, under his captaincy, England





won the ICC Cricket World Cup for the first time. Eoin Morgan has also played for the Ireland cricket team and was the first player to score an ODI hundred for two nations.

Morgan described the four-year journey to becoming world champions and the vital role that good leadership played. He relived England's historic world cup final win over New Zealand, generously sharing insights and allowing attendees to re-live that dramatic super over through his eyes. Morgan highlighted the importance of giving a team clear instruction and being open about direction and

motivation. He also emphasised that leadership is a two-way street and it is vital to listen to feedback and take on board the comments and advice from the whole team. He spoke humbly of his success and was very forthcoming about what he feels makes a great leader. Speaking candidly for over an hour, he received a standing ovation at the end.



Ruth Strauss Foundation

The occasion also served to raise awareness of, and funds for, the Ruth Strauss Foundation which is named in memory of the wife of Sir Andrew Strauss, former England captain. Ruth Strauss passed away from an inoperable form of lung cancer that attacks non-smokers. Her foundation seeks to provide support to patients and their families going through a similar experience and to fund research into rare lung cancers.

www.ruthstraussfoundation.com

66 Morgan highlighted the importance of giving a team clear instruction and being open about direction and motivation



ADVICE ON THE INTERVIEWING PROCESS WITH HUNTER GIBSON



HUNTER GIBSON

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Our sister company Hunter Gibson recruits across a range of sectors including: Healthcare and Life Sciences; Industrial; Business and Professional Services; Technology and Media; Consumer, Entertainment, Sport and Fashion; and Not for Profit. Here they share their expertise on the Interviewing process with tips for both Interviewee and Interviewer...

Tip

Interviewee

Research

Ensure you fully research the company, look at their website, LinkedIn profile, any news articles about them and - especially if it's a finance role - what their profit and turnover is like. Also be up to date on current affairs, your interview starts the moment you enter the building so the level of your small talk can

have an influence on the overall impression you make.

Preparation

Prepare by researching typical interview questions and your answers for them (e.g. where do you see yourself in 5 years' time? Strengths? Weaknesses? What would you do within the first three months in the role? Etc.) If you're at a competency-based interview, you may be asked to "describe a time when..." the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) technique is good for those.

Utilise Your Recruiter

Your recruiter can offer insights into the company and what the interviewers are looking for, which is something you can't research on the internet. Ensure your recruiter can contact you easily if you're called back for a 2nd interview or to receive an offer. Keep your recruiter informed of how you got on at interview and whether you remain interested in the role.

First **Impressions** Your appraisal may well start the moment you arrive at the interview location. Be polite to any security and admin staff you meet on the way. Take your cue regarding formality from the person leading the interview: if they're fairly relaxed then don't be too stiff, but if their manner is quite formal

then don't be too casual.

Two-way process

Remember that you're interviewing your potential future employer as much as they're interviewing you. You may have questions about the role or organisation which arise during the interview itself, but it's also good to have a question or two prepared in advance.

Interviewer

You'll have a candidate shortlist and CVs from your recruiter and whilst you'll likely have a list of prepared questions (see point below), candidates will have different experiences and achievements. Have a look through the CVs and highlight specific areas you'd like to ask individual candidates more about.

Original or individual questions are a great way to assess how well a candidate thinks on their feet. Typical interview questions are a useful way to see how well candidates prepare in advance. Interviews should have a mixture of both question types. Choose which typical questions you'd like to ask all the candidates, so you can more easily appraise candidates against each other.

Our recruiters meet all candidates personally ahead of shortlisting. This offers a valuable insight into how they come across in person and not just on paper. Your recruiter should offer insights into why candidates have been shortlisted and can recommend which exceptional qualities make a candidate a great fit for your organisation.

Whilst candidates are expected to put their best foot forward during an interview, take the opportunity to also assess them outside the interview room. What first impressions did they create with other staff on their way to the interview? These can offer useful insights into how well a candidate may fit your team

An interview is also an opportunity for candidates to appraise your organisation and the role on offer. Give them the chance to ask questions (this can be at the end) so they can judge whether they're still interested in the role. It's also an opportunity for them to talk about an aspect of their application that might not have been covered.

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WIN THESE See the news page on the Alexander Charles BOOKS! website for details:: www.alexander-charles.c website for details:: www.alexander-charles.co.uk

The Unfair Advantage Ash Ali and Hasan Kubba **Profile Books 23rd January** RRP £14.99 256pp

Start-up entrepreneurs Ash Ali (of Just Eat) and Hasan Kubba describe their concept of the Unfair Advantage.

This is an individual set of traits which everyone possesses that can be used to their advantage. The authors make the argument that hard work alone will not lead to success; instead, they describe how to leverage individual traits to give entrepreneurs a competitive edge. Written in three parts, the first introduces the concept, the second presents the authors' "MILES" framework to help identify an individual's advantages and the third is a quick start guide for start-ups. Written in an engaging style, the advice is an original take on a common-sense approach.

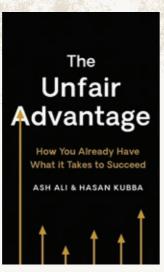
The MILES framework helps to guide the reader to reflect on their own circumstances and develop their advantages. The

start-up guide has insightful, pragmatic advice on a variety of entrepreneurial and career development aspects, including tips for finding a mentor and the importance of adding value. Whilst geared towards startup entrepreneurs, the advice throughout is transferable to a variety of career settings.

A World Without Work: Technology, Automation and How We Should Respond **Daniel Susskind** Allen Lane 14th January RRP £20 326pp

Technological revolutions have invariably sparked panic that workers will be replaced by machines. Those fears have historically proved unfounded, so will the 4th Industrial Revolution be any different? Yes. writes Economist and former government policy adviser Daniel Susskind in his new book A World Without Work.

Drawing on a decade of research experience, Susskind



argues that automation and Al advances threaten a wide range of careers, including highly skilled white-collar workers. Susskind's writing is accessible to a general audience and well researched (complemented by notes and references). Written in three parts, the first provides context, the second explains the nature of the threat and the third suggests responses to the predicted challenges. Susskind envisions a world where technological advances have the

potential to address the age-old problem of wealth distribution. He offers hopeful and practical advice for achieving universal prosperity and curbing the geopolitical influence of Big Tech. Automation has already changed many aspects of our lives, so will Susskind's predictions come to pass? That remains to be seen, but in a rapidly changing employment landscape challenges can also present opportunities and forewarned is forearmed.

Take a few minutes out from your busy work schedule to enjoy this puzzles (Answers can be found at the bottom of page 11)

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L	Ε	R	Ν	Υ	R	Α	L	Α	S

WORD SEARCH

Locate the listed words in the grid, running in one of eight possible directions horizontally, vertically, or diagonally...

BONUS	CLIENT
CV	HIRE
INTERVIEW	OFFICE
ROLE	SEARCH
CANDIDATE	CONSULTANT
EMPLOYEE	HR
MARKET	RECRUITMENT
SALARY	SPECIFICATION

WISDOM

as hard as vou like but, it will

QUICK QUIZ

Question 1:

How many Olympic Gold Medals has Daley Thompson won and what event did he win them in?

Question 2:

Five of England's Cricket World Cup winners including Eoin Morgan, featured in the Queen's New Year Honours list in 2019. Can you name the other four?

IN THE NEXT YOU'RE EDITION OF HIRED!

SUPPORT: The Cycle of Success: Supporting British Cycling

INSIGHT: Assessing the Current Labour Market

ANALYSIS: What Makes a Great Manager?

Your Thoughts on the National Living Wage Rise **OPINION:**

REVIEWS: The Latest Business Book Releases

YOU'RE HIRED! Issue 2 - 'The Summer Edition' will be available in May 2020



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FINANSCOPE

ur prediction for this quarter is one of very slow growth. Rumours abound that if there isn't an uptick in the UK economy, the Bank of England may cut its rate from 0.75% to 0.5% at the end of January. Others are speculating that a recession looms large on the horizon for 2020. Despite profit warnings from several large firms, at ACA we don't feel the UK is in recession territory yet.

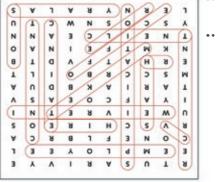
SHOUT OUT!

very much hope that you enjoyed the first edition of You're Hired Ve would love to hear what you thought of our premier issue, so, lease do share your feedback with us.

Let us know what you'd like to see more of in future issues. We'd also welcome letters on any topical issues that you'd like to share as we will be launching our feedback section in the next issue. See you next time!

Email Sabina - editor@alexander-charles.co.uk





MORD SEARCH

Root were made MBEs. Coach Trevor Bayliss becomes an OBE. Question 2: - Answer - Ben Stokes was appointed an OBE, and team-mates los Buttler and loe

considered by many to be one of the greatest decathletes of all time. Commonwealth titles, and wins in the World and European Championships, Thompson is Angeles Olympic Games in 1984. With four world records, two Olympic gold medals, three Moscow Olympics in 1980 where he clinched the gold aged just 21, the second at the Los Question 1: Answer - Daley Thompson won 2 Olympic Gold Medals. The first at the

GNICK GNIZ

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We all are.

There are toxic particles in the air we breathe. They can get in our blood, get stuck in our organs and increase our risk of heart attacks and stroke.

Demand a change to the law. Search BHF toxic air.