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# Creative leadership: Innovating when every penny counts

Wednesday 1st October 2025

## Speaker biography

Sarah Maskell CMgr CCMI, Chair, CMI North East, Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Board



HR and leadership professional, specialising in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Built on a solid foundation of nearly 20 years commissioned military service, Sarah's varied career focuses on people and culture including roles leading on personnel practice, employment policy, international gender perspectives and a number of high profile activities towards proactive inclusion in other militaries. As a HR and latterly EDI Director Sarah moved into a global role in HSBC, then the UK Home Office as a Senior Civil Servant working on EDI Reform through the lens of Windrush and most recently at a large NHS Foundation Trust

where she was exposed to the complex issues around health inequalities. Specialist skills have been developed across areas including employee pipeline and proposition including responsible recruitment, workforce planning, learning & development, talent management, corporate sustainability, risk and governance, wellbeing, retention and reward.

Working as a partner and active ally in developing employee networks from a policy perspective Sarah identified there was a gap in the provision to share opportunities, inspiration and experiences and in 2015 established a Women's Inspirational Network Group to support RAF serving personnel and veterans which operates entirely virtually and currently has an active membership of over 3500 members. Since retiring from the military Sarah has channelled her voice into the veteran space and recently participated in the Military Afterlives project video campaign to create change around the perceptions and societal understanding of veterans. Sarah uses her position and connections to support the better distribution of opportunities and plays an active role in the Northern Power Women movement to support for women from, working in or living in the North; volunteers as a School governor and Trustee, and regularly acts as a judge for cross-sector recognition and award schemes.

Keen to work across a number of organisations to connect, celebrate and positively disrupt towards greater equity and inclusion Sarah founded an independent people consultancy which to date has included the delivery of learning content to a large government department, leading the facilitation of a global leadership evaluation and also contributing to horizon scanning research on ESG issues. An active CMI Companion and advocate for inclusive management and

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leadership provision for all, Sarah will be taking on a role as Board Chair, North East, Yorkshire and Humberside Region in Autumn 23.

### Richard Leavis, Corporate Fundraiser, St Georges Crypt



In 2024 I joined the Crypt following 9 years as a mortgage broker. I felt it was time for a change, and I could not have made a better one. Seeing the work that goes on here day by day is truly inspiring and the changes being made to peoples lives are monumental. My role is to ensure the team have the resources to do the good work they do. The innovation and new ideas that are being trialled daily at the St George's Crypt are wonderful initiative that I cannot wait to share with you all.