

FBUK Annual Conference Programme 2026



4-5 June | The Kia Oval



DAY 1: Thursday 4th June

08.30 - 09.30 Arrivals, Registration and Refreshments

09:30 – 09.45 Welcome

With Neil Davy, CEO, Family Business UK

09.45 - 10.30 Opening Keynote: Leadership Borne of Legacy

With William Kendall. Including Sarah Naghshineh, RCP Parking

This opening keynote will spotlight the unique attributes that set family businesses apart. It will set the tone of the Conference; a call-to-action to family businesses to showcase their leadership and celebrate their contribution to our economy and communities across the UK.

10.30 - 11.00 Refreshments and Networking

11.00 - 12.30 Workshop Session 1

Run by leaders of family businesses and expert facilitators, these sessions will offer insights from lived experience of owning and running a family business and practical advice from subject matter experts.

**Starred sessions are repeated within the programme.*

***Navigating Disruption**

Facilitated by Neil Davy and Russ Haworth. With Neil Urquhart, Gordon and MacPhail.

Reflecting on the economic and geopolitical disruption of the past few years, this session will assess readiness for the future, with a specific focus on risk mitigation, scenario planning and horizon scanning.

Capitalising on the Family Name

Facilitated by Juliette Johnson. With Lizzy Rudd, Berry Bros & Rudd and Nigel Macdonald, James Locke & Co.

Being stewards of a family brand comes with responsibility, but also the need to carefully manage reputations. This workshop is designed to help family business leaders understand how to protect their brand, strengthen their reputation, and leverage both to create competitive advantage.

***Inside the Family Office**

Facilitated by Catherine Grum. With Sarah Rutt, Beeches Group and Helen Ellis-Smith, Wates Group.

As family businesses grow, their finances, governance, and legacy can become more complicated and harder to manage. Family offices can provide a valuable vehicle to preserve family legacy and secure the long-term viability of the business. This workshop will explore how differing models of governance can achieve that.

Community Cohesion and Prosperity

Facilitated by Natwest. With Helen Ford, Vestey Group and Grant Gordon, William Grant & Sons.

Family businesses play a key role in building community cohesion and economic prosperity. This session will explore how family businesses can further strengthen their role in the community and reinforce their social license to operate.

***AI: The Risks and Opportunities**

Facilitated by Rebecca Robins. With John Parkinson and Sydney Parkinson, HRGO.

AI is reshaping business. Family firms risk being left behind if they don't adapt and adopt it. This workshop will help leaders understand AI, how to leverage it to improve efficiency, innovation and competitiveness whilst not losing sight of its associated risks.

12.30 - 13.30 Lunch and Networking

13.30 - 15.00 Workshop Session 2

The Foundations of Philanthropy

Facilitated by Peter Leach. With Alex Day, Reed/The Big Give, Sonia Chhatwal, The Rigby Foundation and Maya Prabhu, JP Morgan.

Most family businesses want to give back to society, but some don't know where to start. Foundations can provide a structured approach to philanthropy in a way that aligns with their values, has genuine impact, and strengthens their legacy and community relationships. This workshop will explore how.

***Accessing Finance Whilst Retaining Control**

Facilitated by KPMG. With Marcus Studdard, London Stock Exchange Group.

Family businesses often need new sources of funding to grow but want to retain ownership and control. This workshop will focus on options to access investment capital whilst doing that.

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Communicating with Influence

Facilitated by Issie Peate, Haymarket Media Group. With William Lees-Jones, JW Lees and Jo Milligan, EMR.

Navigating today's media landscape, both earned and unearned, can feel like a minefield. This session will focus on tools and techniques to leverage social and mainstream media to successfully deliver your message and create influence.

***Mitigating Cyberthreats**

Facilitated by Lockton.

Cybercrime is an escalating threat, putting family businesses at increasing risk. Developing strategies to prevent attacks and establishing effective response mechanisms are essential. This workshop will focus on how to safeguard systems, protect data, and preserve reputations by anticipating threats and responding decisively when incidents occur.

15.00 - 15.30 Refreshments and Networking

15.30 - 16.15 Legacy vs. Leadership: Striking the Right Balance

Facilitated by Ken McCracken. With Sarah Dran, Noble Foods, John Butters, Hoburne and Sarah Dunning, Westmorland.

Respecting the past whilst leading for the future can present inevitable tensions and challenges. Yet with the right balance struck, organisational purpose and family legacy can act as a golden thread to help leaders successfully navigate the future.

As well as aligning the wider family and business around a shared vision, the right balance can produce considerable opportunities and advantages for family firms. This panel will showcase some of the businesses that have done that most successfully.

16.15 - 17.00 The Future of Family Business Leadership

Facilitated by Sophie Ashburton.

As trading environments change – often suddenly and unpredictably – the skills and capabilities needed to successfully lead a family business need to evolve. This panel will discuss the future of leadership through the eyes of those appointed to take on that responsibility.

17.00 Closing Remarks

19.00 - 19.30 Drinks Reception and Networking

19.30 - 22.00 FBUK 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner

DAY 2: Friday 5th June

08.30 - 09.30 Arrivals and refreshments

09.30 - 10.00 A Year in Politics - FBUK Advocacy Update

With Matthew Jaffa, Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Family Business UK.

An update on FBUK's advocacy activities over the past year, most recent discussions with Government, and a look at policy priorities for the year ahead, and the remainder of this Parliament.

10.00 - 11.00 Workshop Session 3

Diversity Fuelling Growth

Facilitated by Cara Macklin. With Dr Ronnie Savage, Jomas Associates, Emma Ayres, Bennie Group, and Julie White, D-Drill.

This session will explore how diversity in leadership can be harnessed to create new opportunities for growth. Through shared insights and case studies, it will highlight how inclusive leadership strengthens decision-making, fosters innovation, and supports long-term success.

Modern Governance for Multi-Generational Families

Facilitated by Alex Sharpe. With Alexander Bradford, Bradford & Sons, and Claire East, NG Bailey.

Governance models must be continually assessed and adapted to reflect the evolving dynamics of the family and business, ensuring they remain fit for purpose in a changing operating environment. This workshop will explore effective governance models that support future growth while preserving the family ethos and values.

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11.00 - 11.30 Refreshments and networking

11.30 - 12.15 Family Business Leader Keynote

With Holly Thallon-Steenson, Viridian Nutrition.

Family businesses are built on strong values, long-term thinking and deep personal commitment. But leadership within them brings its own unique opportunities and challenges. In this closing keynote, Holly will share her journey as a family business leader, offering honest reflections on navigating growth, leadership and stewardship.

12.15 - 12.30 Closing Remarks

12.30 - 13.00 Lunch and Networking

13.00 - Departures