

# SPEAKER & WORKSHOP DETAILS



# SUMMER CONFERENCE

11 JUNE 2026

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Association of Business  
Leaders in Education

# Morning Keynote and Workshops

## Keynote -From Desk to Desk... Headteachers might be responsible for running the school but Business Managers make sure they can- Ben Waldram

Ben Waldram has been in education for 25 years with over half of them in leadership. He has been a headteacher in a village CofE Primary School and is currently the executive headteacher of a large city Primary School in Nottingham. He has been a serving Ofsted inspector for the last 4 years and has been supporting another primary school within the Nottingham Schools Trust.



## Workshop Overview - What SBMs need to know before Ofsted coming knocking – Ben Waldram

As a School Business Manager, your in-tray is always full and when Ofsted call, it gets fuller very quickly! This workshop will detail what happens from the first call to the moment they leave and what, in your role, are the key elements you need to prepare for. Due to incredibly good feedback this is a repeat of last Autumn's keynote which was poorly attended due to heavy snowfall.

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## Workshop - Cyber Crime Escape Room – John Hammond

John has been with the East Midlands Special Operations Unit for the past 3 years following Graduating from the University of Northampton with BA Professional Policing. Since joining John has worked in collaboration with other law enforcement partners and helped assist with a number of national events across the law enforcement network. While working as Cyber Protect Officer John has also managed to study for and complete his CompTIA Sec+ qualification and is currently studying for CompTIA CYSA+ which he hopes to complete within the next year.



## Workshop Overview

The Cyber Escape Room is a tabletop exercise that delivers basic cyber protect advice in a fun team building exercise. The learning gained in this 1hr workshop will give participants basic knowledge that they can use in their professional and personal lives to protect themselves from cybercriminals

# Workshop - Retirement Planning – Secure Your Future With Confidence

## – Will Stokes

Following 7 successful years as an RAF Officer, Will seamlessly transitioned into the Financial world and was delighted to establish his own financial advice business, New Age Financial Services. Will helps people achieve financial security by providing expertise across all areas of financial planning, including retirement, investments, and estate planning. He takes pride in providing bespoke investment solutions to meet his clients' needs, following a rigorous assessment of their individual financial circumstances. Will is also incredibly passionate about making financial advice more accessible to everyone, believing that expert guidance should be within reach for all, not just a privileged few.



## Workshop Overview

Whether retirement feels decades away or just around the corner, it's never too early—or too late—to start planning with purpose. This practical, jargon-free workshop is designed for all ages who want to build financial security and confidence for the years ahead.

In this session, we'll break down the key elements of retirement planning in clear, relatable terms. From understanding how pensions work (both workplace and private) to exploring other potential income sources in retirement, we'll look at the big picture—and the small steps—that make a real difference over time.

We'll cover essential topics such as:

- How much you might need in retirement
- What your pension options are—and how to make the most of them
- Other sources of retirement income, including investments and property
- The impact of inflation, tax, and rising life expectancy
- Common myths and mistakes to avoid

You'll leave with your Top 5 Retirement Planning Essentials—practical actions you can take immediately, whatever stage you're at. This is not about financial jargon or sales pitches—it's about empowering you with the knowledge and tools to shape your future with confidence.



# Afternoon Keynote and Workshops

## **ABLE School Business Leader Recognition Awards – Emma Cripwell, Chair -ABLE**

Emma Cripwell is Chair of ABLE and brings over 20 years' experience across education, local government, and business operations. Much of her career has focused on working with services that support schools, giving her a strong understanding of the operational, financial, and strategic challenges School Business Leaders navigate every day.



Alongside her role with ABLE, Emma works with organisations to bring clarity to their operations, helping teams deliver more effectively and sustainably. She is known for her practical approach, calm leadership, and ability to turn complex challenges into clear, manageable solutions.

### **Keynote overview**

After lunch, we'll be coming together for something a little different before you head into your afternoon workshop.

Now in its second year, the ABLE SBL Recognition Awards celebrate the School Business Leaders across our network who go above and beyond — the people who keep schools running, support their teams, and make a difference every single day, often without the recognition they deserve.

Nominees are put forward by colleagues who've seen their work first-hand, and the awards will be announced live on the day. It's a moment worth being in the room for.

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## **Workshop - Preparedness and Risk Management – Sally Boaden, Raleigh MA**

Sally works tirelessly as a transparent and ethical leader. She has over two decades of school business leadership experience in all aspects of business support services, including governance, procurement, health & safety, human resources, finance and compliance from primary and secondary settings and academy trusts.

She is also an accredited school resource management adviser (SRMA), a member of ISBL and NNOSS with a master's in educational leadership and management and a Level 6 School Business Management qualification.



## Workshop Overview

This session is about more than fixing things when they break. It's about being ready – for anything. From burst pipes and power cuts to cyberattacks and safeguarding failures, schools face all kinds of risks. But resilience isn't just about having a plan on a shelf. It's about leadership, communication and making decisions that stand up when things go sideways. In this session, we'll look at how SBLs can take the lead on building a culture of preparedness that runs through the whole school – not just in operations, but in thinking.

### WE WILL EXPLORE

- What resilience actually looks like in a school setting
- How to join the dots between physical and digital risks
- Why good planning is more than a checklist
- Getting SLT, staff and governors on the same page
- What to do when things don't go to plan – and how to lead through it

### TAKE HOME POINTS

A practical framework for building resilience, clear strategies for risk and crisis planning, and leadership tips for staying calm under pressure.

### THIS SESSION IS FOR SCHOOL BUSINESS LEADERS WHO

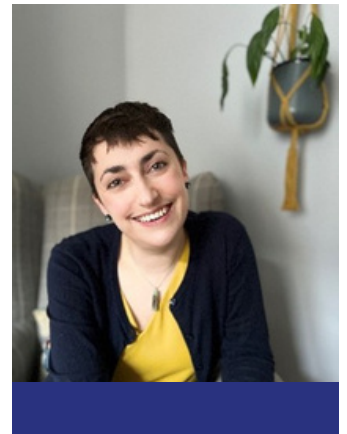
Want to lead from the front when it comes to risk, resilience and long-term thinking – and make sure their school is ready for whatever comes next.



## Workshop - Just say no! Small Word, Big Impact for School Business Leaders – Gemma Drinkall

Gemma is an educational wellbeing coach, trainer and supervisor. Her ambition: transform educators' lives to benefit themselves, their school community and team. With 9 years' experience in education including middle leadership, Gemma understands the challenges that education professionals face just to survive.

After experiencing panic attacks, low mood and anxiety, Gemma burnt out, leaving her teaching career behind. She openly speaks about her experiences, making it her mission to help other education professionals avoid the same fate and create clear boundaries so that they can switch off from school and switch on in their lives.



## Workshop Overview

According to research 64% of SBLs considered their workload to be excessive, either all or part of the time, due to the demanding nature of the role. This was in part due to the breadth of the school business manager role and also the unpredictable nature of requests or requirements.

Being able to say no to just some of these requests and requirements could empower SBLs to take back some control of their workload, and therefore their wellbeing. Attendees will come away with a greater understanding of themselves and a feeling of empowerment, able to immediately put their learning into practice.

SBLs who attend this interactive workshop will gain:

- A clear understanding of why they may struggle to say no, examining their subconscious drivers.
- Bespoke methods that will empower them to say no at school.
- The confidence to reflect and make active choices about what they choose to take on at school, helping them to feel in control of their workload and wellbeing.

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## Workshop: Dedicated Delegate Networking

This one is yours.

No agenda, no slides. Just time to connect with the people around you in whatever way works best for you.

Grab a coffee and pick up a conversation you started earlier. Find a quiet corner to talk through something you're dealing with at school. Head back to the exhibition to have a proper conversation with a supplier you didn't get chance to speak to. Or simply enjoy some time with people who understand the role.

Spaces are open throughout Eastwood Hall, including the Lawrence Suite, the exhibition area, and the seating areas, so find your spot and make the most of it.

