

## 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021: Chamber Members Only

### 1. The Economy

As we have mentioned on these pages before, the number of registered Universal Credit claimants, the registered unemployed, is a key economic indicator. The Office for National Statistics gives us and the ever-excellent Kent Analytics at Kent County Council a monthly update on the unemployed in East Kent. Your Chamber's attached "225 2 Portrait of East Kent: 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021" quotes the latest unemployment figures released a few days ago. Doom and gloom merchants will be disappointed to see the marked fall in the jobless in the last year. The number of unemployed in Kent has fallen by 11.8% with the biggest reductions of 13% to 14% in our East Kent districts of Dover, Ashford and Thanet.

### 2. The Open

Congratulations to Collin Murikawa the winner of the 149<sup>th</sup> Open in Sandwich yesterday. He will take home nearly £1.5 million for triumphing at Royal St. George's Golf Club. Two other winners deserve mentioning. Firstly, the East Kent economy stands to gain an immediate and continuing boost from the impact of the spectators and world-wide media coverage. Secondly, the winning combination of the R&A, Dover District Council and Royal St. George's Golf Club provided an exemplar of how a large-scale sports event should be organised. More spectators attended the four days of the 149<sup>th</sup> Open than any match ever played by the England football team. Not only was the organisation better than the recent England v Italy game at Wembley, but so was the weather. We are blessed indeed.



*A low-flying Spitfire delights the crowds at the 16<sup>th</sup> hole. Shepherd Neame was the Official Beer Supplier to the 149<sup>th</sup> Open.*

### 3. Climate Change Update: Vattenfall

Thanet Offshore windfarm owner Vattenfall is working with Preem, the largest fuel company in Sweden, on a project to produce fossil-free hydrogen from electrolysis using fossil-free generated electricity. Details are in the attached file . The recent soaring temperatures in Canada and the floods in Germany have put a renewed emphasis on measures to protect the environment in which we all depend. Vattenfall's experience of more than 100 years of producing environmentally friendly power suggests that the odds on a 50MW electrolysis plant at Lysekil must be better than even, see attached file "225 3 Vattenfall 7 Hydrogen 13 July 2021".

### 4. Climate Change Update: Manston Airport

Hydrogen-powered ground vehicles are among the many options being explored by the owners of Manston Airport as they await a decision from the Secretary of State for Transport regarding a "Re-determination of the Application by RiverOak Strategic Partners Limited ("the Applicant") for an Order granting Development Consent for the reopening and development of Manston Airport in Kent." as outlined in our Note to Chamber Members of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and accompanying file TR020002. As an official Interested Party, your Chamber has

reflected the views of East Kent companies supporting the revival of aviation at Manston. You will note in the comments on the Sixth Carbon Budget at paragraph 5 in the attached “225 4 Submission on Manston Airport 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021” that “... it is fair to claim that a revived Manston Airport could be the greenest airport in the UK and set an example to aviation facilities elsewhere in the world.”

## 5. Southern Water

Following a resumption of correspondence with Southern Water, we are looking to improve the links between the water company and East Kent companies. In a candid email to the Chamber, Southern Water’s CEO, Ian McAulay stated: “We are a changed company, with a new management team since 2017”. He apologised unequivocally for the past actions that led to a fine of £90 million in Canterbury High Court ten days ago: “I regret that during this period Southern Water failed in its duty to protect customers and the environment” and added “And I want to make clear that the fine will not impact customers’ bills, and investment in our transformation will not be reduced. Our shareholders are bearing the cost of the fine.” We will keep you updated on further developments.

## 6. East Kent Business Directory

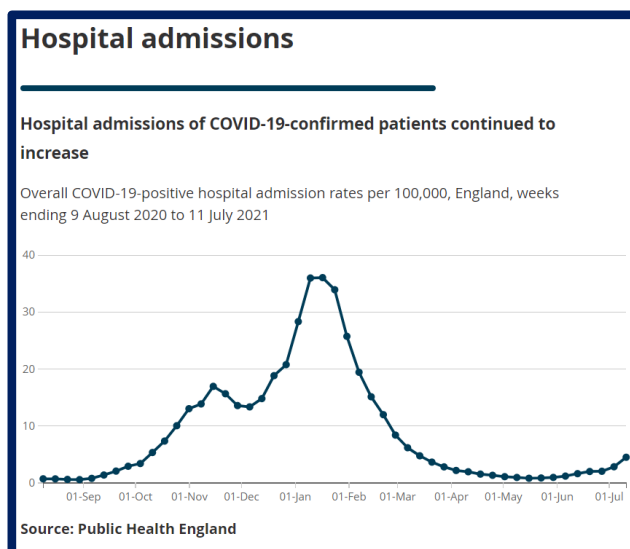
We are pleased to confirm that our 2022 East Kent Business Directory/Chamber Diary will go ahead as in previous years with no cost rises for advertisers. This prestigious publication will again feature an alphabetical list of company names as well as a classified section. New for 2022 will be a selection of images from the past ten years of activities, reflecting the wide range of events, seminars, activities and indeed fashions involving Chamber members in East Kent. All advertisers in the 2021 and 2022 editions will be featured on our upgraded website which will be launched shortly.

## 7. Chamber Charity Golf Day

Our Chamber Charity Golf Day will take place on Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 at Royal St. George’s Golf Club Sandwich. Canterbury Nissan has again confirmed its sponsorship of the event. Many companies invite key clients to join their team and we can expect a full complement of players to enjoy a day away from the office at one of the best golfing venues in the world.

## 8. Coronavirus Report

Attached is edition 17 of our Coronavirus Report, see “225 5 Coronavirus Report Chamber of Commerce 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021”. It shows that infection rates in England are higher than every country in Europe and the European Economic area with the exception of Cyprus. What at first appears a worrying spike should be viewed in the light of the undoubted success of the vaccination programme in the UK. Some countries in Europe have had difficulty in securing vaccines and further problems in convincing their native population of the benefits of being vaccinated against COVID-19. Public Health England tells us that the hospital admission rate of COVID-19-confirmed patients in the week ending 11 July 2021 is almost three times the rate seen four weeks previously, BUT it is still much lower than in the mid-January peak, as is clearly illustrated in the accompanying graphic. More details are available on the ONS website by searching for “Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest insights: Hospitals”.



David Foley  
Chief Executive  
19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

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## **Information**

Thanet & East Kent and Dover District Chambers of Commerce provide professional business support to the East Kent coastal business community.

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