



Surrey Economic Prospects – September 2017

Headlines

- The £2.2 billion merger of Woking-based Wood Group and Amec Foster Wheeler has been approved
- A government sponsored Science and Innovation Audit has revealed that the South of England – [Innovation South](#), is the backbone of UK's digital economy
- Plans for student accommodation comprising 527 bed spaces have been recommended for approval near Guildford lido.

MIPIM UK 2017

All Surrey boroughs and districts are working with the county council to showcase the county at this year's [MIPIM UK](#) exhibition at London Olympia (18-19 October).

MIPIM UK is the UK's largest exhibition and conference for property professionals. It provides a market place for UK and international investors to meet, discuss opportunities and do business.

Surrey, under the banner of [Invest in Surrey](#), will have a stand at the exhibition and will showcase opportunities for investment in the county.



Included in the nine sites and premises to be marketed at the exhibition are Longcross (pictured above), Slyfield (Guildford) and Clare House and James House (Transform Leatherhead (pictured below)). Collectively these sites represent over 660,000 sqm of development potential. A full list of the sites can be found [here](#).



Invest in Surrey is working with a number of private sector partners, the Local Enterprise Partnerships and Surrey's universities to promote the county.

This initiative is part of a piece of work called the Surrey Inward Investment Programme. This aims to market Surrey nationally and internationally as a place to do business, encourage inward investment, encourage further investment from businesses already located in the county and retain existing businesses.

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Business intelligence¹

Regulators have accepted proposals by **Woking**-based **Wood Group** and **Amec Foster Wheeler** (with offices in **Guildford**) to address competition concerns over their planned £2.2 billion merger. The firms have agreed to sell a range of assets after the Competition Markets Authority found the merger could curb competition in the supply of services to the UK oil industry.

Plans to redevelop a site close to **Guildford's** lido to make way for student accommodation have been recommended for approval. Applicant Stone Grove Stoke Park is seeking permission to demolish a complex of vacant buildings at the western end of Lido Road (formerly part of the Guildford College campus). Once cleared, the site has been earmarked for student accommodation comprising 527 bed spaces, communal kitchens and living space, study areas, a gym and student amenity areas.

From the beginning of October Surrey Chambers of Commerce will be offering a full **International Trade service** from their Heathrow office based in **Staines-Upon-Thames**. Based at Spelthorne Borough Council, the new offering will include export documentation services as well as expert advice and support on international trade matters. Situated in the town nearest to Heathrow airport, the Heathrow Office will allow local and airport based businesses to drop-in and get their documents processed the same day without losing any time travelling.

Jellyfish, based in **Reigate**, is the highest ranking Surrey company in the 2017 Sunday Times International Track 200. The listing ranks Britain's private companies with the fastest-growing international sales, based on their previous two years trading. Jellyfish is number 42. **Cennox** appears at number 66 and **Les Cave de Pyrene** 153.

Investment manager Foresight Group has invested £1.9 million into **Godstone** business **Regency Design & Print**, which makes printed materials for the beverage equipment and retail point-of-sale sectors.

Weybridge-headquartered **Verint Systems** has lined up a £26.3 million takeover of software business EG Solutions.

The [Gatwick Diamond Business Awards](#) are now open for entries. Entering is free and open to *any* business in the Gatwick Diamond region. The closing date is 24th November 2017. To help businesses create an 'award-winning' entry, businesses are invited to attend free "How to Win Awards" Seminars. Please click [here](#) to find out more and to book online.

Historic property consultancy **Bruton Knowles** has unveiled a new company structure to support future growth. The firm operates from 13 offices including in **Guildford**.

Restore, a **Redhill**-headquartered office services provider, has expanded with the acquisition of two related secure shredding businesses - Lombard Recycling and Data Shred.

Petards, the **Guildford**-based software developer of advanced security and surveillance systems, is sitting on a strong order book after enjoying a solid start to the year. For the six months to 30 June 2017, the company reported revenue of £7.97 million, up from £7.41 million in 2016. Pre-tax profits were £503,000.

¹ Sources include Insider Media, CoStar Group and Surrey News.



INVEST IN SURREY

Low cost fitness chain the **Gym Group** which is based in **Guildford**, has acquired 18 gyms, primarily in the Midlands and North of England, from Lifestyle Fitness for £20.5 million.

A **Leatherhead**-based debt purchase and management business has been acquired by listed company **Arrow Global** for £15.5 million. **Mars Acquisition Ltd** is the holding company for a group of businesses advised by Oaktree.

A **Guildford**-based software developer which counts John Lewis among its clients has hailed a transformational year. **Eagle Eye Solutions** has created a platform to allow retailers to offer promotions, coupons and rewards to customers. In the year to 30 June 2017, the business generated revenues of £11.1 million, up from £6.5 million 12 months earlier. Pre-tax losses also narrowed to £3.9 million.

Surrey County Council Leader David Hodge has used a Cabinet meeting to underline the county council's unprecedented financial pressures and highlight that the authority is working alongside all of Surrey's boroughs and districts [to put forward proposals](#) to be part of the government's **business rates retention** scheme in 2018/19. The government announced in September that it was inviting bids to join the scheme that will allow councils to retain all the growth in business rates.

As the Sainsbury's redevelopment comes to completion in **Redhill**, **The Gym Group** who occupy the 1,800 sqm leisure unit located in the new development will open its doors to the general public in mid-October.

A **Chobham**-headquartered online retailer of pet products and services has launched a crowdfunding pitch to support its growth. **Purrfectly Yappy** is looking to raise £375,002 on Seedrs in exchange for a 5.41 per cent stake in the business.

Weybridge-based agri-tech giant **Cargill** has agreed to establish a joint venture company with **Faccenda Foods** which will support about 6,000 jobs. Under the agreement, Cargill's fresh chicken business in the UK will join Faccenda's fresh chicken, turkey and duck business.

The long awaited arrival of **Wagamamas** in Bell Street, **Reigate** is nearly over. The popular Japanese chain restaurant is set to open its doors to the public on the 9th October.

Financial planning and wealth management group, **Beaufort** have confirmed that they will be moving their HQ into the Kingsgate offices, **Redhill**.

Nine Group, a Watford-based investment company has acquired a historic hotel in Gatwick which closed four years ago in a deal that has created 60 jobs. **Chequers Hotel** in **Horley** went into administration in November 2013 and has been closed for almost four years. It will be revamped to provide four-star facilities under an international hotel brand.

The **University of Surrey** is launching an Innovation Voucher Scheme. The scheme will fund (between £5K and £10K) collaborative projects between small and medium enterprises and the University's academic expertise. Projects can be used to address specific technical challenges, develop or test products or introduce innovative new business processes. To note:

- Applications will be processed in batches
- The number of vouchers available is limited so the earlier applications are received the better



INVEST IN SURREY

- The more evidence provided that the project will benefit both the SME (growth, competitiveness, innovation...) and the University (impact, reputation, lasting partnership) the more chance of it being selected
- Projects should address challenges that the company would not be able to perform without expertise from the University
- All projects must be completed by 31st March 2018.

If you would like to apply for a chance to take part in this voucher scheme email Ian James (Scheme Manager, i.james@surrey.ac.uk).

Businesses are being urged to plan for disruption and develop a **business continuity plan**. At its simplest, business continuity is about coping with disruption. Disruption could occur due to fire, flood, snow, IT failure or power loss, etc. For more information see [here](#).

Due to popular demand **Farnham Castle Intercultural Training** has added extra workshops to their Open Workshop Series 2017:

- International Customer Service - One Size Does Not Fit All, Wednesday, 01 November 2017
- International Presentation Skills, Friday, 17 November 2017

To book click [here](#).

National news²

A new government sponsored Science and Innovation Audit (SIA) has revealed that the South of England – **Innovation South**, is the backbone of UK's digital economy. Innovation South covers eight counties across southern England, with a total economic output of £225.3 billion, accounting for 13.7% of UK's economic output. To view the report see <https://www.enterprisem3.org.uk/innovation-south-sia>

The first **Transport for the South-East (TfSE)** forum has met, bringing together more than 40 representatives from transport operators, the travelling public, businesses, industry groups and the public sector to plan support for a transformation of transport across the South-East. TfSE is a partnership of 16 local authorities and five local enterprise partnerships. The Transport Forum will give expert advice to TfSE's board on strategic and operational transport issues and ensures the voices of all key groups are heard. TfSE is operating in shadow form and intends to become a statutory body by 2020. Over the next few months it will begin developing a comprehensive transport strategy, in consultation with partners, businesses and residents. For more information see [Transport for South East \(TfSE\)](#).

Forthcoming training available from the **Department of International Trade** can be found [here](#). Training includes sessions on the North American market (London, 16 November) and an Introduction to International Trade (Redhill, 15 November).

The government is offering companies a slice of a £7.9 million funding pot for the development of new technology to improve the UK's rail network. The next round of the **Accelerating Innovation in Rail** scheme, run by the Department for Transport and Innovate UK, is calling on businesses to help improve the railway experience for passengers.

The government has urged the UK's largest companies to increase transparency over diversity in the workplace ahead of the first meeting of the new **Business Diversity and Inclusion Group**. This comes a

² Sources include Insider Media, CoStar Group and Surrey News.



INVEST IN SURREY

week after the government put forward proposals for listed companies to increase such diversity policies, targets and progress, as part of corporate government reforms.

The government has announced that **eleven new energy projects** worth up to £176 million per year have been successful in the latest competitive auction for renewable technologies. Contracts for Difference are designed to drive investment in a new generation of clean, secure electricity supplies. The projects, which are set to generate over 3GW of electricity, will power 3.6 million homes.

A new government initiative is aiming to shrink the multi-billion pound hole in the UK economy caused by illness. Public Health England has teamed up with workplace health provider Healthy Working Futures to set out **new guidelines for SMEs to promote a healthier workforce**. The advice offers SMEs, which account for 60% of private sector employment, questions on health and wellbeing covering areas such as smoking, fitness and sleep that staff can answer anonymously.

The government has outlined protections for the country's research, financial services, journalism and legal services as part of its plan to update data protection legislation for the digital era. The **Data Protection Bill** is said to make all data protection laws fit for purpose in the modern world, in which a constantly increasing amount of data is being processed.

According to facts and figures published by manufacturers' organisation EEF and Santander, growth has returned to the British manufacturing sector despite the persisting uncertainty of Brexit. Launching the 2017 manufacturing fact card, the new data shows that Britain is now the 8th largest industrial nation with an annual output now worth \$249 billion, up from 9th place last year.

A new way of measuring how much men and women are paid under government reporting requirements has revealed that the gender pay gap for the UK's 3.3 million managers is nearly £3,000 bigger than previously thought. According to analysis of manager salaries conducted by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and XperTHR, the gender pay gap as calculated under the new regulations stands at 26.8 per cent, with male managers on average out-earning female peers by over £11,000 per year.

Grants of up to £5000 are available to SMEs for best practice **energy efficiency projects**. The **Utilise Plus Programme** offers a range of services: grant funding, events, workshops and fully-funded energy audits, for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) throughout England. It is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), supported by the Coast-to-Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, and delivered by the Sustainable Business Partnership CIC.

Just one year remains to award around £800,000 of grant funding to rural businesses, communities, farmers and foresters in rural Surrey. The applications need to be complete by the end of 2018. Cathy Miles, of the Rural Surrey LEADER grant funding programme, is seeking applications towards capital costs for new or expanding rural businesses and for rural communities. The programme has already awarded over £400,000 of grants so far and hopes to find some more deserving businesses in rural Surrey to apply. For more information see <https://www.ruralsurreyleader.org.uk/>.

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