

Plymouth Manufacturers' Group Chairman's Review of the Year 2018

(figures rhs will correspond to the accompanying slideshow)

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Following the completion of my first year as Chairman of the PMG, it gives me great pleasure to present to you our *Review of the Year 2018* – a year that will be mainly remembered for our 40th Anniversary celebrations.

This script is accompanied by a slideshow. (For those reading this document pl. note references alongside).

In keeping with tradition I'm going to present my review in chronological order.

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January

So, in January, we heard that Plymouth had once again maintained its title as the city with the highest concentration of manufacturing employment in the south of England. At 11.8 per cent it was well ahead of its nearest rivals Portsmouth and Luton – who were both on 9.5%. (Statistics courtesy of the Centre for Cities – Cities Outlook 2018).

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February

In February, our smaller network members held one of their regular bi-monthly meetings met at Artemis Optical's premises at Western Wood Way, Langage Science Park to '*demystify the funding and support options open to innovative companies*'. This well-attended event heard speakers from the government's innovate2succeed project outline the range of support available from government-funded programmes to help businesses to innovate, partner, export and access grant funding.

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March

March was the month that the PMG held its fourth Apprentice Jobs Fair in Plymouth Guildhall which attracted a record numbers of visitors and was deemed a great success by exhibitors and visitors alike. This was the second occasion that the PMG had shared the event with construction firms who were represented by the sectoral group '*Building Plymouth*'. Between us, these two major sectors account for nearly a quarter of Plymouth's economy and 1 in 6 of all jobs. This year we had forty-five different exhibitors and we attracted almost a thousand people through the doors. Once again, we need to give special thanks to *Princess Yachts* and demolition experts *Gilpin* who helped to grab the attention of people passing by with the presence in the car park of their demolition plant and the beautiful Princess v40 yacht – which was raffled off at the end of the day to a lucky winner – just kidding!

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April

As part of its ongoing 40th Anniversary celebrations, April saw the PMG make its first ever group visit to London. With the help of local MP Gary Streeter (now Sir Gary Streeter) we booked the Macmillan Room at Portcullis House literally just across the road from the Houses of Parliament. The purpose of the event was to raise Plymouth's manufacturing profile in the nation's capital and to spread the word about the significance of our sector to the local, regional and national economy. We were joined on the day by Richard Harrington MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Business and Industry who addressed the group.

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We took the opportunity to show the Minister our new 40th Anniversary video.

April also saw the start of a series of awards being won by numerous PMG members throughout the year with four different firms each winning different categories in the 2018 Herald Business Awards held at Plymouth Pavilions.

<i>May</i>	May was the month that the PMG sponsored, for the first time, an award for Quality at the West Devon Area final for the <i>Young Enterprise Company Programme</i> which was won by the Endeavour team from Tor Bridge High.	7
<i>June</i>	After a one-year break, June marked the return of the PMG's <i>Year in Industry</i> competition which is run in conjunction with EDT. This year's winner was Sam Spears who edged it by having an all-round understanding of the impact that his project had had on his employer Schneider Electric, including a clear knowledge of costs and benefits. Sam was given his certificate and cheque for £300, appropriately enough, by Schneider Electric's PMG representative, Paulo Raquel.	8
<i>July</i>	In July, the PMG published the 100 th edition of its regular monthly newsletter.	9
<i>September</i>	With Brexit talks getting close to what we hoped would be some sort of conclusion, September saw the first of two subgroup meetings to discuss the topic hosted by accountants KPMG. Firstly, the Purchasing subgroup and later in the year, the Finance subgroup.	10
	As part of our rolling-programme of PMG 40 th Anniversary celebrations, we held a 5-a-side football competition at Plymouth Marjon University in September. Sixteen teams entered the knock-out competition and the whole event was played in the spirit that one would hope, with a mixture of fun and a strong desire to win. A few teams shone through with delicate silky skills and a light touch. And the final was decided by a penalty shoot-out between Rittal-CSM and Barden which Rittal won convincingly.	11
<i>October</i>	The finale to our yearlong 40 th Anniversary celebrations was a black-tie dinner and ball held at Plymouth's Crowne Plaza in October. It was an exceptional evening for several reasons: aside from being the first event of its kind to be held by the group for a decade or more; it brought together, not only a large number of member firms – including six former Chairman of the PMG spanning over two decades, but also a broad range of key service providers, including local firms of lawyers, accountants, bankers etc. The event provided us with the opportunity to recognise the six founding members of the PMG who are still active partners today, and we presented each of them with an etched Dartington Crystal vase. The evening was topped off by everyone present managing to raise a massive seven thousand, four hundred and forty-six pounds for St Luke's Hospice, a fabulous and well deserving cause.	12
<i>November</i>	On a dark, cold evening in November, the PMG sponsored a highly successful <i>Women in STEM Plymouth</i> careers event which was held for the second year running at Dartmoor Zoo. This year's event attracted over thirty exhibitors and hundreds of students. The statistics speak for themselves: >90% of attendees rated the event either good; very good or excellent >80% thought that there were a good range of exhibitors on offer >70% thought it was well organised and, most importantly, >70% said that it made them more aware of STEM careers.	13

December	The latest estimated figures released in December by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) – shown on the graph here - reveals that Gross Value Added (GVA) from manufacturing in Plymouth rose 4.3% between 2016 and 2017. It now stands at a record £866M. This represents 16% of the total Plymouth economy which is valued at £5.4Bn. Growth in the sector locally since 2010 is up nearly forty per cent.	14
	We closed the year on a high with The PMG's <i>2018 Christmas Lecture</i> featuring guest speaker, Dr Gertjan Vlieghe, External Member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England, which was once again hosted by the University of Plymouth in the Roland Levinsky Building. Dr Vlieghe's off the record talk was entitled ' <i>The Economic Outlook</i> '. He was widely praised for his impressive level of knowledge on the subject matter and his use of statistics not previously seen before, to analyse the current economic situation. In particular, his questioning of a possible change in the long-term relationship between unemployment and wages and the impact that the Brexit vote was having on UK business investment performance.	15
	<i>So, to conclude, 2018 was a very special and successful year for the PMG. But what of the year ahead?</i>	16
2019	2019 will hopefully mark an end, one way or another, to Brexit, but I suspect that no one will be holding their breath!	17