

Plymouth Manufacturers' Group Chairman's Review of the Year 2019

(figures rhs will correspond to the accompanying slideshow)

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Following a short period as Interim Chairman of the PMG, since October, and now as newly appointed Chair for the forthcoming year, it gives me great pleasure to present to you our *Review of the Year 2019*. 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

In January, we hit the ground running with no less than three high profile visitors in quick succession. Firstly, Stephen Phipson CBE, CEO of what was very shortly to become MAKEuk (formerly known as the EEF) was guest of honour at our AGM. Stephen spoke about his organisation; skills shortages "*the most regular issue raised by his members*"; the Government's Industrial Strategy and Brexit. As the result of an offer that had been accepted by the PMG board, he also announced that all PMG members now have the option of FREE affiliate membership to MAKEuk. This represents yet another worthwhile benefit of being a member of the PMG.

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Also visiting during January were Simon Edmonds, Director, Manufacturing, Materials & Mobility, Innovate UK (the UK's innovation agency) and Dick Elsy CBE – CEO, High Value Manufacturing Catapult. Whilst in Plymouth, they met with representatives from a number of PMG member firms including: Kawasaki Precision Machinery; Babcock International; Princess Yachts International; MSubs; Collins Aerospace and Artemis Optical.

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The PMG used these visits to promote the strength of manufacturing in the City and to campaign for greater government investment in local R&D facilities.

To help us make this point, the beginning of the year also saw provisional figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) that revealed 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 (nationally the figure is 10%). Growth in the sector locally since 2010 is up nearly forty per cent.

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March

In March, the PMG launched an ICT subgroup, under the Chairmanship of Myles Blake, Business Information Director at Plessey. This is the eighth themed subgroup that the PMG now operates. Early topics for consideration include: security; cloud computing; collaboration and productivity; mobility; IPv6; privacy and data protection; artificial Intelligence; software define networking and data centres and the so-called Internet of Things.

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March was also the month that the PMG held its fifth 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 third 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. Once again we had over forty different exhibitors and we attracted approximately a thousand people through the doors.

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May	<p>In May, once again, the PMG sponsored an award for Quality at the Plymouth Area final for the <i>Young Enterprise Company Programme</i> which was won by the <i>Protect</i> team from Plymouth High School for Girls who made environmentally friendly jewellery.</p>	7
	<p>Also during May, and coinciding with National Mental Health Awareness Week, the PMG co-sponsored a Plymouth Employment and Skills Board (PESB) conference on the subject of mental health in the workplace called <i>'Lifting the Lid'</i>. PESB represents the City of Plymouth at a local, regional and national level regarding skills and employability including supply and demand of skills and how a healthy workforce contributes to productivity. PESB invited employers from across the City to attend, and the delegates attending packed out two of the Future Inn hotel's meeting rooms including several representatives from PMG member firms. Steve Cardew, Chair of PESB and Non-Executive Chair of the Board at Kawasaki Precision Machinery (UK) introduced the event. Steve said, <i>'This is the first time that the PESB has promoted an event on this subject so with over 70 attendees, the conference is an undoubted success in raising awareness of Mental Health issues whilst also informing businesses of the support mechanisms that are available in the City to help employers manage the wellbeing of their workforce. I wish to thank the PMG membership for their sponsorship, support and attendance'</i>.</p>	8
June	<p>June saw the return of the PMG's <i>Year in Industry</i> competition which is run in conjunction the engineering Development Trust (EDT) who are based at Plymouth Science Park. This year, to increase participation, we also worked with the University of Plymouth. The winner was Robert Potier who was placed with Southway-based Schneider Electric. He, along with four other locally based students, presented their projects to a panel of judges from the PMG. Robert came out on top for a number of reasons including his level of technical understanding and clarity in identifying the business impact of the project. He was presented with a certificate and a cheque for £300 by PMG Chair Mike Snaith.</p>	9 10 11
July	<p>In July the PMG held its popular Annual Summer Conference at the Plymouth Future Inn on the hot topic of Industry 4.0 with guest speakers including: Brian Holliday, Managing Director, Digital Industries, Siemens plc and Dr Lina Huertas, Chief Technologist, Technology Strategy, Manufacturing Technology Centre, Coventry. Also presenting from Germany was Carsten Roettchen, Managing Director, Global Production, Rittal, parent company to the Plymouth-based Rittal-CSM. In addition to these national and international heavyweights, the audience of approximately sixty local manufacturers also heard presentations from local firms: Saltash-based Composite Integration Ltd and Babcock International. The accompanying exhibition featured a range of cost effective robots and other smart automation solutions. Post-conference feedback revealed an 85% satisfaction level from members for the event overall.</p>	12
August/ September	<p>In August and September, the PMG ran a photographic competition with the aim of using a broad range of social media platforms to promote the fact that, unlike much of the country's industrialised heartland of the Midlands and the North, our local manufacturers here in our part of the south west of England often work from enviably placed sites and premises. We definitely achieved that with interest generated from many firms who provided great examples of both beautiful countryside and coastal views. Our winner was Chris Shaw, Training & Education Leader at Mars Wrigley</p>	13

Confectionery who are based in Plymouth on the edge of Dartmoor where they have 45 acres of land. Chris' stunning shot was titled 'Sunrise' and is a view of the moorland landscape, as seen directly from their building, inclusive of deer grazing under the trees in the distance. Chris collected a prize of a telescoping tripod and grip for a mobile phone, plus a £50 Amazon voucher from the PMG Secretary. Our PMG postings on LinkedIn alone generated five thousand viewings and by using the hashtag 'manufacturing', it gets picked up far and wide, so you never know who might be reading about Plymouth and who might as a result be tempted to relocate to our wonderful part of the world. 14

November

November marked a special occasion for the PMG when Chairman, Mike Snaith, signed a partnership agreement with the University of Plymouth's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Judith Petts CBE. The agreement states, *'This new relationship will change the paradigm that currently exists between the University and PMG to enable greater advancement of knowledge and transformation of lives. It will enable local industry to formally engage with the University as its local Higher Education key strategic partner along with the agencies of local and central Government. This includes engagement with industry to fully utilise the university's physical and intellectual assets. The impact will include collaborations for joint grant applications for funding, new commercial developments and innovations, access to university specialist equipment as well as businesses benefiting from student talent and collaborative research opportunities'*. In addition to the signing ceremony and networking over a light lunch, there was an opportunity to preview the new Immersive Media and Digital Fabrication Laboratories and the Immersive Vision Theatre (used in modelling and data visualisation). 15 16

December

As usual, we closed the year on a high with The PMG's 2019 Christmas Lecture featuring guest speaker, Antony Sheriff, Executive Chair of Princess Yachts, which was once again hosted by the University of Plymouth in the Roland Levinsky Building. Lawyers Foot Anstey LLP were sponsors of the wine and canapes which was enjoyed by members and other local business people and guests while networking after the talk. Antony gave an excellent wide-ranging talk that included an explanation of their sites within the Plymouth area; how they celebrate the contribution made by their three thousand staff; what they are currently focused on achieving; an explanation of the luxury brand; their platform approach to construction and how to manage a 15 month order book plus much more besides. Antony closed with lessons for 2020 and beyond: don't be shy; grow ... carefully and celebrate your heritage and people. 17

Over the course of the year, the PMG continued to work with our partners to lobby behind the scenes for improved infrastructure of all kinds – road, rail, air and broadband etc. The most important developments during 2019 were: £80 million in funding to commence the first phase of major resilience works to the Dawlish sea wall and more than £22 million to be put towards the Forder Valley Link Road, which will help support the city's economic prosperity and lead to wider benefits.

In conclusion, despite the continued economic uncertainties that prevail, the PMG has been able to: strengthen strategic partnerships; continue to heighten our profile locally and nationally; maintain and find new ways in which we encourage our members to collaborate and work together. It has been a successful year.