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June/July 2021

Launching out of Lockdown with landmark conference at Manchester Central

PROGRESS21 is scheduled as a pivotal business conference dedicated to boosting the city-region of Greater Manchester out of lockdown. Hosted by the Business Growth Hub on 23 September at Manchester Central - full details available inside.

Enter the new Dragon

As new Dragon Steven Bartlett enters BBC1's Dragons' Den replacing Tej Lalvani, we look at the Dragons' investments over the programme's history.

Innovative Medical Product Sourcing

A business focus on South Manchester's Steroplast Ltd, including an interview with head of Health & Safety Janice Watson.

From submariner to IT specialist

Interview with Greg Buchanan, MD of Mango Tech, Altrincham's new IT and Telecoms provider.

Good to be back!

GM Business Connect sponsor their first Face to Face networking event coming out of lockdown, supporting the British and Irish Trading Alliance (BITA).

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Innovative Medical Product Sourcing

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From submariner to IT specialist

Interview with Greg Buchanan, MD of Mango Tech, Altrincham's new IT and Telecoms provider.

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editorial

Here at GM Business Connect we are on the lookout for both news articles relating to business activity within Greater Manchester, and educational articles that can help businesses at any level.

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welcome to the latest edition of GM Business Connect

and join the fastest growing business to business across Greater Manchester and the North.

GM Business Connect is a dynamic business to business bi-monthly magazine that is crammed full of local and regional news, articles, interviews and regular columnists.

The magazine connects businesses across Greater Manchester and the North, and is completely free.

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news

Government commits to Eastern Leg of HS2



On a recent online event for the Policy Exchange Thinktank, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps re-confirmed the Government's commitment to not just complete the western leg linking Manchester with Birmingham, but also the Eastern leg linking Birmingham with Leeds.

He revealed: "We will be completing HS2, including the HS2 Eastern Leg to Leeds. The only question we have now is how to integrate this with plans drawn up over many years, relating to Northern Powerhouse Rail plans."

The Transport Secretary also revealed the schedule for the works could be completed early due to smarter construction methods.

Stage 1 of HS2 linking London with

Birmingham and onwards to Crewe is due to be completed 2028 – 2031. Stage 2 will involve the Western Leg being extended from Crewe to both Wigan and Manchester. At the same time the Eastern Leg will be constructed linking Leeds with Birmingham, via a new East Midlands hub.

As well as the recent confirmation on both Western and Eastern Legs of the project, last month saw the unveiling of the largest tunnelling machine ever constructed for a UK project. Named after Florence Nightingale, 'Florence' has started work tunnelling through chalk under the Chiltern Hills in Buckinghamshire.

The machine will operate 24/7 for the next three and a half years.

15% of owner managed businesses still in survival mode

Owner managed businesses coming out of the third lockdown are still struggling with the impact of COVID-19 and an uncertain economic outlook:

- 11% reported that it is likely they will have to make redundancies in the next 3-6 months putting a potential 1.85 million jobs at risk across the UK.
- 24% reported a negative or very negative impact on their business since the UK left the EU.
- 53% of respondents identified uncertain trading conditions as their biggest single challenge.
- 15% cited Brexit supply chain issues as their single biggest challenge.

However:

- 84% of respondents reported that they were either confident or somewhat confident that they would be able to access the finance that they needed over the next 6 months with anecdotal evidence suggesting that the major banks were continuing to lend.
- Longer term 54% were more positive about their economic prospects outside the EU while 46% were less positive.

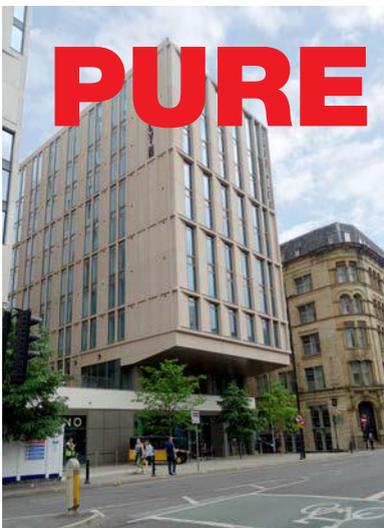
The research among 435 owner managed businesses across the UK was carried out between April and May by the APA, a network of 17 leading business advisory firms who represent over 14,000 of these businesses.



Co-op pledge almost half a million to support apprentice firefighters

Supporting a cohort last summer and another who started in the Autumn, the Co-op have pledged a total of £492,000 from its Apprenticeship Levy to support 41 apprentice firefighters at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service on two-year programmes.

Co-op Group CEO, Steve Murrells, said: "As a champion of social mobility, we know how apprenticeships form a vital part of the lives of thousands of people as they start their careers – and vital for the UK economy. It's great to see our levy being used to help frontline Fire and Rescue services."



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Friday afternoon face-to-face networking is back! Organised by GM Business Connect Magazine and in association with venue host Hotel Brooklyn, Manchester's business community are invited back to networking at one of Manchester's newest iconic hotels.

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- Tickets are £20+VAT – available on Eventbrite. Entry includes £5 Forever Manchester Tombola Ticket.
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- Opportunity to tour the hotel in small guided groups.
- Business Card Draw.

Tickets available through EventBrite: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pure-connectworking-tickets-158435265143

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B2B MAGAZINE

Four new Challenger banks launched during pandemic

Adding to the 41 launched over the last eight years

- As CBILS ends, high street lenders are likely to cut back on their lending to SMEs
- Challenger banks and debt funds part of growing options for businesses looking for finance in 2021

Four new banks were launched in the UK in the first ten months of the coronavirus crisis, reported by ACP Altenburg Advisory, the debt advisory specialist.

ACP observes that this is a sign of the growing options available to businesses looking for finance as CBILS comes to an end.

With the CBILS & BBLs schemes having ended on March 31, businesses looking to grow may need to turn to an alternative source of finance in the coming months as the high street banks are likely to decrease their lending to SMEs.

Including the four new banks launched in the last year, there have been 23 UK banks to launch since 2013, alongside 22 banks to launch in the UK either as a branch or subsidiary of an overseas bank. These figures do not include the larger challenger banks that have launched since the credit crunch

such as Shawbrook, Metro Bank and Aldermore.

The figures show the increasing competition challenger banks are providing to high street banks in providing lending to SMEs. In addition to challenger banks, there are also hundreds of debt funds looking to provide funding to growing UK SMEs.

Dan Barrett, Partner at ACP, says: *"The continued launch of new banks is gradually bringing more and more competition to the SME lending market. High street banks are likely to reduce their credit appetite for lending to SMEs over the short term whilst the dust settles on the vast amount of money they have lent under the BBLs and CBILS schemes. Many businesses may now need to look elsewhere for the funding they need to grow."*

"With nearly two dozen new UK banks launching in the eight years, together with 100s of alternative lenders and debt funds, the funding options for UK businesses outside of the high street banks have never been greater."

The three most common types of lending seem to be asset backed lending (ABL), real estate and cash flow.

Manchester arts organisations welcome back audiences



Arts organisations from across Manchester have come together to launch a major joint campaign that aims to encourage audiences to return to their venues and embrace the city's rich cultural offering.

The campaign, which is supported with funding from the UK Government's Culture Recovery Fund, aims to showcase that culture is the beating heart of Manchester; inspire confidence that venues are safe, welcoming and open to everyone; and remind people that a cultural experience can have a transformative effect on health and wellbeing.

A major poster, radio and digital campaign has been commissioned with emotive imagery and inspiring poetry that aim to capture the attention of audiences and highlight the range of cultural experiences on offer in the city.

The campaign will run throughout the summer and into autumn.

Dave Moutrey, Director of Culture at Manchester City Council, said: *"It's been a long road to get here, but as cultural venues across Manchester begin to reopen they couldn't be more ready or more excited to welcome back audiences."*

Organisations involved in the #HereforCultureMCR campaign include the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art, Chetham's Library, Contact, HOME, Hope Mill Theatre, The Lowry, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester Camerata, Manchester Independents, Manchester International Festival, Manchester Libraries, Manchester Museum, Music Venues Trust, National Football Museum, Palace and Opera House Theatres, People's History Museum, Royal Northern College of Music, Royal Exchange Theatre, Science and Industry Museum, The Stoller Hall, The Whitworth and Z-arts.



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news

Manchester Royal Infirmary unveils £40million A&E project



Ambitious new plans to transform the Emergency Department at Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI) have been given planning approval by Manchester City Council.

The redevelopment will see the facilities modernised to best meet the changing needs of the local population of Manchester. This includes increased capacity, and a more streamlined layout to ensure patients continue to receive high quality emergency treatment and care in an improved environment.

The £40 million renovation project will boost the capabilities of MRI, which is a Major Trauma Centre for Greater Manchester and part of Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT). Upgraded facilities will include an expanded and improved Emergency Department, including 10 resuscitation bays and 27 major cubicles.

Plans also include the creation of six new operating theatres, which will support the hospital's role as a regional centre for specialist surgery. Integrated Health Projects (IHP), an established joint venture between VINCI Construction UK and Sir Robert McAlpine, has been appointed as construction partner for the new build development.

Construction is expected to start later in 2021. Construction is expected to take just over three years to complete.

Vanessa Gardener, Chief Executive of MRI, said: "Manchester is a rapidly developing city, with a much larger population and different health requirements to the 1980s when our current Emergency Department was first built. These exciting plans lay out our vision for a new and improved department that will best support the needs of Manchester and beyond."

Who were the winners and losers of Greater Manchester's 2020 property market boom?

The winners and losers of Greater Manchester's 2020 property market boom have been revealed - with Bryn, Radcliffe, Cadishead, Hulme and Moss Side emerging as the hottest areas within the region, according to new research.

Data compiled by Manchester-based conveyancing specialist JMW Solicitors LLP, which compared Google Trends data from July 2019 to July 2020, revealed that searches for homes for sale in Bryn had increased by 179%, from 140 to 390.

Radcliffe (132%), Cadishead (125%), Hulme (100%) and Moss Side (100%)

all showed similar increases, as the property market surged following the first lockdown.

Andrew Garvie, Head of Real Estate Residential from JMW Solicitors LLP said: "The unprecedented impact and disruption of the coronavirus pandemic on all aspects of life has resulted in many people choosing to re-evaluate their priorities.

"Greater Manchester was no exception to the property market boom that was noted across the UK after the first lockdown, with thousands of searches carried out among prospective homeowners."

Nearly one in four out of Generation Z invests in meme crypto such as Dogecoin

- 23% of Generation Z invested in meme cryptocurrency such as Dogecoin.
 - Exchange eToro began offering Dogecoin in May 2021, 25% of users are already invested.
 - The cryptocurrency has gained 13,494% in value within the past 12 months
 - 23% of US investors convinced that Dogecoin will break the 1-dollar mark this year (currently \$0.50).
 - 66.33% of total Dogecoin supply held in the 100 largest addresses.
 - Almost one in five first heard about the cryptocurrency through Elon Musk.
- 23% of Generation Z are actively investing in meme coins such as Dogecoin and Shiba Inu. A similar picture emerges at the social trading broker eToro: although the platform only launched Dogecoin trading in May 2021, 24.95% of users are already invested in this trendy coin.

The price of Dogecoin has risen by 13,494% in the last 12 months. And there is still a long way to go, at least if US investors have their way. 23% believe that the cryptocurrency will surpass the 1-dollar mark before the end of the year. The digital currency is currently trading at just under \$0.50 US.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk has been seen to have a dramatic effect on crypto markets. Almost one in five people first became aware of Dogecoin through Musk. He recently asked his followers on Twitter whether Tesla should accept Dogecoin as a means of payment.

The result was unambiguous: 78.2% voted in favour.

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1 in 3 small business owners became personal guarantors in 2020

22% have not told their spouse or partner

The personal financial risk of becoming a personal guarantor for a business loan has become a fact of life for 1 in 3 small business owners but it's also a secret for 1 in 5.

This is according to a new survey of 1,000 SME business owners and directors by Purbeck Personal Guarantee Insurance, provider of the UK's only Personal Guarantee Insurance.

Based on the survey, 34% of small business owners had to make the difficult choice to become a personal guarantor for a business loan in 2020.

This means that if the business defaults on the loan, the lender is able to seek settlement of the debt from the director's personal assets. For some, it's a risk too far - 45% said they had decided against a loan because it required a Personal Guarantee.

However, 64% said they would be more likely to sign a personal guarantee if there was insurance in place to protect against the risk of providing it.

Amongst the survey respondents, 24% took the loan outside of the Government's support schemes, putting their home and life savings at risk if their business fails.

A further 10% agreed to sign a Personal Guarantee to access funding as part of the CBILS with the average debt for which the director would be liable if their business fails, estimated as £154,000.

Worryingly 22% of those with a partner or spouse has not informed them of the risk to their personal assets, should the business fail.

Top 10 Sectors* where the business owner signed a personal guarantee for a loan in 2020 outside of the Government support schemes:

1. Finance and Accounting
2. IT & telecoms

3. Retail - High street
4. Construction
5. Retail - Online
6. Manufacturing
7. Medical & health services
8. Hospitality and leisure
9. Legal
10. Media/marketing/PR and sales

Top 10 sectors* where the business owner signed a personal guarantee for a CBILS loan of £250,000 or more in 2020:

1. Finance and Accounting
2. IT & telecoms
3. Hospitality and leisure
4. Retail - Online
5. Construction
6. Manufacturing
7. Medical & health services
8. Legal
9. Media/marketing/PR and sales
10. Education

Prior to 2020, 21% of the business owners surveyed were already acting as a Personal Guarantor for a business loan. Furthermore, 8% anticipate they will become a Personal Guarantor for a loan in 2021.

Todd Davison, MD for Purbeck Personal Guarantee Insurance said: "Signing a Personal Guarantee is a huge step for any business owner given the risk it can pose to the family home and other personal assets.

"If a Personal Guarantee puts joint assets at risk – it should really be a joint decision in a relationship.

"Business owners need to understand that there are ways they can mitigate the risks of Personal Guarantees, including through insurance. Knowing there is a way to protect their personal assets could give many small business owners the confidence to become personal guarantor for a business loan."

*Source: Purbeck Personal Guarantee Insurance Survey of 1,000 SME Owners and Directors.

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news

Kier Living Northern rebrands to Tilia Homes as sale is finalised

Kier Living has become Tilia Homes following the successful completion of its sale from Kier Group to Terra Firma, one of Europe's leading private equity investment firms.

Its Northern region, which is based in Leeds, employs over 90 people has new homes developments across Yorkshire, Lancashire and the North East.

The sale marks a new chapter for the homebuilding business which completed over 1,100 private and affordable homes in the year to June 2020.

The business will continue to be run by its existing senior leadership team, led by CEO David Bridges. Commenting on the announcement, he said: "The completion of Kier Living's sale is a really positive step for our teams, customers and partners and presents an exciting opportunity



Tilia Homes CEO David Bridges

to move forward with our new owner and invest in our future.

"The backing of Terra Firma will enable the business to build on our strong foundations and create a thriving and sustainable company. With the acquisition being equity-funded, our ability to compete in the land market will be significantly enhanced and continuing our active land acquisition programme will be a key pillar of our future growth plans."

Two million revolutionary bricks go into production

A new brick producing a tenth of the carbon emissions of a traditional one is poised to go into commercial production.

Zero Waste Scotland has pledged £1m for manufacturing Kenoteq's K-Briq made from over 90% of recycled demolition and construction products.

Kenoteq managing director Sam Chapman said: "The construction industry faces a tremendous challenge when meeting decarbonisation goals. The industry sends over 800 million tonnes of waste to landfill in Europe every year, at a huge cost to itself and the environment."

The brick, developed by researchers at Edinburgh's Heriot-Watt University, uses less than a tenth of the energy needed to make a conventional fired brick and has double the insulation



Sam Chapman, MD, Kenoteq

properties. It can be made in a range of colours using recycled pigments providing flexibility to architects and design planners.

"With this funding, we will scale the manufacturing capacity from a pilot plant to industrial-scale production through development of a new manufacturing line in Scotland," said Sam.

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Salford set to welcome 410 new central government jobs by 2025



The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Home Office announced on 19 May that a total of 3,000 government jobs are set to be moved to regions outside of London as part of the Places for Growth Scheme to bring policy makers closer to communities and support economic growth. Salford is set to significantly benefit from this major move by the

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, securing the lion's share of job relocations. BEIS is a ministerial department, supported by 46 agencies and public bodies. The other areas set to benefit from one third of BEIS's roles placed outside London are Birmingham, Cardiff and Darlington, Belfast and Edinburgh.

The announcement was made by Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng and Home Secretary Priti Patel.

Salford is also listed as one of the areas expected to benefit from an increase in Home Office personnel, including senior civil service roles.

City Mayor of Salford Paul Dennett said: "This announcement is great news for Salford and local people, demonstrating the success of our long term strategy to bring in new investment and opportunities.

"The relocation of jobs to Salford is greatly welcomed and we will work with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and the Home Office to make it a local success.

"Relocations are not just about jobs being relocated outside of London, but also making sure that local people benefit the government department's presence in our city.

It is about unlocking opportunities and linking local people, local businesses and educational providers with what is on offer. It is our job to connect people and organisations in our city to the roles and opportunities available.

"We're also pleased that the department responsible for areas including business growth, industrial policy, renewable energy, science, research and development, and employment rights will have a significant base in our city and we welcome the opportunity to influencing their decisions and practices as well as the employment opportunities they'll inevitably provide.

"I am proud of the innovation of Salford; the city has a proven track record of attracting investment and creating jobs, growth and opportunities."

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news

Manchester presents a new zero carbon programme ahead of COP26

The Manchester Climate Change Partnership is tackling climate change with the launch of a new zero carbon programme - *In our Nature* - so everyone can take action, ahead of the international climate conference COP26 taking place in Glasgow this November.

The climate change initiatives were outlined in a report presented to the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee of Manchester City Council on Thursday May 27.

The Partnership is working with community groups, young people and businesses to ensure that together we reduce carbon by 50% until 2025 keeping on track to become a zero carbon city by 2038 at the latest.

The report found that the city has achieved an overall reduction in carbon emissions of 40% between 2005 and 2019, which is in line with meeting the 41% target in 2021. There are areas needed for continual improvement, particularly in how we heat our homes, ground transport and aviation where progress is being made to reduce carbon emissions, but will need to be accelerated.

Some of the city's successes include:

- Reducing emissions from industrial, commercial and domestic buildings by 41% during 2010 to 2018.
- Reducing emissions from electricity use by 58% during 2010 to 2018, associated mainly with the decarbonisation of national electricity generation and supply (i.e. the continued shift away from coal).

A Zero Carbon Communities' programme 'In Our Nature' has been launched to support residents. It includes a toolkit of tried and tested initiatives that can be replicated by communities to create healthy, green, zero-carbon neighbourhoods across the city.

The first phase of the programme will run until May 2022 and has been funded by National Lottery and supported by a coalition of funding partners, including Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Wates Family Enterprise Trust, the Co-op, Suntory Beverage Food GB&I and Coca-Cola GB.

The programme is a partnership between the Manchester Climate Change Agency and Partnership, Manchester City Council, Hubbub, Amity, the Tyndall Centre for Climate Research and Commonplace.

UK businesses restructure after January's Brexit deal

85 per cent of UK businesses have restructured in the wake of January's Brexit deal, and the majority believe leaving the EU has negatively impacted operations, according to a new report by specialist recruiter Robert Half.

Nearly half of UK businesses (44%) have had to redesign job roles and responsibilities post-Brexit, while 20% have laid off staff and 16% have required team members to relocate, according to the survey of UK executives. A further 6% indicated they have implemented a combination of the above, while only 15% say there have been no changes due to Brexit.

"These findings underscore the impact Brexit has had on the way companies operate, especially coming on the heels of the major changes wrought by COVID-19," said Matt Weston, Managing Director, Robert Half UK.

"Employees are having to move location and develop new skills in response. Brexit has created both challenges and opportunities for British businesses, and it's up to each individual organisation to make sure they have the agility and responsiveness to capitalise on this upheaval."

The research also found that the majority of British businesses (56%) believe that the Brexit deal has had a negative impact on their operations, with a fifth (21%) saying they have been 'amongst the worst affected'. This stands in contrast to the 6% of companies who reported that Brexit has been a net positive, while 38% said that the deal hasn't impacted them significantly thus far.

"There are a number of areas – including the services economy – which are still unclear on precisely what Brexit means for them," continued Matt. *"But already, we're seeing the impact of ending Freedom of Movement with so many businesses struggling to find top talent. The legal and political situation will continue to evolve, but in the meantime, businesses need to develop clear strategies around how they are going to source, upskill, and retain their best people."*



Developing public land set to get easier for SMEs

Smaller housebuilders are to be given a better chance of bidding to develop public land following a major overhaul of the system.

Housing accelerator Homes England is making the process more flexible and simplifying access so smaller developers and new entrants can participate.

Homes England chief land and development officer Stephen Kinsella said: *"This new digital system marks a huge step forward, making it much easier for developers to bid for our land. I'd encourage our current partners, as well as those we haven't worked with before,*

to get their applications in so we can work together to create great places to live."

A digitised delivery partnership system will enable housebuilders to join the agency's preferred list whenever they choose rather than waiting every four years for the panel to be renewed.

The application will consider the size of the developer so SMEs bidding to deliver smaller sites will benefit from simpler entry criteria.

However, this is offset by the requirements for developers bidding to deliver larger strategic sites will be more testing.

Card payment provider choose Manchester for UK expansion

Manchester's proven credentials as one of the UK's great economic and cultural hubs has attracted UTP Merchant Services, one of the largest providers of credit card machines and online payment gateways in the UK.

The company has moved its 20-strong workforce into 5,600 sq ft office space in Orbit Development's Barlow House on Minshull Street in the city centre.

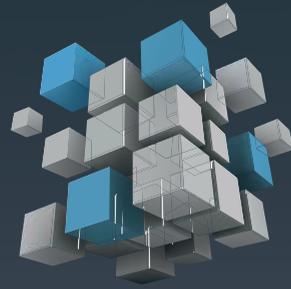
Sales Director, Jaime Lowe, said they were excited to be joining Manchester's city centre business community.



"We are looking forward to providing exciting new employment opportunities and being part of the city's Build Back Better push as we come out of the pandemic."

"Manchester has a fantastic talent pool, including a large number of foreign language speakers, who can provide tailored native language support to our international customers."

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PROGRESS21

event



Landmark conference confirmed for Manchester Central on 23 September

A large-scale 'in-person', one-day conference has been confirmed to go ahead at Manchester Central on Thursday 23 September.

PROGRESS21, is one day, three events, centred on careers, businesses and Greater Manchester's global ambition, delivered by the Growth Company with a wide range of partner organisations.

The events will see thousands of Greater Manchester businesses, support organisations, and individuals, safely re-connect in person.

The three events will offer a wide-ranging programme of presentations, workshops and support to add significant momentum to the economic recovery of the city-region.

The three events, which attendees must register for individually, are:

PROGRESS21 Careers:

The Greater Manchester jobs and careers conference, matching employers, employees and support organisations, with a focus on getting people into jobs and with an offer of thousands of job vacancies available on the day.

PROGRESS21 Business:

The Greater Manchester business conference, offering insight and

support on key issues including generating sales, managing cash-flow and raising finance, creating and leading a high performance workforce, digital transformation and understanding Net Zero, as we move towards recovery and growth.

PROGRESS21 Global:

The event that brings Greater Manchester together, to get behind showcasing the city-region on a global stage, and attracting investors and visitors.

PROGRESS21 is being carefully planned in line with government and event industry guidelines to maximise COVID-19 safety.



Mark Hughes, Growth Company CEO, said: "We're incredibly proud to be delivering these three events at PROGRESS21 through an immense private-public and third sector partnership – too many to individually call out but including the Mayor and GM LEP, business representative organisations such as CBI, FSB, the Chamber of Commerce and IOD, and government departments such as DWP, BEIS and DIT, along with supporting organisations such as Citizens Advice and

many individual employers.

many individual employers.

"Employment, business growth and securing global opportunities are all vital to the recovery and future success of our city-region.

"By coming together again in a safe environment we can continue to build momentum and support individuals, businesses and our city-region on the whole, to recover and to thrive.

"We believe PROGRESS21 will play a key role in accelerating and broadening momentum across Greater Manchester in 2021 and beyond. I encourage you to get involved, as attendees, speakers, exhibitors or sponsors, for us to make sure this is a collective Greater Manchester success."

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, said: "This event is a brilliant opportunity for individuals to progress their career prospects, businesses to unlock potential for growth, and Greater Manchester to expand its global potential. PROGRESS21 will showcase our ambitions to become a world-leading city-region with a drive to become Carbon Net Zero, innovate in the digital sector, and accelerate our economic growth as the region recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic.



"Across three main themes – Career, Business and Global – this practical event will allow us to address the key issues facing our region, explore future skills to help kickstart careers, build insight into growing local businesses, and position Greater Manchester on the global stage to attract visitors and investors."

Sir Richard Leese, Leader of Manchester City Council, said: "PROGRESS21 is a leading example of how we're continuing to push the envelope in Manchester, as our city-region accelerates efforts to recover from the coronavirus pandemic.



"It will be more than a year since such a large-scale gathering has taken place here; a historic opportunity to seize the moment and set the right tone as we collectively convey the city's global ambition and opportunities to progress for the benefit of all our residents, businesses and communities."

PROGRESS21 is free to attend and will include a series of expert seminars, thought-provoking presentations, practical workshops and exhibitions.

Anyone interested in registering their interest for a PROGRESS21 event can do so on the website. The full schedule and speaker line-up will be announced soon.

PROGRESS21

One day. Three events.

CAREERS BUSINESS GLOBAL

To register your interest or find out more, visit the website PROGRESS21: progress21.co.uk
 If you are a business interested in exhibiting at PROGRESS21 Business, or an employer or skills provider interested in exhibiting at PROGRESS21 Careers, email the team at info@growthco.uk

feature

Enter the new dr

Entrepreneur and author Steven Bartlett is to join Dragons' Den, replacing Tej Lalvani to become the youngest Dragon in the programme's history.

The 28-year-old will join Dragons Peter Jones (55), Deborah Meaden (62), Touker Suleyman (67) and Sara Davies (36) for the 19th series of the BBC One programme.

As part of their Innovation Investment Index report, the investment experts at money.co.uk have discovered which of the Dragons have made the most savvy investments, as they welcome the newcomer into the Den for season 19.

Below, we've listed the top three investments for each of the Dragons, plus created a handy league table, featuring the vital statistics for every Dragon who has appeared in the last 18 seasons.

Dragon's Den League Table: Solo Deals of Past and Present

- Peter Jones is the most prolific investor in the den with 68 deals, but on average his equity stake is only around 25%.
- James Caan, who appeared during seasons 5 and 8 scored 11 solo deals in the den, with an average investment of £100,000 and 35% equity stake per deal, making him the ex-dragon who secured arguably the best deals.
- Tej Lalvani (who Steven Bartlett will replace) made 20 solo investments with an average equity of 26%.
- Deborah Meaden has the next highest number of solo deals at 62, but secures 20% on average per deal.
- Rachel Elnaugh from seasons 1 and 2 made just three investments for £229,000, with 37% equity across the deals.

Dragon	Seasons	Total Deals*	Total Invested	Average Investment
Peter Jones	1-18	68	£5,565,500	£81,846
Deborah Meaden	3-18	62	£4,667,000	£75,274
Duncan Bannatyne	1-12	27	£2,580,000	£95,556
Theo Paphitis	2-10	19	£2,115,000	£111,316
Tej Lalvani	15-18	20	£1,560,000	£78,000
James Caan	5-8	11	£1,100,000	£100,000
Touker Suleyman	13-18	16	£950,000	£59,375
Nick Jenkins	13-14	10	£670,000	£67,000
Piers Linney	11-12	8	£590,000	£73,750
Hilary Devey	9-10	7	£475,000	£67,857
Jenny Campbell	15-16	7	£415,000	£59,286
Rachel Elnaugh	1-2	3	£229,000	£76,333
Sara Davies	17-18	3	£226,000	£75,333
Richard Farleigh	3-4	3	£225,000	£75,000
Sarah Willingham	13-14	3	£142,500	£47,500
Doug Richard	1-2	1	£120,000	£120,000
Kelly Hoppen	11-12	2	£100,000	£50,000
Simon Woodroffe	1	1	£75,000	£75,000

*Deals made on the show may have since fallen through and figures do not include any joint deals made between more than one dragon

Peter Jones



Peter Jones is a British entrepreneur, businessman, and reality television personality with interests in mobile phones, television, media, leisure, retail, and property.

He is the only remaining original investor on Dragons' Den.

Net worth: **£450 million**

Portfolio Size: **21 Investments**

Average Investment: **£83,696**

Average Equity: **25%**

Total Invested: **£7,030,500**

Avg. Investments per series: **5**

Nae Danger/Glencrest Sports Drink



£200,000 Investment
30% Equity stake

Wonderland - high end magazine



£175,000 Investment
40% Equity stake

Tags snack foods Ltd



£125,000 Investment
30% Equity stake

Sara Davies



Sara is a British businesswoman, entrepreneur, and television personality. She started her business Crafter's Companion as a Student, after spotting a gap in the market for a tool that could create bespoke envelopes for handmade cards.

Net worth: **£37 million**

Portfolio Size: **3 Investments**

Average Investment: **£77,500**

Average Equity: **35%**

Total Invested: **£310,000**

Avg. Investments per series: **1**

Drynks Unlimited - Alcohol-free drinks



£125,000 Investment
7.5% Equity stake

Mak Tok - Chilli paste



£60,000 Investment
33% Equity stake

Pipe easy - pipe fitting tool



£41,000 Investment
30% Equity stake

agon...

Deborah Meaden



Deborah Meaden is a businesswoman and TV personality who ran a multimillion-pound family holiday business. She was the only businesswoman on Dragons' Den for several years, taking a tough approach to young businesses.

Net worth: **£60 million**
 Portfolio Size: **29 Investments**
 Average Investment: **£80,064**
 Average Equity: **30%**
 Total Invested: **£6,245,000**
 Avg. Investments per series: **4**

Socketz - Electrical socket protection



£100,000 Investment
40% Equity stake

Value my stuff - Antique valuation



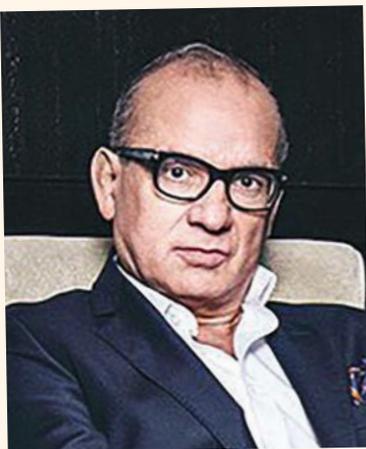
£100,000 Investment
40% Equity stake

Good Bubble - bath products for children



£60,000 Investment
40% Equity stake

Touker Suleyman



Touker is a British-Turkish Cypriot fashion retail entrepreneur, investor, and reality television personality.

In 2001, his company Low Profile Group purchased UK shirt maker Hawes & Curtis, and in 2002 he purchased UK fashion label Ghost.

Net worth: **£200 million**
 Portfolio Size: **24 Investments**
 Average Investment: **£59,167**
 Average Equity: **34%**
 Total Invested: **£1,420,000**
 Avg. Investments per series: **4**

Liquiproof - Waterproof coating



£100,000 Investment
50% Equity stake

Shnuggle - Baby products



£100,000 Investment
25% Equity stake

Tancream - Sun cream and moisturiser



£75,000 Investment
25% Equity stake

Steven Bartlett



Steven is set to become the youngest ever Dragon, taking over from Tej Lalvani for the 19th series.

He is the co-founder and former CEO of listed social media firm Social Chain, published author and podcaster.

The young entrepreneur first launched the company from his Manchester bedroom aged 22, and went on to take it public at the age of 27. The social media firm has a market value of over £300million.

Net worth: **£68.5m**
 Social Chain: **Social media marketing agency**
 Huel: **Meal replacement powder**
 Catena Capital: **Private equity investment vehicle, specialising in venture capital investments.**

GM Business Connect asked previous Dragons 'The Godfather of Small Businesses' Theo Paphitis and Jenny Campbell about how they felt about their first appearance on Dragon's Den.



"When I was approached by the Dragons' Den production team, I was initially a little unsure as to whether to go for it, even though it was potentially a major breakthrough for me. I have a fun outlook on life and business, and felt the show was way too serious at the time - but, how wrong can you be?"

"I was nervous on my first day in the Den, but I was amazed by how quickly I took to it. Mind you,

I had spent most of my working life interviewing people who had come to me with their business proposals! What hit me was that there's nothing fake about Dragons' Den - it's real in every sense of the word. We haven't a clue who - or what - might be coming up those stairs, and the pitches are very often much, much longer than they appear in the TV edit.

"I learnt very quickly that it was the person, rather than a flashy impressive pitch, that was the thing to look for. I looked for that passion, that sparkle in the eye, that can-do attitude and I was prepared to see through a supposed lack of experience and qualifications. What's important is if a person has heart and can pick up things quickly. It's that passion and determination which more often than not gets a business through the dark days and drives it forward. The Den offers a world of opportunity and was full of great moments for me."

"I remember getting the call inviting me to the Den and being so excited and yet full of trepidation too!"

"Walking onto the set on the first day was quite surreal. I loved every minute of it, especially shaking hands on a deal, getting to work straight away with the entrepreneurs and helping them to shape and grow their business.

"I'm sure Steven will be a great success and will have an immediate fan club!"



interview

New, unique & innovati

Through their global manufacturing partnerships developed over 25 years, Steroplast can offer new, unique and innovative products designed for 7 individual markets, **delivered to your door within 24 hours.**

Where does Steroplast source its medical products from?

"Steroplast has global reach giving us access to manufacturers around the world."

Do most of your imports come out of China?

"There is a misconception that 'everything' comes out of China. We import from 14 countries, because each country offers something different, or has a unique advantage. It's for this reason that we have such a wealth of knowledge on which country or region within a country offers a better choice or higher quality product."

What type of medical products can you supply?

"If you look at what we supply to the Emergency Services you'll get a sense of just how varied a range we have. From diagnostics to trauma our range is comprehensive."

Which are your main target markets?

"We provide medical products into broadly seven market sectors, but there are sub markets within each sector. **Sport, Emergency, Hospital, First Aid, Veterinary, Medical, & Retail.**"

What opportunities are there for Steroplast going forward?

"U.K. based medical companies have global appeal. In our experience British companies are still seen as providing some of the best quality and most reliable medical products anywhere in the world. Our quality compliance credentials back up all our claims."



Sedex



If a company wanted to source a specific medical product or device, could you help?

"We have joint venture partners around the world that we have vetted to ensure consistent quality and reliability. We have learned the hard way that you've got to be very careful when sourcing products used in a wide range of medical applications."

How long have you been in the industry?

"25 years acquiring knowledge and expertise which is hugely beneficial to our customers who may want advice and guidance with a new challenging project."

What would you say to someone who doesn't know Steroplast, but wants help finding a solution for a specific medical product need?

"Working with Steroplast comes with a 100% satisfaction guarantee. So starting a partnership with Steroplast is totally risk free!"

"We take the time to establish what a business really needs based on mutual cooperation. We often get asked to build bespoke medical kits for specific industries. Take the example of lone workers in the wind turbine industry. Their engineers needed a medical kit made to their specification, in a pack that had to be a specific size. We've kitted out private ambulances with all the required medical disposables and equipment."

"And in the case of **The British Red Cross**, we work with them to source all their medical products on an exclusive basis."

How have you managed stock and supply to your customers during the pandemic?

"We import from 14 countries worldwide with varying lead times and

logistical implications, so we have always had to keep three to four months "buffer" stocks to ensure a seamless service for our clients and customers. Even when containers are delayed our customers supply lines are not impacted."

On a different matter, what would you say to anyone that says Health and Safety is complicated?

"At first glance it appears that way, but with our help we can change that perception, and give guidance



Health & Safety doesn't need to be complicated

How have you coped with export to the E.U. following Brexit?

"We have plenty of experience exporting to the E.U. and have managed the changes very well through careful planning. It's true that it's been a challenge, but that's where experience is absolutely vital. It's fair to say that over twenty-five years we've become very familiar with the sometimes complex nature of export documentation, and the current changes imposed on us from the E.U. It's only the same as learning a new set of rules we would encounter from an unfamiliar country."

What size of businesses are you looking to work with?

"We love working with a wide variety of businesses, and that includes very small niche enterprises through to huge multi-nationals. We have the capacity to cope with both ends of the spectrum."

to businesses that want to ensure they are meeting their obligations and are on the right side of the law. We can do site visits to put people's concerns to rest. We can make sure that companies are compliant both in terms of procedures they need to follow, while also ensuring their first aid and medical provisions are up-to-date."

Why do you think so many people are so sceptical about Health and Safety?

"As with anything, when there is a lack of understanding as to the purpose of an organisation such as the Health and Safety Executive, the good that it does can be overlooked."

"Add to that, long standing rumours and factual inaccuracy which have been twisted out of all recognition over time leads to distrust and a degree of scepticism."



ve medical product sourcing:

"As a company we are immersed in Health and Safety and therefore understand it. We can dispel the rumours and the hearsay and present it in a user friendly way, that will get everyone on board with its benefits. The nett result being companies can feel at ease and protected with a sensible Health and Safety policy."

With Health and Safety in mind what services can you offer to businesses across Manchester and the North West?

"We set out to raise awareness of the importance of Health and Safety and what businesses need to do to ensure they are meeting their legal obligations for workplace first aid under the Health & Safety At Work Act 1974.

"We do this by showing businesses that small steps, and some careful planning are essentially all that is required. It really doesn't need to be complicated! We can lead the way, and put Health and Safety in context.

"We also offer a free, no obligation, site survey."



British Standard Workplace first aid kits own branded for Carrs Pasties



Eyewash & Woundwash could save someone's sight

Taking a few simple precautions could protect you, your business and your reputation, saving you £1000s.

"Like many business owners their reputations are built over decades, but so easily tarnished by something such as an accident that really need not have happened.

"We all hear about H&S breaches that make headline news and it is very damaging for the reputation of the company. But more often than not, simple procedures put in place could have avoided the event in the first place.

"H&S is there for everyone's protection and when maintained properly can be everyone's friend!

"It's only misinformation that gives H&S a bad reputation."

Workplace injury statistics for Great Britain 2019/20



Employees killed at work 111



Non-fatal injuries 693,000



Work days lost due to injuries 6.3 million

Non fatal workplace injuries	2019/20
Fall from height	8%
Violence in the workplace	9%
Hit by moving object	11%
Manual handling/lifting and carrying	19%
Slips/trips and falls	29%
Other	14%

We always welcome any enquiries and opportunities to help businesses around Manchester and the North West.

We are here to provide solutions to individual company needs. Please email janice@steroplast.co.uk for

A FREE guide that will demystify and clarify the great H&S conundrum - 'Health & Safety Made Simple!'



GM Business Connect recently met with Janice Watson, Head of Health & Safety for Steroplast, at Carrs Pasties in Bolton.



Janice (Steroplast Healthcare) & Peter (Carrs Pasties) with their CPAD (Community Public Access Defibrillator).

Carrs Pasties contacted Steroplast to enquire about workplace first aid kits.

Following a site visit, British Standard Catering First Aid Kits, Vehicle First Aid Kits, Eyewash/woundwash stations and Burns Kits were recommend and subsequently ordered with their own logo.

Not only that, they are now the proud owners of an AED which is accessible to the public (CPAD), in the event of a cardiac arrest.

Peter Worthington, H&S Manager of Carrs Pasties stated, "Initially we wanted some advice on our first aid equipment, and we started to look for a company who could not just supply equipment but audit what we were putting in place.

"Steroplast stood out as they were a family run business like ourselves, also they were located in Greater Manchester.

"I was really pleased with the level of service – we've been looked after extremely well. After speaking with Janice it was a very quick process to get an audit and the level of knowledge and expertise from Steroplast on workplace first aid compliance has been fantastic.

"After reviewing our facilities, one of the stand out purchases has been a defibrillator unit. I have been looking to install one of these for years, and Steroplast have helped choose and supply the right model for us. This won't only provide crucial life-saving capabilities to our own staff, but as a family-run and community conscious business the defibrillator is available for anyone in our local community that would ever need it.

"Going forward Steroplast will be visiting us on an ongoing basis, reviewing our equipment and making sure everything is fully stocked. As Health and Safety co-ordinator it's extremely reassuring that not only will supplies be replenished where required, but we have an ongoing relationship with a business that can keep us up to date with any changes or new products that will make our factory a safe environment to work."

Interested in an AED, then contact us to hear about a fantastic offer we have on IPAD SP1 Fully Automatic (available whilst stocks last).

If you would like to know more, or would like a site visit then call us on **0161 902 3030** or email janice@steroplast.co.uk



focus

Martyn's Law

On the 22nd May 2017, Figen Murray's life as she knew it changed forever.

Her son, Martyn Hett, was one of the 22 people killed in the devastating Manchester Arena bombing attack.

The shock, heartache and emptiness felt by Figen's family was overwhelming. In the aftermath, friends, family and even strangers flocked to support her and her grieving family, and while there was nothing anyone could do to bring Martyn back, the acts of kindness strengthened their faith in humanity.

While many would assume Figen's anger at what happened to Martyn, she was defiant in her message that hate fuels hate, and that being angry would only cause more heartache and pain.

Figen made it her mission to promote peace and positive change in Martyn's name.

Figen is now committed to her mission of promoting peace, kindness and tolerance in Martyn's memory, while also working towards tangible changes that can help ensure no other family has to go through what hers did.

Figen is also the force behind **Martyn's Law**, a legislation requiring entertainment venues to improve security against the threat of terrorism, and one that requires that all venues in the city have a counter-terrorism plan. Her petition to make Martyn's Law mandatory received



Figen with Martyn in their last photo together

over 23,000 signatures and is now on its way to becoming a reality.

It should apply to any place or space to which the public have access. For small venues this may require a small measure to be changed or added, e.g. a better back entrance lock or identifying a safe exit route for customers and staff in the event of an attack. Bigger venues with a greater footfall will require a more holistic approach. Martyn's Law is proportionate to the size of the venue.

It consists of 5 requirements for spaces and places which the public have access to:

- Engage with freely available online counter terrorism advice and training;
- Conduct vulnerability assessments of their operating places and spaces;
- Mitigate the risks created by the vulnerabilities;
- Put in place a counter-terrorism plan;
- A requirement for local authorities to plan for the threat of terrorism.

Martyn Hett was a remarkable young man who died doing something that he had every right to be enjoying in the knowledge that he was both safe and secure. He was the epitome of everything that terrorists are not; caring, compassionate and life-loving. He and all the others that died in 2017 were the essence of what terrorists despise and what terrorists will continue to attack, if they get the chance.

Martyn's Law will save lives and be a fitting tribute to a wonderful young man and all those who died alongside him in 2017.

Figen has recently been presented with the Outstanding Contribution award at the 2020 Counter Terror Awards in recognition of the work that she is doing and her efforts in stopping terrorism.

To help people feel less alone, Figen knits bears and gives them

personalities and backstories that often relate to mental illness. She credits Martyn with helping her gain recognition of her bears - in 2016 his tweets about the teddies went viral on social media. Her online Depop shop, Imperfect Hearts, sells knitted bears with various mental health conditions and generally uplifting backstories to not only identify with them but also to make them smile.

Figen believes every adult should own a teddy bear and she has sold hundreds of them across the world. Her book "Bears Have Issues Too" helps to shine a light on the mental health of adults through her professional knowledge as a counsellor and her more personal, lived experience. In 2017 she created Jordan Bear in Martyn's memory and set up a Facebook page dedicated to his travels across the world.

Jordan's Journey #BeMoreMartyn.

What can businesses do to help?

Martyn's Law will raise public awareness of terrorism and will be a stand alone law, not to be added to health & safety plans or fire evacuation plans and this has been agreed with the government.

However, Martyn's Law will not help if people are injured in an attack or a mass trauma incident were to happen. So venues must take responsibility and have a care of duty in being prepared

One of the startling finds to come out at the Manchester Arena inquest was the lack of first aid/medical products and this is another issue that Figen is keen to address not only for Manchester but the whole of the UK. Had there been it would have made the job of the people trying to help the injured so much easier and may have even saved lives.

Also, with inner cities being increasingly plagued by knife attacks and shootings, young people are becoming more vulnerable.

Figen has worked in collaboration with Rapaid and they have installed



trauma dressings in 200 taxis in Manchester.

More recently Figen has been liaising with local company, Steroplast Healthcare, to help raise awareness for much needed Trauma Kits and Bleed Control Kits to be readily available at public venues and stadiums should a mass casualty event happen again.

It takes only a few minutes for someone to bleed to death so those minutes are precious, having bleed control and trauma products available could save someone's life.

Be prepared, act now; take advice and training on terrorism, conduct vulnerability assessments, look at your risks, have a counter-terrorism plan and have bleed control/trauma/medical products on standby – they could help save a life one day.

Don't wait for Martyn's Law to become legislation or an incident to happen.

To find out more about Figen and the important work she is involved with visit:

figenmurray.co.uk

interview



From Submariner to IT Specialist

We recently caught up with Greg Buchanan, Managing Director of IT and Telecoms specialists Mango Tech, and asked him to share his story from watery beginnings to pioneering business solutions.

Greg, you started your career in the Navy and now you're a Director of your own business - please tell us about your journey?

"I was never very interested in school, and joined the Navy at 15 as a communications rating in the submarine service. For the next 6 years I travelled the world – not necessarily seeing much of it as we rarely docked! There was also very little room to move around in the subs. This taught me many life skills – including patience and tolerance.

"After leaving the Navy, my first role was at GCHQ as a technical consultant. From there I travelled around the UK as an IT Contractor working for many large businesses and organisations, including BT and the MoD.

"In 2012 I then set up my own business providing IT and Telecoms, and followed that by going into business with a partner in the same field. After 3 years we started to get a lot of attention from an acquisition point of view. We then sold the business to Intec in 2019, and I spent the next 12 months as Managing Director of Intec.

"After the year with Intec I decided to start again as a new business – and this is where we are today with Mango Tech."

How does Mango Tech differ from your previous businesses?

"A lot of the concerns I had with running a larger business was the lack of closeness to our clients, and it's something that I realised I really missed. When I set up Mango Tech I spent 6 months building the whole business around customer service. We've ensured this is at the very heart of what we do.

"Everything had to be perfect before we launched, including the helpdesk operation and specifically any area that customers relied on to have a great experience."

What services do you provide, and what kind of customers are you working with?

"Mango Tech provide IT support, On-premise desktop solutions and a full suite of business IT. We also provide telecom services such as business broadband, business mobile and telephony, such as VOIP, and the idea is that we are a one stop shop for any business requiring IT.

"We have a particular focus on the legal and accountancy sector, in fact any business that requires strict regulatory accountability. My background is in secure IT, in some instances top secret situations where the utmost security is required for the installed systems.

"As well, we are finding a niche with home broadband, especially with all the movement recently to home working. This is where we enjoy working locally as we have far more local knowledge than the national suppliers and can offer much better deals.

"Having run a business and sold a business of a certain size you realise that you can't be all things to all men. And that also means you can't be everywhere for everyone. So focusing locally, on the Greater Manchester region means that we can provide that dedicated onsite and support without stretching ourselves too thin. This includes making ourselves available as quickly as possible

to fix things where necessary."

How has your experience with the Armed Forces influenced your role operating and growing an independent business, and what are your affiliations with Ex Service personnel?

"Learning positive attributes like tolerance, patience and authenticity from my time in the armed forces have set me on a very steady road throughout my career.

"Mango Tech have signed the Armed Forces Covenant. This means we will promise to treat all past and current members of the forces and their families with respect. This is actually very easy to uphold as this is the basis on which we engage with all businesses and individuals."

You have spoken about the importance of running an ethical business. Can you elaborate?

"Technology, particularly IT and Telecoms, can be very a very misleading place. There are many people out there that will attempt to confuse people in order to make money.

"We run our business ethically and ensure complete transparency so customers see us and trust us as part of their business structure going forward. By operating with authenticity and being ethical in our business dealings we are aiming to ensure long lasting relationships."

Where are you intending to be with the business in 5 years?

"I've got a particular route, and that is not to overtrade, or to grow too fast. I've got no desire to be a huge business. I think within 5 years I'd like Mango Tech to be a local go-to solution for IT and telephony requirements.

"The brand so far is pretty strong, and the enjoyable thing I'm seeing is that by finding similar clients who have the same ethics as ourselves, we are appreciating great partnerships with those 'like-minded' businesses."



Greg Buchanan, Managing Director, Mango Tech

To find out more about Mango Tech, call us on **0333 358 2012**
sales@mango-tech.co.uk www.mango-tech.co.uk

networking

Good to be b

The end of May saw most of the UK coming out of lockdown measures that finally saw face to face business networking events become possible once again. To mark the occasion GM Business Connect sponsored a Manchester evening networking event hosted by BITA (the British and Irish Trade Alliance) at the iconic Atlas Bar, situated in City Centre Manchester.



We ran a feature on the impact of COVID-19 on Manchester's hospitality sector in our February/ March edition, featuring an interview with owners Mark and Elaine Wrigley, who were very pleased to once again to be hosting the region's business community coming together at their venue.

As well as offering over 540 Gin brands, the bar featured a fantastic area outside offering safe networking for 30 guests – a number still limited by government guidelines.

GM Business Connect's Jon Cheetham and Paul Mirage were in attendance, and Paul commented:

"It was a great event, and the Atlas Bar did a tremendous job of offering us all a warm and safe welcome. Getting back to face-to-face networking is extremely important for a business like ourselves, and it's events like these that will help kick-start the economy and ensure a sense of community is re-established - which will ultimately help support well-being within the entire business sector."

On arrival, all attendees received a welcome drink with a fantastic selection of foods provided by the Atlas Bar. BITA President Paul Whitnell attended, and he was lost

for words when he saw GM Business Connect's new banner featuring him on a recent magazine cover.

As BITA's President, Paul welcomed all attendees with Tony Goodman MBE, Manchester Chair of BITA. A number of BITA board members were also in attendance making the event a good opportunity to catch up with old friends as well as getting to know new ones.

True to many good old fashioned face-to-face networking events it went on well beyond the 8pm scheduled finish, and the observations from both members and guests was positive, with a number of prospective visitors signing up to BITA membership on the back of the event.

Manchester's BITA Chapter is currently in the process of arranging a lunch event, as well as many more networking opportunities throughout



2021, especially as further lockdown measures are being relaxed across the UK.



BITA Board Members L-R Paul Mirage, Paul Whitnell (President), Stacy Byrne, Tony Goodman MBE (Manchester Chair), Tony Greenway



ack!

GM Business Connect took the opportunity after the event to speak with Paul Whitnell. We asked Paul to describe how he thought this very first face to face BITA event went, and how successful was it in communicating the BITA message:

"The sentiment of any message is hard to relate both online and in email. Meeting someone face to face offers a different level of attraction in terms of business.

"When you're speaking to someone, there are subtle ways to see if there is an instant reaction to whether they are agreeing with or averse to your concepts or thoughts. Even with online face to face meetings, much of the subtle reactionary nuances are difficult to see compared to live meetings.

"This is what we've lost by going online. We don't get the same ability to gauge those feelings from people, and the sincerity of our messages are getting lost.

"People can also hide away to a certain extent from engaging fully in an online conversation. There would be plenty of nodding and general physical elements of someone being engaged in a conversation, but the physical evidence of someone being totally on board in what you are speaking about can be missing.

"So, when you come to a position of engaging and securing a business deal it is very difficult to replace the depth of communication and authenticity that is only experienced in a live face to face discussion."

Apart from a range of subtleties lost on online meetings, are there any other aspects of face to face networking that are important?

"There is the sentiment of enjoying the act of getting out. Life has become very mundane in terms of work, and because we have been restricted and unable to enjoy the social element of spending time with people in different physical spaces, it seems we are working more and more than we have done previously.

"The danger of this and the impact on our mental wellness is that we don't see we are sitting in an office from 7 in the morning to 7 at night, and sometimes later. We don't stop, we don't take breaks. When we were out and about there were natural breaks happening.

"There were the travel times between one event or meeting to another, where you would have to concentrate on the travelling rather than work. This time would also be spent in reviewing what had taken place in the previous event, and perhaps notes would be made and emails would be written. All too often we'd now jump virtually from one meeting to another without time to take breath."

How have you viewed this event, which although was face to face, was still subject to us sitting at tables following COVID guidance?

"One thing that struck me was a sense of freedom. Even though we were restricted to sitting down with a small group or next to one other person in a personal face to face situation, we overcame the limitations by rotating tables ensuring everyone had the chance to chat with a good number of other attendees.

"This also resulted in a feeling of

camaraderie, where people knew they were all working together to make the event a success. In fact, by everyone working together, those relationships that were established could then develop knowing the people involved were supportive of working together – a very basic but very important aspect of successfully choosing the right supplier or partnership in business."

How successful was the event in sharing the BITA message?

"The main message we'd like to promote with BITA is the importance of working together. It's that caring, sharing, generosity of spirit which is the central core of BITA, and what our organisation allows you to do is to practice these things and become a better person for it.

"By listening to others, sharing with others and helping others, you will inevitably get back the same from others within an environment such as ours.

"When you're presented with a problem that seems impossible to solve, the best thing to do is to reach out to others. A problem shared is a problem halved is the old maxim. We like to create opportunities to do just that. When you're surrounded by the right sort of people that are there for a genuine reason, as we are here in Manchester with a great group of people with a common goal of integrating themselves in a business community anchored on generosity and freedom of spirit, that's where the magic happens. And that is what BITA is totally built on."

The BITA motto is 'the people who know people that help people'. Can you explain this in more detail?

"It's a very straightforward statement to make. The important point though is being able to back it up, and we can do so with all the people in different BITA chapters around the UK and Ireland, and even further afield.

We all have different ways of doing things, but the people that make up our collective have the ability to offer positive guidance, support and help through the community that is BITA.

"It is so important that we get back to face to face networking. This is best practice. I can guarantee that hiding behind a computer screen will inevitably result in whatever you intend to communicate be miscommunicated so quickly.

"We have got to accept the responsibility of standing in front of one another and of sharing and caring."

What business related issues are most important to you?

"There are a number of concerns that I feel are crucially important. I believe manufacturing and self-sustainability are the way forward. Also of serious concern is our surrounding environment.

"Everything is inter-related, and one of the statements that BITA always refer to is 'We cannot recycle our way out of this. Stopping use is the only way we will save our environment, and we haven't got long.' This is a very strong statement, and when you repeat that you realise that if we don't make these changes in our lives we will be going down a rabbit hole."

Finally, what are the type of businesses that you would like to see join BITA?

"We are very keen to bring on board businesses who share the same ethos as ourselves. Those people that are keen to increase their own prospects through sharing with and supporting other businesses in a positive manner.

"We are specifically looking for members who are decision makers in the field of Innovation, Manufacturing, Design, Training and Technology. Essentially businesses represented by people who know people that help people!"



For more information please visit www.bitai.e,
email Paul on paulw@bitai.e,
or email Laura, BITA's operations manager laura@bitai.e

exporting



value, goods, then a budget supermarket may not be the place for you. These considerations are exactly the same as selling in your home market.

Right Price When you have decided which products you want to sell into the market, and selected the right place for you to be, then how to price?

You have to be aware of the competition, but sometimes imported goods can withstand a premium price cache. It is important that you get your pricing right to start with and there is no point in pricing at a level that won't make you any profit.

Taking these three factors into account it then makes sense to look for markets with similar characteristics to those of your home market customers – the low hanging fruit.

If you base your export strategy on finding similar markets rather than just countries of interest you are more likely to pinpoint that low hanging fruit.

You may also want to change the way that you move your goods to market from how you operate in your home market. For instance, having a good local distributor can remove a lot of problems from understanding the local market, and hopefully may take care of all the logistics.

You would have to make careful allowance for the margins that a distributor will need and your pricing structure must allow for this.

The hardest part...

The hardest part of any journey is the first step. Taking small steps on your export journey need that one essential decision: that you are going to start. **Why not try?** There is big, inviting world out there.



Tony Goodman MBE

is a successful exporter and has been doing so through a variety of different businesses. He is currently Marketing Advisor at Forest and Co who specialise in offering guidance on branding, exporting and sales:

www.forestandco.com

The first time you start to sell away from your local neighbourhood it could be said that you have started your export journey. There is nothing scary or mysterious about exporting, it is simply about selling your products or services 'somewhere else'.

With exporting, that somewhere else has come to be understood as being to another country, but the principles behind it are exactly the same.

Exporting is just selling!

The first time you receive an enquiry from a potential customer in London, perhaps when sat in your office somewhere in Manchester, you have new issues to consider; how will I deliver? Should I price differently? How will I service the customer?

It is exciting and generally you will find the way. But what if it was Belfast? That brings the additional complication of crossing the sea. You find that there are delivery companies that do this every day and will help. Perhaps Dublin? Its no further than Belfast and they speak the same language, so at least you can communicate well, but they are a different country and after Brexit a different jurisdiction. Then you find the rules are very similar and that

so much trade crosses the Irish sea every day that there is plenty of help at hand.

The world beckons

So now lets push further afield, let's try Canada or the USA; the language is the same but the rules are different. Sometimes, depending on the products or services you sell, very different.

Yes, there is now some more work to do to understand different rules and customs. For instance, in the USA, weights have to be shown first in ounces, but can then also show grammes. This is more adventurous, but the potential customer base is so huge that some additional effort is worthwhile.

The next stage is to try to export to countries that don't have English as a first language. That can seem daunting, but help is readily at hand.

It is remarkable how widely English is spoken across the world, and so even if your prospects do not speak English, it will be easy to find help with translations.

The key point I am making here is that whilst the prospect of exporting may seem at first to be daunting, it is a natural progression in business.

There are many advantages for a business to seriously consider that can come with exporting:

- English is a world language. This may be one of the greatest commercial advantages UK companies can have.

- The UK brand is strong and very well respected. In many parts of the world having a Union Jack on the product is seen as a sign of quality.
- The Government is providing significant levels of support and resources to help businesses to export, including free expert guidance, both locally based and in territory. This has been increasing over recent years.
- Support is also forthcoming from non governmental organisations including, trade bodies, chambers of commerce, local enterprise zones and many more.
- Exporting is a great opportunity to increase your sales and your profits.

Key Considerations

Many of the considerations when exporting are the same as for selling in your home market, and for me there are three key factors:

- Right Product

- Right Price

- Right Place

These apply wherever you are selling, but are definitely worth focusing on when you are considering exporting.

Right Product Not all products will suit all markets, so you should ensure that you only try to export products that are suited to the markets you are looking to sell into.

Right Place If you have luxury, high

China Xpress to be extended to regular liner operation

DKT Allseas' pioneering China Xpress shipping services from Shanghai and Ningbo to Liverpool are now to be extended into a regular liner operation following the success of the first group of sailings.

This is the first service of its kind from the Far East into the north of England port, and following the success of its initial sailings, DKT Allseas (part of Allseas Global Logistics) says it will operate further services in response to "overwhelming demand".

The logistics specialists have already commenced additional sailings throughout May/June and the plan is to continue operating a regular call in the future. Allseas added that its

first three sailings operated at full capacity, from the Far East direct to Liverpool.

DKT Allseas launched its China Xpress initiative in early April to provide relief to customers facing increased ocean freight rates, as well as reduced reliability, as a result of knock-on effects relating to the global pandemic.

Allseas Global Logistics managing director Darren Wright said: "Our first three sailings were completely sold out and we've now fixed an additional six sailings and looking to introduce further services over the coming months, working towards a longer-term frequent Far

East service for our customers."

He added that focusing on single ports of loading and discharge offered a more robust solution, especially for time sensitive goods.

Owner and operator of Port of Liverpool, Peel Ports, said it was well positioned as a viable call for Far East services and other deep-sea lines. Managing director, David Huck, said: "The success of the Allseas services shows there is demand for a direct China to

Liverpool service. We've worked closely with Allseas to provide a gateway from the Far East direct into the heart of the UK's cargo owning community."

He added that while the Allseas service would use smaller vessels, "our continued investment into our Liverpool2 deep-water container terminal also means we can handle some of the world's largest vessels and facilitate deep sea routes, strengthening our position as a viable call for Far East trade."

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China Xpress



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Exporting continues on next page



Continued from
previous page

exporting

Preparation has been the **key**



Marie Boyer, Managing Director, France Line Ltd.

Marie Boyer, managing director of the European freight forwarder France Line International Transport Ltd, known as France Line, discusses the post-Brexit realities for her independent business which specialises in cross channel road

freight services between the UK and France.

"With a few fortunate examples, the first few months of 2021 have been exceptionally tough on UK manufacturers and freight forwarders. What we have found

crucial to our success is the way we have adapted and re-evaluated our organisations and found new ways to keep trading on profitably despite so many factors working against us.

"For us at France Line, this resourcefulness has been paying off for ourselves and our customers."

Honest, realistic advice and customs solutions

"There is no denying that the first quarter of 2021 was challenging, especially January when every EU market, including France, was disrupted due to the introduction of new customs procedures and European trade became more complex.

"However, we have fared better than many in our industry, principally due to us having warned our customers

that a free trade deal would not mean they could continue as normal. Training in the new regulations has been extremely important for us to help our customers prepare for them.

"Of course, our figures in volume and turnover were down on the previous year, but we had a good quarter overall, and as of writing, everything is trending upwards."

"Since then we have seen some further improvements in quarter two. Yes the UK's trade with Europe is down, but we are staying positive as new customers from different sectors of industries are coming on board mainly for our full load and express services.

"On the one hand, some of our traffic and volume are down as many EU importers are replacing their British suppliers with suppliers from within



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in adapting to Brexit

the EU due to the complexity and expense of the new additional customs processes.

"On the other hand, we are winning new business, for both exports and imports, though mainly for exports to France and the EU. We're finding this is due to giving honest, realistic advice and customs solutions - and the feedback from our new customers is extremely positive.

"We have also picked up some new business due to a number of competitors reducing their services or struggling to trade with France and Europe, and us having good trailer capacity, as well as the understanding of the data required by customs for these trailers to move without issues.

"In addition a number of old customers have been returning, businesses

who had used cheaper competitors, but have come back to us because the hassle-free transport and customs solutions we deliver is worth the price we charge."

Help with the new normal

"Whilst some of our customers handle the customs themselves via their own agent and only book transport with us, our customs services are popular, especially with customers with smaller volumes who are struggling to get access to customs agents, many of whom are not taking on new clients.

"We actually prefer to handle all the customs directly ourselves if we can, so that we are in control of everything - we find this works better.

"Having a good network of UK,

French and European customs agents and having a very good relationship with them has also crucial - they have been very cooperative and been there to help us and our customers when we needed it.

"In fact, it is the relationships that we nurture that has seen us outperform our competitors.

"We have worked alongside both our customers and our hauliers and drivers to explain the new customs rules and data requirements, and helped them to implement new working practices.

"This hand-holding service has become a key differentiator for us.

"Unsurprisingly, there are still many shippers confused by Incoterms and rules of origins, something which

we do think is likely to last until later on in the year, but we are working closely with any new prospect to help them overcome these obstacles, especially for France which has been our specialist market since France Line's inception 41 years ago, and still remains our main market today.

"Exports to and imports from the other Western and Eastern European countries we service are still being developed in relation to new customs regulations, and this will be an area of increased attention for us in the next few months.

"Our aim is to carry on identifying our customers' needs, adapting to meet these, and carrying on moving onwards and upwards."

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Economic uncertainty post-COVID means talent development is more important than ever

Economic commentators across the globe continue to debate, analyse and predict the impact that the pandemic has had on global, national and local economies.

Many are prescribing to the 'V-shaped' scenario (see: Figure 1), where the obvious significant economic challenges brought on by COVID-19 (demonstrated by the UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as falling by almost 10% in 2020 compared to 2019) recover quickly and strongly.

Current predictions of a 7.25% growth in GDP in 2021 - the fastest growth since World War II - would possibly support this. Others are looking at alternative outcomes, with the letter 'K' being used by some as the descriptor (see: Figure 2). This would see potential strong performances in larger corporates and public sector organisations, while other, smaller business may continue to struggle.

Other potentials include the 'W' (see: Figure 3); pessimistic-strong-decline again, and the 'L' (see: figure 4); which is a decline and remain low.

What is clear is that uncertainty and challenges lie ahead across all sectors and all economies. The legacy of huge market and economic interruption, where there has been huge amounts of business casualties and a vast reliance on state support, will be a period of instability.

We cannot underestimate the importance of people and their performance in enabling organisations to navigate these challenging times ahead and the instability that is amongst us. Talent recruitment and development is more important than ever before.

Critical to this is improving the core skillsets that are required for individuals to perform successfully in their chosen occupation and profession, but so too is the development of a skillset that may have previously been alien to as a business or a function. Furthermore, it can be argued that these skills are not

merely a response to the pandemic and that their need has been emerging for some time.

The globally recognised leadership and business consultants, McKinsey, suggest four key areas that businesses and organisations should focus on. The first is perhaps the most obvious; to expand the ability for people and businesses to operate in a fully digital environment.

The second encourages cognitive development to enable redesign and innovation.

The third revisits the importance of communication and relationships moving forward, aiming to strengthen social and emotional skills so we are better placed to collaborate, lead and motivate.

Finally, developing the adaptability and resilience of people is vital as we enter an age of change, with automaton and digital solutions gathering momentum and speeds unseen before.

Figure 1: The 'V' Shape

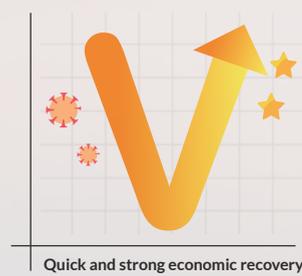


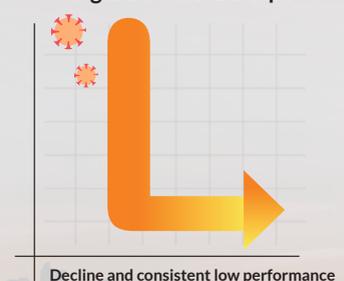
Figure 2: The 'K' Shape



Figure 3: The 'W' Shape



Figure 4: The 'L' Shape



It is not surprising that we are seeing Government position the skills sector at the heart of the nation's pandemic bounce back. Statutory changes are being made to ensure the post-16 education sector is best placed to drive the nation forward, with Colleges and employers working hand-in-hand to develop the talent with the skills, knowledge and behaviours that we need to move forward.

Vocational education is not what it used to be; workshops with poor equipment and out of date lecturers. Today, Further Education Colleges are multi-million-pound education

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economy

Spend, Spend, Spend... ...the Shoppers are back!



Analysis from Dr John Ashcroft on the economic impact of Covid-19

Retail sales jumped by almost 10% in April. Masked shoppers returned to the high street. Sales were up 40% compared to April last year. Sales were up by 12% compared to pre-pandemic levels in the months of 2019.

Clothing stores were major beneficiaries. Sales volumes increased by 70% compared to the prior month. Household goods sales jumped 10%. Furniture sales were up by 30%. Sales of cosmetics were up by 25%. DIY and garden centre sales were down. Shoppers had other things on their mind as the high street moved back into business.

Salvation for the high street? More of a respite perhaps. Online sales increased by 32% year on year. Clothing sales were up by over 80% year on year. Household goods sales were up by almost 30%. As a proportion of all retail sales, online slipped to 30% of all retail. This was in line with our 30% forecast for the second quarter, as more options open for retail traffic.

Fastest output growth for twenty years...

Business activity is expanding

at the fastest rate since records began according to the latest PMI data compiled by IHS Markit and CIPS. The composite output index increased to 62.0 compared to 60.7 last month. The manufacturing index increased to 63.2. The service sector index increased to 61.8. This all bodes well for a strong recovery this year.

Chris Williamson, Chief Business Economist at IHS Markit, said *"The UK is enjoying an unprecedented growth spurt as the economy reopens. Factory orders are surging at a record pace as global demand continues to revive. The service sector is reporting near record growth as the opening up of the economy allows more businesses to trade. Business confidence has hit an all time high as concerns about the impact of the pandemic continue to fade."*

Growth expectations rise for the year...

Growth expectations have been revised up according to the latest forecasts for the UK economy published by HM Treasury this month. The average forecast for GDP growth is now 6.4% compared

to 5.3% last month. The American banks lead the pack. Goldman Sachs forecast growth of 8.1%. JP Morgan forecast growth of 7.9%. The Bank of England now expects growth of 7.25% in 2021.

For the moment economists appear to be pretty relaxed about the prospects for inflation. CPI inflation is expected to average 2.2% in the final quarter and through most of the following year. We think that may be a tad optimistic. We expect inflation to hit the 3% CPI basis and soon.

So what of spending?

The Chancellor has urged households to get out and spend. *"Go have fun and spend money"*. People should *"do their bit"* by spending savings they had built up during the lockdown, said Rishi Sunak.

The Chancellor believes there are a lot of excess savings, which could be a stimulus to growth. The Office For Budget Responsibility suggested in March, households have accumulated £180 billion in forced savings over the past year or more.

Household spending fell by £136 billion last year, incomes increased by £15 billion. The effective nominal savings were £150 billion over the twelve month period. Add in a further quarter of lockdown in 2021, and the quantum of "savings" increases to over £180 billion.

Expenditure has been curtailed by restrictions in "opportunities to spend". Incomes were supported by the relatively low increase in unemployment, an increase in universal credit claims and the introduction of the furlough scheme. Without Treasury intervention, the household loss would have been 9% of total incomes.

Households have been accumulating savings and cutting back borrowing. We estimate some £25 billion of repayments have been made on credit cards and other

loans since March last year, using Bank of England data.

The OBR is forecasting a *"strong recovery in consumption in its central forecast over the second half of 2021, primarily a direct consequence of the re-opening of the economy as restrictions are relaxed."*

Our TSE forecasts suggest household spending will increase by 7.9% this year and 7.4% in 2022. This is consistent with our forecasts of 6% plus real GDP growth. Spending could be higher. We disaggregate the forecast into major spending categories. Major beneficiaries will be restaurants and hotels, up 42%, clothing up 32%, net tourism up 88% and transport up 15%.

So what could go wrong? Shoppers may experience higher prices in the process as businesses try to recovery lost profits. Prices are increasing as a result of higher shipping and transport costs. Limited occupancy levels are pushing up operating costs.

For the moment, the shops are open, the crowds are back on the streets, confidence is high, consumers have the money and they are ready to spend.

Dr John Ashcroft specialises in economics, strategy and financial markets. He is author of *The Saturday Economist*, great updates every week on the UK and World Economy. *The Saturday Economist Live* is now available as a podcast and on Zoom.

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credit management

Credit control policies and the need for good credit management

If your business doesn't have a credit policy it should get one or create one as soon as possible.

The main benefits of good credit management policies are to ensure a business maximises credit sales with the minimum amount of risk.

Credit risks should be identified to reduce the risk of sales going wrong and invoices not being collected in accordance with agreed terms.

Your credit policy should detail the requirements you have set for your terms of payment.

Recent research suggests that UK SME's are owed on average £130,000 in late payments.

In the last 12 months as much as 20% of all invoices issued by small to medium sized businesses were paid late. The percentage of businesses paying their suppliers late increased from 41% to 47% in 2020.

Over 50% of UK SME's rely on customers paying them to ensure that they in turn can pay their own creditors.

After more than a year of trying to run businesses with reduced sales or with the lack of access to support or funding many businesses are now pinning their hopes of recovery on a rapid increase in sales when all restrictions are lifted on 21 June.

However, that hope will only come to fruition if businesses have enough cashflow to support the initial increase in sales.

Another potential risk to recovery is whether the end of the furlough scheme at the end of September with have a positive or adverse effect on already struggling companies.

If you are owed money by a company that has furloughed the majority or all of its staff, then when the scheme ends they will be trading from a standing start with no cashflow to fund the business whilst it gets "back to normal".

Sadly many businesses will become insolvent and will cease trading. Who knows what will happen to the estimated 4 million workers that are currently paid via the furlough scheme.

However, it is not all doom and

gloom. More than half of small businesses are now more aware of how business funding works, having possibly utilised the Government schemes such as the Bounce Back Loan and the CBILS loan. Almost 55% of businesses are now much more likely to seek advice regarding finance for their business than they would in previous years.

As the economy reopens there are a number of essential tasks you should implement if you haven't already done so:-

1) Know your customer (also known as KYC). Ensure you know who you are trading with. Is it for example John Smith, or John Smith Limited, or John Smith and Sons trading in partnership. Credit reports are readily available online for a small fee.

2) Create a set of payment terms that will make your clients aware of how long they have to pay your invoices. Always issue your trade credit terms to new clients before the first order. Don't be afraid to retrospectively issue terms to all your existing clients.

3) Ensure you are invoicing your

clients effectively and accurately.

An incorrect invoice will delay payment. It is worthwhile contacting your clients before an invoice is due for payment to confirm they have received the invoice and to enquire when the invoice will be on the payment run.

4) Know when to chase payment and assign responsibility for chasing to a specific member of staff if you don't already have a credit controller within your business.

5) If all efforts fail, seek professional advice from a solicitor or a debt collection agency.



Paul Daine

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wellbeing

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Are you one of those people who everyone turns to in a crisis?

You're calm, confident, together and never seem to flap under pressure. People trust that when they turn to you for answers, you'll be there for them, ready to help, able to find solutions to problems, all the while providing reassurance and comfort.

But what about you? Who looks after you on your tough days and gives you the comfort and support you sometimes need?

Would people be incredulous to discover that you sometimes have down days? Perhaps you come across as someone who never needs anything, as a person who doesn't have 'off' days.

Do you always remain calm under pressure, stay even-tempered when things go wrong or don't go to plan, able to quietly assess what needs to happen next?

There are no histrionics, just a measured assessment of what's going on and what needs to happen to put things right again. So, people understandably assume that you're fine, relaxed and coping well.

Might it be that you're a very private person and prefer for people not to see a vulnerable side to your personality, fearing that you could appear weak or unable to cope?

In reality, many people are fine, even happy to see an occasional vulnerability in someone they respect. It humanises them and gives others an opportunity to reciprocate and be helpful in return.

Ask yourself if you present an, 'I'm tough, I'm coping, leave me alone', almost aggressive front at times of crisis. If you become angry, hostile or belligerent when things go wrong, pushing potential help away, others may quickly learn to leave you to sort things out alone.

It's important to be gracious and respectful when people offer help. Be polite and acknowledge their efforts with a 'thank you', even if you choose to decline.



Remember, though, that doing everything yourself is not always the most efficient way to function.

There are bound to be areas where you could delegate tasks that others are better equipped to do, so enabling your time to be used more effectively.

Also, letting others share the load helps them feel valued, develop their confidence and skills whilst potentially allowing you to focus elsewhere and maybe even have time off for fun and recharging your batteries.

In a business or work scenario there maybe, under normal circumstances, support which provides help and advice wherever needed; HR, occupational health, staff appraisals as well as any staff benefits may usually be available to employees.

But during the pandemic, if working from home or operating as a small or sole trader, many of those familiar points of contact are for the most part inaccessible or even unavailable. Working alone means dealing with whatever crops up as best you can.

There are many ways that you could let others look after you. Scheduling regular zoom calls can be an important way of keeping in touch, to discuss problem areas and still feel connected to friends, colleagues and advisers.

As a sole trader, delegating mundane tasks frees your time to be used more productively, as does letting others with greater expertise take care of the

more specialised tasks like accounts, web design, PR and advertising. Doing this maximises opportunities for the best outcomes.

Even hiring domestic help with cleaning, gardening, ironing is often money well spent, ensuring that your home is well looked after, feels good and leaves you with time and space to comfortably relax.

Learn to let others know that you appreciate their looking after you.

Acknowledge the kindnesses; the bath run for you after a tough day at work, the drink made for you without being asked, the meal ready for you, the car washed or filled with petrol.

Your being appreciative encourages others to look after you. It shows that you value their thoughtfulness and attention. Changing your approach may take a little time to filter through, but it's worth it and can gradually introduce a more balanced dynamic to the relationship.

But, ultimately looking after you has to start with you. Many of us learn in childhood to expect others to automatically take care of us, look after our health, education, give us guidance and provide structure to our lives.

As we get older, we need to recognise the importance of monitoring our own wellbeing, take responsibility for our exercise, nutrition, hydration levels, and healthy sleep patterns.

Our mental and emotional wellbeing is also important, where we learn to regularly schedule breaks, manage stress and support our commitment to positive relationships.

When you demonstrate that you're worth caring for and expect to be treated well, people will respond to your level of confidence.

Being appropriately assertive, positive about yourself and your efforts, okay about saying 'no' sometimes, others will be influenced by your lead. You'll find that they'll then automatically invest more in the relationship and be happy to look after you, as they appreciate you more and more.



Susan Leigh MNCH (ACC)

Altrincham, Cheshire and South Manchester counsellor, hypnotherapist, relationship counsellor, writer and media contributor offers help with relationship issues, stress management, assertiveness and confidence. She works with individual clients, couples and provides corporate workshops and support.

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Virtual diary dates

Due to the exceptional circumstances we find ourselves in, many business networking events, shows, expos and 'face to face' events have been cancelled, postponed or reworked as virtual events until further notice.

Rest assured the Greater Manchester business networking community will be back as soon as the current crises fades and we get clear advice from government that all is well, but in the meantime we are presenting a series of 'virtual' solutions available to the business community to keep networking but stay safe. We're also listing a number of events that are pencilled in for later in this year and next in the hope that the situation has changed by then, and we're also featuring some re-arranged events that have recently moved.

Regular readers will also note our 'places to meet' page has been omitted.

Again, once the situation changes we'll be re-introducing this.

4 Networking

Online networking

Cost £5+VAT per meeting.
Membership £19.99+VAT per month.
Contact www.4networking.biz

page 20 BITA (British and Irish Trading Alliance)

Online networking using Zoom

BITA Joint Manchester+Leeds every fortnight
25 Jun, 9 Jul, 23 Jul 4.00pm - 5.00pm

BITA London every week
18 Jun, 25 Jun, 2 Jul 8.00am - 9.00am

BITA Irish Networking every month
8 Jul, 12 Aug, 9 Sep 8.00am - 9.00am

Cost FREE until further notice

Live face to face events

BITA Joint Manchester+Leeds luncheon
13 Aug 12noon - 5.00pm

Venue The Lowry Hotel, 50 Dearmans Place, Salford, Manchester M3 5LH

Cost £TBC (BITA members get discounted tickets).

BITA Liverpool Networking Lunch
30 Jul 12noon - 5.00pm

Venue Anfield Stadium, Anfield, Liverpool L4 0TF

Cost £80+VAT (BITA members get discounted tickets).

Contact Paul Whitnell paulw@bita.ie
www.bita.ie

BNI Alchemy Didsbury

Online networking using Zoom

Weekly every Thurs 6.30am - 9.00am

Cost FREE until further notice

Contact Andy Walsh 0161 250 5040

Notes Please contact Andy Walsh to arrange joining as a guest.

BNI Graphene Manchester

Online networking using Zoom

Weekly every Weds 10.00am - 12.30pm

Cost FREE until further notice

Contact John Galloway 07971 161621

Notes Please contact John Galloway to arrange joining as a guest

Dynamic Networking

Zoom Networking

Cost FREE

Contact natalie@dynamicnetworking.biz
www.dynamicnetworking.biz

www.facebook.com/groups/DynamicNetworkOnline/

High Peak Business Club

Regular monthly breakfast networking + high calibre speakers

Contact Edwina Currie for further information

Contact edwinacurrie@sky.com
www.highpeakbusinessclub.co.uk

K-Club

Entrepreneur's networking events

Virtual Lunch - Speaker + networking

For further details please contact Amanda Manson.

Contact Amanda Manson 07754 069 829
www.k-club.co.uk

page 32 Lancashire Business Expo

1 Day Business Expo

24 Sep 9.00am - 3.00pm

Venue Guild Hall, Lancaster Road, Preston PR1 1HT

Cost FREE (pre-registration required).

Contact shoutexpo.com

Notes GM Business Connect are media partners.

M Postcode Business Hub

Monthly online zoom networking.

Multiple breakout rooms.

17 Jun 2.00pm - 3.30pm

Cost FREE

Contact 0161 505 1054
www.mpostcode.co.uk

page 11 The Northern Business Expo 2022

2 Day Expo and Conference

15 + 16 March 2022 10.00am - 4.00pm

Venue Manchester Central, Windmill Street, Manchester M2 3GX

Contact northexpo.biz

Notes GM Business Connect are media partners.

Northern Restaurant and Bar

2 Day Expo and Conference

29 + 30 June 2021 10am-5pm

Venue Manchester Central, Windmill Street, Manchester M2 3GX

Cost FREE (Trade only)

Contact www.northernrestaurantandbar.co.uk

page 32 Northwest Business Expo

1 Day Business Expo

5 Nov 9.00am - 3.00pm

Venue Bolton Whites Hotel, University of Bolton Stadium, De Havilland Way, Bolton BL6 6SF

Cost FREE (pre-registration required).

Contact shoutexpo.com

Notes GM Business Connect are media partners.

pro-manchester

Hot topic breakfasts, Sector lunches,

Economic Updates, Panel debates

- all face to face events postponed or cancelled.

Full programme of webinar-based events available

Contact Nicola McCormick 07929 671755
nicola.mccormick@pro-manchester.co.uk

Full listings of online and offline events can be found on: www.pro-manchester.co.uk

page 4 Pure ConnectWorking

GM Business Connect Magazine invites you to

Friday afternoon face to face networking

23 Jul 4.00pm - 7.00pm

Venue Hotel Brooklyn, 59 Portland Street, Manchester M1 3HP

Cost £20+VAT (Price includes a £5 Forever Manchester tombola ticket)

Contact Paul Mirage 07708 987518
paul@businessconnectpublishing.co.uk
Tickets available through EventBrite

Stockport Expo

1 Day Expo and Conference

** Postponed ** 10am - 4pm

Venue Stockport County FC, Edgeley Park Hardcastle Road, Stockport SK3 9DD

Cost FREE

Notes Originally scheduled for 2020. GM Business Connect are media partners and will publicise updated information as soon as it is available.

Contact www.stockportexpo.co.uk

The Business Network Manchester

Online networking to replace monthly face to face networking

23 Jun, 22 Jul, 18 Aug 11.50am - 1.30pm

Cost £15

Contact Helen Bennett 0161 823 1384
helen@business-network.co.uk
www.business-network.co.uk

The Business Network South Manchester

Mix of online networking running with face to face networking.

Live face to face networking and lunches:

1 Jul 12noon - 2.00pm (optional seminar at 10.30am available)

Venue Cottons Hotel, Manchester Road, Knutsford WA16 0SU

5 Aug 12noon - 2.00pm

Venue Mottram Hall, Wilmslow Road, Mottram SK10 4QT

Cost £46.80

Contact Simon Edmondson 07766 493428
Simon.Edmondson@business-network.co.uk
www.business-network.co.uk

Please note If you plan to link to any of the above events please ensure all details are correct in advance. Whilst every effort has been made to confirm accuracy some details may be subject to change.

Some of the following organisations may be active with online networking.

Please check their websites regularly for more up to date information:

Bowdon Business Club

Contact Members@BowdonBusinessClub.co.uk
www.BowdonBusinessClub.co.uk

Business for Breakfast

Contact centralservices@bforb.co.uk
www.bforb.co.uk

Business over Breakfast

Contact Tracy Heatley 07812 076946
www.bobclubs.com

Carrington Business Park

Contact 0161 776 4000
lisa.graham@cbpl.co.uk
www.cbpl.co.uk

FSB - Federation of Small Businesses

Contact Rose McAteer 07917 628916
rose.mcateer@fsb.org.uk
www.fsb.org.uk

Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce

Contact 0161 393 4321
www.gmchamber.co.uk

Manchester Business Breakfast Club

Contact info@manchester-bbc.co.uk
www.manchester-bbc.co.uk

Manchester Business Catalyst Club Lunch

Contact Graham Shiers 07818 675 310
www.businesscatalystclub.co.uk

M62 Connections

Contact Bill Dove 07932 044 743
www.m62connections.co.uk

Shout! Network

Contact 01772 935930
info@shoutnetwork.co.uk
www.shoutnetwork.co.uk

SK8 Networking

Contact Chris Jones
0161 437 5999 / 07757 710199
www.sk8networking.co.uk

The South Manchester Business Association

Contact 0161 962 5195
smba.org.uk

Trafford Business Club

Contact David Lawton 07973 502595
www.traffordbusinessclub.co.uk

Women's 20/20

Contact Catherine Sandland
enquiries@2020network.co.uk
www.2020network.co.uk



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**LANCASHIRE
BUSINESS
EXP 2021**

**NORTH WEST
BUSINESS
EXP 2021**

Lancashire Business Expo
24th September 2021
9am til 3pm
Guild Hall, Preston

North West Business Expo
5th November 2021
9am til 3pm
Bolton Whites, Bolton