

Berkshire Economic Intelligence

Week Ending 2nd February 2020

Jobs

28/01/20 - Residents will play a crucial role in helping the UK to reach its net zero target by 2050. National Grid has pledged for thousands of people in Berkshire to help reduce their carbon emissions to tackle climate change by taking on new jobs. 79% of adults in the South East say they are keen to play their part in helping the environment. 58% say they would like to work for a company that is helping the UK deliver its net zero goals. National Grid hopes to create 54,900 jobs in the next 30 years. This number is fuelled by projects such as Project Cavendish, feasibility study in the South East in collaboration with Cadent, SGN and Arup. - [LINK](#)

30/01/20 – Nearly 100 Bracknell teenagers claiming universal credit struggle to find employment. Roughly one in every 63 teenagers between 16 and 19 in Bracknell Forest were on Universal Credit last year. Anti-poverty charities are urging the Government to do more to help vulnerable young people "burdened" by low incomes and rising housing costs. - [LINK](#)

31/01/20 - Fried chicken chain KFC could be opening its first branch in Wokingham. The fast food chain has been tight lipped about the plans but is advertising for a number of roles at a new branch in the town centre including team leader, cook, and full time and part time members, for a restaurant in Elms Road. - [LINK](#)

01/02/20 - Plans to open a Greggs in Sandhurst are becoming a reality after planning application was submitted to Bracknell Forest Council, which formally asks permission for the food outlet to take over an empty building in Yorktown Road. Greggs bosses say the bakery will be 'beneficial' for the town and will create extra jobs. - [LINK](#)

Mergers and acquisitions

31/01/20 – Wokingham based acquisitive Leaders Romans Group (LRG) have snapped up a Cardiff-based residential sales and lettings agency, Moginie James. Moginie James also includes a short lets Airbnb-style company created in 2019, called 'Hello Ted'. - [LINK](#)

Awards

20/02/20 - Slough based 'IMGeospatial' are one of the 20 finalists who will proceed to pitch at the Rising Stars 2.0 Grand Final for the chance to become one of the 10 Rising Stars of 2020. IMGeospatial deploys artificial intelligence in unconventional ways, to digest, distill and disseminate data efficiently, regardless of how imperfect or vast the data becomes. - [LINK](#)

31/01/20 - Reading has been named as one of the 'top ten places to live in as a young adult', according to Comparethemarket.com, coming 2nd behind Edinburgh. In Reading young adults can expect the second highest salaries in the country, only behind London, taking home an average of £27, 126 according to the ONS. They are also ranked second happiest, ranking their mental wellbeing as 25.47 against a total score of 35 (ONS). But unsurprisingly the town fell down on its average rent, with young adults forking out £1,101 a month, according to Rightmove, one of the most expensive in the country. The survey also found Reading has the best 4G connection of anywhere surveyed. - [LINK](#)

Other

27/01/20 - Reading Buses is scrapping its leopard 3b route to Arborfield and Bracknell. Meanwhile, route 9 will be absorbed into the leopard services. The company says the reason behind the changes is to “improve reliability and create new links”. - [LINK](#)

27/01/20 - Waterloo to Reading train route could be affected by more South Western Railway strike action. - [LINK](#)

27/01/20 - Reading tops list of towns with most potential for business growth. The Great British Enterprise Report says the town has all the ingredients to become a top place for entrepreneurs. - [LINK](#)

27/01/20 – Organisers behind a three-month publication consultation into the future of transport in the South East have gathered more than 3,500 responses from businesses, campaign groups and other organisations, as well as individuals. They were responding to a request for information from Transport for the South East, a pan-local authority and business group that aims to create a 30-year transport strategy to improve journeys, boost jobs, increase the quality of life and help cut carbon emissions to net-zero. - [LINK](#)

28/01/20 - Prime Minister Boris Johnson is expected to make a decision on whether to allow Huawei (Reading based within the UK) to play a major role in Britain’s 5G network amid concerns from the US. The implementation of 5G is expected to bring with it download speeds 10 times faster than what 4G currently offers. - [LINK](#)

28/01/20 - London, Slough and Heathrow and the West Midlands town of Leamington Spa have been identified as the biggest hubs for the UK’s £6bn gaming industry. The new report by video games trade body UKIE reveals that London’s games sector is a £1bn industry, but that thriving hubs around the country make up 55pc of game development jobs and that seven hubs have contributed over £60m in GVA to their local economies. - [LINK](#)

30/01/20 - The boss of BT has welcomed the Government’s “clarity” over its decision to allow Chinese tech giant Huawei access to the UK’s 5G phone network infrastructure. Philip Jansen said the decision will have “an impact of around £500 million over the next five years”, and admitted that current trading has been weaker than expected. - [LINK](#)

01/02/20 – Bracknell Forest Borough chiefs submitted their annual air quality report in June 2019 but the department for environment, food and rural affairs (DEFRA) only recently responded to the analysis. The report identifies two areas in Bracknell Forest which have made “significant” contributions to poor air quality. Bracknell’s A322 and the B3348 through Crowthorne show high levels of nitrogen dioxide and have therefore been declared as air quality management areas. - [LINK](#)