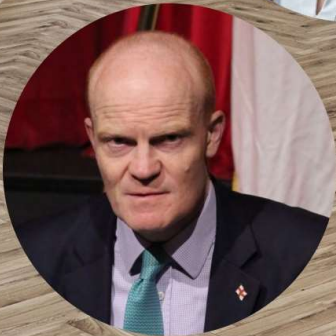


b BUSINESS BRIEF

ISSUE 379 | APRIL 2021

THE OFFICE IS NOT DEAD & OTHER PANDEMIC REFLECTIONS



Bright Future's Susie Crowder
Guernsey's Gavin St Pier
Jersey's Lyndon Farnham

The role of technology

Flexible working

UK budget analysis

In a changing
commercial
property market,
expert knowledge
is key



We provide unrivalled market
knowledge combined with
a truly global perspective.

- Leading Investment Agent - In 2020 the team has been involved in over 80% of all commercial property investment transactions in the Channel Islands
- Leading Valuation Team - In 2020 £285m+ valued, largest team of RICS registered valuers in the Channel Islands
- 2020 Property Management - Managed portfolio worth £500m+. Run by RICS qualified staff, delivering ESG and following best practice
- Latest Published Market Research

To find out how we can support your real estate strategy with research insights and strategic advice:

www.d2re.co.uk

Local market experts
with a global mindset

JERSEY

4th Floor, Conway House,
7-9 Conway Street, St Helier,
Jersey, JE2 3NT
T +44 (0) 1534 629001
E enquiries@d2re.co.uk

GUERNSEY

Carinthia House,
9-12 The Grange, St Peter Port,
Guernsey, GY1 2QJ
T +44 (0) 1481 723375
E enquiries@d2re.co.uk

D2 REAL ESTATE

An alliance member of
 **BNP PARIBAS
REAL ESTATE**

Welcome

Editor

Will Green

will.green@briefci.com

Telephone: 01481 240236

Assistant editor

Amanda Eulenkamp

amanda.eulenkamp@briefci.com

Telephone: 01481 240234

Advertising

Stevie Edmonds

stevie.edmonds@briefci.com

Telephone: 01481 240279

Sue Hart

sue.hart@briefci.com

Telephone: 01481 240277

Susie Campanella

susie.campanella@briefci.com

Telephone: 01481 240242

www.briefci.com

For subscriptions to Business Brief

contact Sue Hart

sue.hart@briefci.com

To view the publication online,

visit www.briefci.com



THE long and winding road. That's the journey we have individually and collectively been on these past months since those first lockdowns of 2020 – and

reflecting on that experience is the focus of this edition.

For most of us, it's not been a physical journey. It's one we've taken in sitting rooms, kitchens, makeshift offices and classrooms. But we have travelled far and at great speed.

The trends, driven by tech disruption, were already with us. But the pandemic has pushed the pedal marked change hard to floor. The world is different to what it was.

Working from home was a thing before Covid, albeit with scepticism in many quarters. Now WfH is an everyday thing. Truly, necessity is the mother of innovation. As we explore in this edition, companies have reported productivity has been maintained. There are benefits for staff too juggling competing work and personal pressures. Flexibility has been vital to cope, while technology has been an enabler and driver of change.

But the WfH-tech combo is not a panacea for all. Think living in the office at home. Or the challenge of starters who haven't met any colleagues in person. What too of those lost casual chats with colleagues from which flow brilliant ideas? Some have faced an avalanche of emails, Zoom and Teams video calls. Tasks that might be quick in the office end up taking an age.

It brings us onto whether this the end of the office. The answer to that is no in the Channel Islands, according to research featured in this edition, although it notes a more flexible working culture is inevitable and welcome.

So what does that mean going forward? Ideally for many, a hybrid model combining WfH and the office. With the accelerating pace of tech disruption, it means retooling us all to cope with and succeed in this new world.

This edition also features contributions from those at the heart of Guernsey and Jersey's responses to the virus and those initial lockdowns. Gavin St Pier, Guernsey's former Chief Minister, provides a fascinating walk-through through that time while Jersey's Deputy Chief Minister Lyndon Farnham provides his perspective.

Plus, there's our regular line-up of business analysis and features, news and appointments. The Guernsey Chamber of Commerce and Jersey Institute of Directors updates are also must-reads.

Will Green, Editor

B	L	▲	C	K
▲	R	R	O	W
C	Y	B	E	R

Information Security for
People, Operations and Technology



Contact us
contact@blackarrowcyber.com
01481 711 988

Experts from: National Security | British Intelligence | GFSC | Offshore & FTSE 100 Financial Services | Big-4 Consulting

Banking, by BUTTERFIELD.



At Butterfield, we provide financial services with a personal touch, we focus on results, we value relationships, and we celebrate success. Our local expertise connects clients to a world of financial services providing bespoke banking and financial intermediary solutions.

Let's start a conversation.

Butterfield Bank (Guernsey) Limited
Butterfield Bank (Jersey) Limited

Tel (44) 1481 711 521

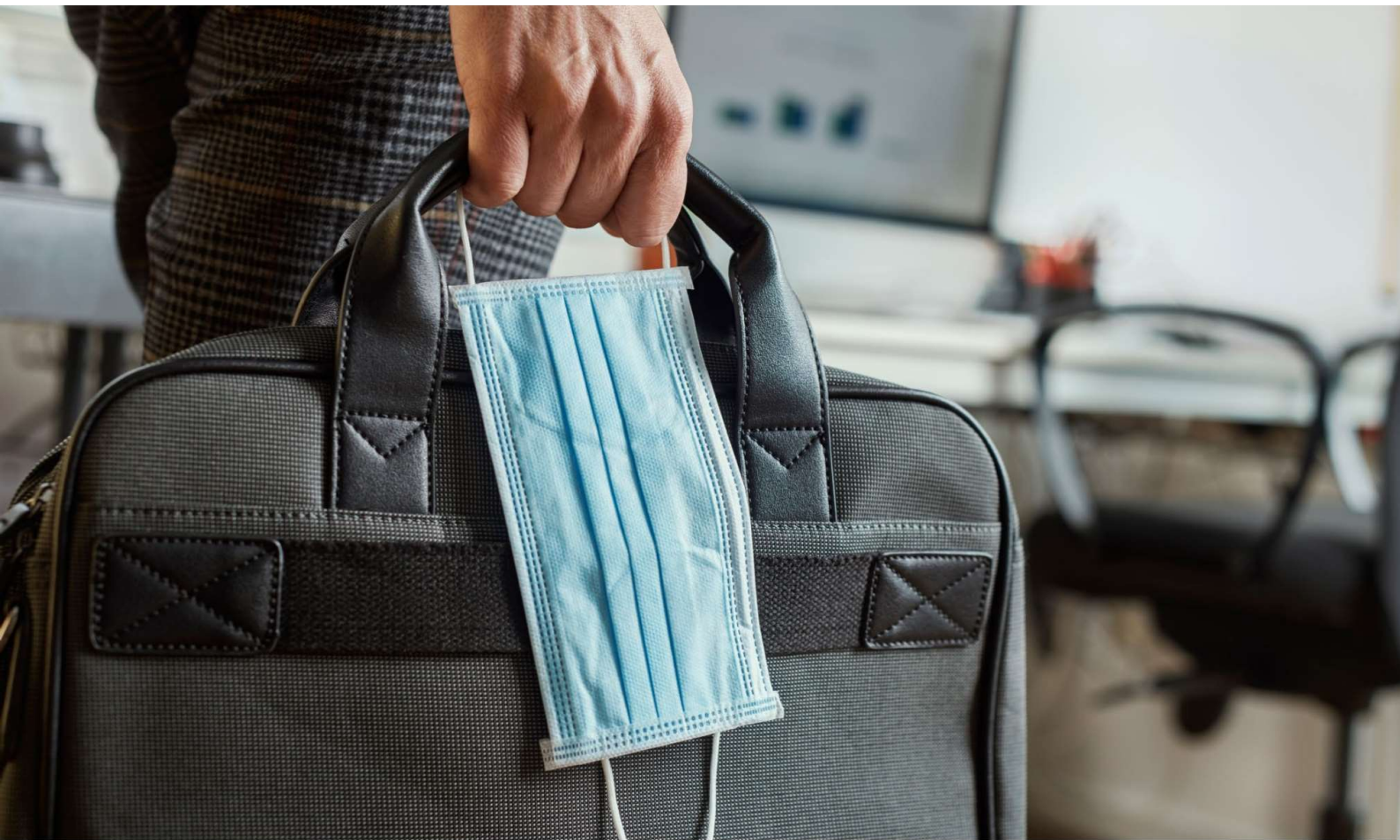
Tel (44) 1534 843 333

butterfieldgroup.com



Butterfield Bank (Jersey) Limited (BBJL) is regulated by the Jersey Financial Services Commission to conduct deposit-taking business under the Banking Business (Jersey) Law 1991 (as amended), and investment business, fund service business and money service business pursuant to the Financial Services (Jersey) Law 1998, (as amended). BBJL is registered under the Data Protection (Jersey) Law, 2018 and is registered with the Jersey Registrar of Companies for the purpose of the Companies (Jersey) Law 1991 (as amended). Registered office address: St. Paul's Gate, New Street, St. Helier, Jersey JE4 5PU. Company registration number 124784. BBJL is a participant in the Jersey Bank Depositors Compensation Scheme. The Scheme offers protection for eligible deposits of up to £50,000. The maximum total amount of compensation is capped at £100,000,000 in any 5 year period. Full details of the Scheme and banking groups covered are available on the Government of Jersey website www.gov.je/dcs, or on request. BBJL is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Bank of N.T. Butterfield & Son Limited. A copy of our Terms and Conditions can be obtained from our website and copies of the latest audited accounts are available on request.

Butterfield Bank (Guernsey) Limited ("BBGL") is licensed and regulated by the Guernsey Financial Services Commission under The Banking Supervision (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 1994 and The Protection of Investors (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 1987, each as amended from time to time, under registration number 85. BBGL is a participant in the Guernsey Banking Deposit Compensation Scheme (the "Scheme") established by The Banking Deposit Compensation Scheme (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Ordinance, 2008 (the "Ordinance"). The Scheme offers protection only in respect of 'qualifying deposits' (as that term is used in the Ordinance) of up to £50,000, subject to certain limitations as set out in the Ordinance. The maximum total amount of compensation is capped at £100,000,000 in any 5 year period. Full details are available on the Scheme's website www.dcs.gg or upon request. Deposits are not covered by the UK Financial Services Compensation Scheme under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, nor are deposits covered by any equivalent scheme outside of the Bailiwick of Guernsey. BBGL is registered under the Data Protection (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law 2017, under registration number 11160 and with the Guernsey Registry under registration number 21061. BBGL's registered office address is P.O. Box 25, Regency Court, Glatigny Esplanade, St Peter Port, Guernsey, GY1 3AP. BBGL's products and services are available in Guernsey and only in those other jurisdictions where they may be legally offered or obtained. BBGL is a wholly-owned subsidiaries of The Bank of N.T. Butterfield & Son Limited.



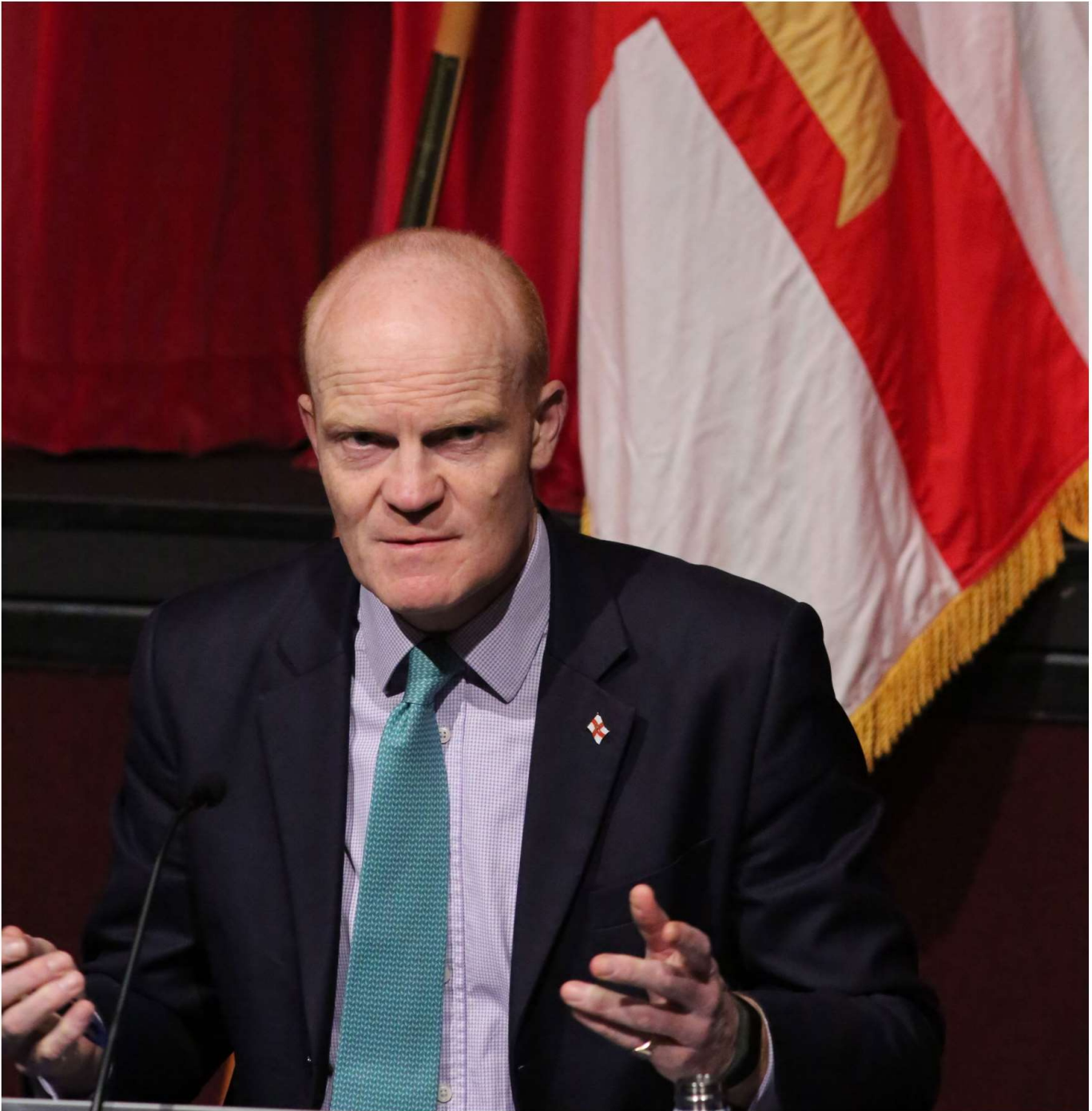
YOUR BRIEF

A year on from lockdown 1.0 – Guernsey’s Gavin St Pier	4	Education and Covid-19 – Carl Howart, Jersey College.....	28
A year on from lockdown 1.0 – Jersey’s Lyndon Farnham ...	6	Leadership – Phil Eyre	29
The office is not dead – Will Green.....	8	The CEO interview – Cees Vermaas, The International Stock Exchange Group	30
Real estate winners & losers – John Rochester, Mourant ..	10	ESG – Craig Cordle, Ogier	31
Flexible working – Sarah Gomersall, Equiom	12	The UK budget & the Channel Islands – David Waldron & Tom Cowsill, PwC Channel Islands.....	32
Flexible working – Guernsey Chamber of Commerce & IoD Jersey.....	14	Entrepreneurship – Ben Symonds.....	34
Flexible working – Nick Toon, Sure	15	News – From Jersey & Guernsey	36
The world of work – Susie Crowder, Bright Futures.....	16	Law News – From Jersey & Guernsey	37
A year of reflection – Jim Coupe, Skipton International.....	17	Guernsey Chamber of Commerce – News & views.....	38
Our new reality – Neal Jehan, KPMG in the Crown Dependencies.....	18	A springboard to funding – Tony Moretta, Digital Jersey....	44
Lockdown learning – Digital Greenhouse.....	20	How secure is your IT? – James Kelsh, Resolution IT	46
Flexible offices – Alex Belcher, Polygon	21	Data protection – Paul Vane, JOIC	48
Investment analysis – Jon Gollop, Ravenscroft.....	22	IoD Jersey – Mary Curtis & Jo Terry-Marchant	50
Working smartly – Nicola Reeves, JT	23	Appointments – From Jersey & Guernsey	52
Covid-19’s human cost – Grant Thornton	24	Business book club – Edward Jewell	54
Condor Ferries – CEO Paul Luxon.....	26	Business comment – Raymond Ashton	55
Hospitality – Pandemic reflections	27	Comfy chair – Q & A with Joe Peacock.....	56

Published by Channel Island Media Group

PO Box 57, Braye Road, Vale, Guernsey, GY1 3BW. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without the prior written permission from the publisher. All details are correct at the time of going to print. © 2021, all rights reserved.





Leadership and communication

Deputy Gavin St Pier, who was Guernsey's chief minister, during the first lockdown, reflects on the experience

TUESDAY 10th March 2020. I was flying back to Guernsey from London and spent the day sitting in Jersey's airport, having been diverted because of fog. Whilst the weather was impenetrable, those few hours of quiet, detached reflection allowed me to see with clarity the true scale of the approaching storm that was about to engulf our community. For the next two months', I entered a tunnel and the most extraordinary, surreal period of my working and personal life. Every waking hour – generally 18 hours a day - was focussed on a single mission: fighting Covid-19. 'What decisions are required here and now? And what do we need to do to protect the Bailiwick?' I filtered out of my attention

any extraneous information that would not assist in being able to answer those questions. I would have been unable to tell you what was going in London, New York or even Jersey; it's only recently, I realised that global stock markets had tanked at the end of March – despite the impact this would have had on the value of the States' portfolios, which would normally have grabbed my attention, it was of no immediate relevance to the task in hand.

A year later, the battle rhythm of response is, quite rightly, well established. The meetings of the Civil Contingencies Authority can generally be regularly scheduled and the greater global knowledge

of the virus and experience in responding to it, can enable governments to better plan their responses. A year ago, while Guernsey had, fortunately, only recently rehearsed a flu pandemic in November 2019, which helped considerably in enabling government to gear up the *machinery* its response – gold and silver commands, technical advisory groups and so on – there was no precedent and no route map to follow. We would have to make it up as we went along.

Guernsey's Civil Contingencies Law worked like a charm in providing a clear framework in which the requisite decisions could be lawfully made. But 'lawful' and 'real politic' are not always aligned and so I am grateful to all my political colleagues who gave the Civil Contingencies Authority ('CCA') the necessary political space it needed to act effectively. Tribute must also be paid to the other members of the CCA, former Deputies Brehaut and Lowe, who consciously did not have the public profile of Deputy Heidi Soulsby and myself – for reasons which I will come to - but were critical to the decision making process of the CCA.

The CCA is incredibly well served by its advisers – a cast which changes depending on the issues before them. Legal advisers are critical at all stages to ensure decisions of the Authority are lawful. The Chief Executive and his senior management team are lynchpins as it is they who need to deliver the actions which follow any decisions – they need to be clear what is 'doable' in practical terms. The technical and scientific advice from the Public Health team, represented by its Director, self-evidently is a key input to the CCA's decision making in relation to COVID. Contrary to some social media comment, the CCA did not simply 'do what they were told' by the subject experts. In my term on the CCA, the Authority made decisions that were both more and less cautious than that recommended by their advisers. It's the politicians' job to make judgement calls taking into account all the information available to them but also the circumstances prevailing, which include the political and public mood – in other words, determining what is politically possible. As we've seen elsewhere, if the politicians make the wrong call, it's their heads on the block, not the experts and advisers.

Whilst the CCA did the job for which it was designed, we still needed further organisational architecture to ensure we could act nimbly. This took the form of an informal 'quad' – myself, Deputy Soulsby, the Chief Executive and one other senior civil servant. We met seven days a week, at least once daily at midday, initially in person before Microsoft Teams calls took-up the strain. This was a very effective tool, allowing us to screen the information available and determine what further inputs would be required, whether from Public Health or elsewhere in government, to ensure the requisite decision makers would have all that was needed to make fully informed decisions.

Delegation was also critical. I was extremely fortunate that I could delegate with complete confidence the design and delivery of government's business support responses to Deputy Lyndon Trott, knowing he would rise to the challenge, tackle it competently and with determination, reverting as needed. I was also grateful to Deputy Le Tocq to whom all other routine business of the Policy & Resources Committee was delegated, including chairing its meetings, giving me one less thing to distract me from the task in hand.

The role and power of communication in the management of any crisis or emergency is key. Its relevance in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic struck me very early on, mainly by observing how badly some jurisdictions were managing their public messaging. It was clear to us that we needed to carry the community with us; to do that, we needed to earn islanders' trust and confidence and that required communication that was clear, consistent, open and honest.

If we didn't know or made a mistake, we'd say so. We knew good communication was more than just about content, the words spoken. Tone and style were important too. Demonstrating empathy, emotional intelligence and understanding would be key. We needed the community to see us – perhaps for the first time in some cases – not just as politicians and decision makers but as humans and individuals with the same issues and anxieties as those for whom we were acting. And that is why we decided, very early, to keep Deputy Soulsby and I as the CCA's spokespeople. Knowing so many people were hanging literally on every word, I delivered my opening comments for briefings from a script, to mitigate the risk of 'misspeaking'; but to ensure the words were authentically mine, I wrote them myself – it was not a time to be trying to deliver someone's else's words. I tried to write what I would say the evening before briefings but often it was a task only finished minutes before we started.

The day the island was put into its first lockdown, 24th March, I chose a phrase and said, "We've got this." It was a simple, short sentence intended to convey confidence and reassurance to the community that its *government* was prepared, calm and in control. But it came to embody the spirit of #GuernseyTogether – 'we, the *community*, have got this.'

Whilst I instinctively knew communication was important, I did not truly realise how significant it was until a couple of weeks into the lockdown, when I was given some feedback, "you make us feel safe; you are Comforter-in-Chief." This was meant well but it rather ramped up the pressure I felt not to mess it up! I became aware how important direct communication was, which is why I started recording regular, short pieces to camera. I also made it a personal mission to return every 'phone message and to respond in person to every direct social media message or email. While this created an extra burden for me, I felt that if any individual was sufficiently concerned about any given issue to make contact, they deserved the courtesy of a personal response.

Whoever had been President of the Policy & Resources Committee in March 2020 would have needed to step into the role of being Chair of the Civil Contingencies Authority leading the Bailiwick's pandemic response. I consider myself to have been immensely lucky that it was me to whom that responsibility fell. It was truly an honour and privilege to serve my community in that role at a critical time. I was very fortunate to have had the most remarkable team – highly professional, competent, totally dedicated, focussed, hardworking, unflappable and good humoured. They were and are a true credit to all those who dedicate their lives to public service. We have relied on that team once again as the island experienced its second and hopefully last lockdown. We must not forget their critical role in our community as life returns to normal and decision makers struggle to manage the consequences of the pandemic on our public finances – they must be seen as resources to be valued not just as costs to be cut.



Protecting lives

Amanda Eulenkamp speaks to Senator **Lyndon Farnham**, Jersey's Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Economic Development, after his reflections on the pandemic a year on from the first lockdown



'It was a huge shock. I think it took time for everybody to adapt to fully understand the nature of what we were dealing with and I don't think the Channel Islands has been any different. It's been enormously challenging,' says Senator Farnham, words that will resonate with many both professionally and personally.

Not many people alive today have had to endure anything like this, he continues, with governments at the eye of the response to a historic global event – having to make extraordinary decisions nobody would have thought would be needed weeks earlier.

'When we look back now, we can all learn a lot from what we've been through, but every decision we made was made carefully and always based on the best information and advice we had at the time,' says Senator Farnham.

'We were making decisions that a month or two earlier we would not have dreamed we'd ever be having to make: decisions that

affected people's freedoms, their businesses, and livelihoods. We were making decisions to protect lives.'

Challenges

As Minister for Economic Development, compiling and getting immediate political back-up for the support measures that needed to be put in place to keep Islanders' jobs, livelihoods, and businesses going was key, and hugely challenging.

'The types of money we were talking about spending would previously have been unheard of,' he says, referencing the £150m of support that has so far been injected directly into businesses and payroll co-funding. 'It's still challenging because we keep fine-tuning it with the prevailing circumstances, and we've tried to keep it as fair as possible.

'It's not government's money; it's taxpayers' money. So, we always have to make sure that it goes to those that need it.

It can't be too little, and it can't be too much – there's a balance, and some sectors are, understandably, constantly pushing for more support. We've managed to keep intact the vast majority of our economy and businesses. We're nearing the end and it would be a shame to lose any now, so we have to be bold and be prepared to put a bit more money in to make sure we have the economic structure in place to take advantage of the recovery.'

Leadership skills

On what strengths he drew on, Senator Farnham says: 'We were well advised and structured ourselves fairly quickly. Jersey has an emergencies council and a framework for dealing with this sort of thing and that came into action very quickly. I've sat on the emergencies council for a number of years, so we are prepared for all sorts of different types of emergencies, from pandemics to floods and natural disasters. I think that put us on a fairly sound footing.'

'From my perspective, I've always felt right from the beginning of the pandemic that I've tried to listen carefully to the expert advice, tried to blend that with an empathy for our culture and community.'

'I think the important thing for senior politicians is to be calm and reassuring and present the political facts and decisions in that manner, plus communicate in a consistent, sensible, and reassuring manner.'

At the time of Lockdown 1.0, Senator Farnham says that the Government of Jersey was well advanced in its restructuring, significantly reducing the number of departments which was helpful.

'We've seen a huge support from government employees who agreed to quickly be redeployed into areas such as track and trace, public health, and other areas to deal with a pandemic,' he adds. 'It showed how a usually quite rigidly structured government could be adaptable and dynamic when it was needed.'

Being a Jerseyman - 'I've lived here all my life; it's my home, my community' - has, he believes, helped him throughout his political career. 'I tend to understand our problems, challenges, and opportunities.'

'And I really enjoy communicating with islanders. I've always tried to be incredibly accessible. When I'm facing decisions or dilemmas, I speak to Islanders and collate their views – it's helpful at times to do that outside the political spectrum.'

'There comes a point when you have to be concise and make decisions, and I've never really had any difficulty with that. But I think you must always really carefully consider all the aspects of making that decision and understand the ramifications.'

'As ministers, we all have individual responsibilities that we are solely responsible for. But a lot of the big decisions are made democratically, either by the competent authority ministers or the Council of Ministers. We are supported by a democratic process behind us.'

Public service

Senator Farnham says that as a publicly-elected representative, there is an inbuilt duty of service. While acknowledging that the past 12 months have been one of – if not the – most challenging periods of his life, he is not one to complain. 'I'm happy to take calls at any time and quite often I've been answering emails late at night. I think that's part of the duty we have to do at the moment.'

Asked how his personal political ambitions have been affected by the pandemic, he simply answers: 'Immediately that you have to deal with such an emergency, everything to do with one's own political agenda disappears. I haven't given a thought to the future, to the elections, because you have to be completely focused on getting the island through this - not least keeping the economy going as best we can, protecting businesses and jobs and livelihoods.'

'After the shock of going into the pandemic and the lockdown, we then had to try and manage the day to day business of government as usual. I've been so immersed in that, including leading the hospital project, and dealing with the large number of business areas that my political portfolio covers that there's just been no thought around the future.'

'We've managed to keep up the necessary political tensions that are required to run a successful democracy while uniting and coming together to make hugely important decisions to protect islanders from the impact of Covid-19.'

Resilience and fortitude

The resilience and fortitude of islanders over the past year has hugely impressed him. 'We are surrounded by natural beauty and beaches and fresh air and plenty of space for us to have been able to deal with the lockdowns and still maintain that element of freedom,' he says, comparing the island to other places in the world.

'It's helped many of us keep going throughout.' He says that it's essential for him to get out early in the morning and in the evening with his dog. 'I'm quite often on the phone or checking emails when I'm out. I also run for a hobby so for me, I couldn't operate the long hours required without having that couple of hours' window in the early morning to exercise, walk the dog, or focus on my fitness.'

'When people ask me what hours I work I tell them, "when I'm awake I'm working and when I'm asleep I'm usually dreaming about something to do with it."' He says that he tends to deal with things as soon as possible rather than let them build up. 'I couldn't have got through the last 12 months without the support of the Ministerial Support Unit and my private secretary.'

'I'm also ably aided by two superb Assistant Ministers, Deputies Hugh Raymond and Kirsten Morel, and, before that, Deputies Pallet and Tadier.'

'I think of us as a very tight team, we're managing a huge portfolio. It's been a complete team effort.'



'It's not government's money; it's taxpayers' money. So, we always have to make sure that it goes to those that need it. It can't be too little, and it can't be too much.'

Reports of the death of the office have been exaggerated

Will Green reports on new research by **D2 Real Estate**

THE office is not dead.

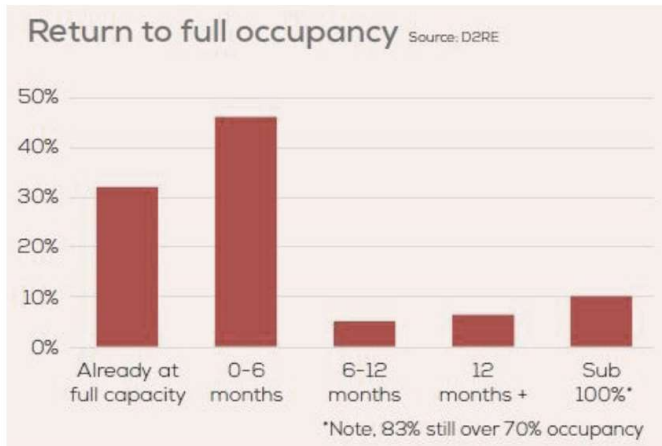
That is the overwhelming message from a survey of dozens of companies in Guernsey and Jersey.

D2 Real Estate, which undertook the research in December 2020 and January 2021, posed a series of questions. The first asked when occupiers would like to return to the office, and the response was 'unequivocal'.

Some 78% were seeking to return to full capacity within six months, and of those 32% were at full capacity – although the research noted this would likely have changed since 'working from home' directives came into effect first in Jersey and then Guernsey in December and January.

'The sentiment is however clear, occupiers are intending to return. At the other end of the scale, 10% of respondents were not intending to return to full capacity, and of those, 83% of this sample are expecting to operate at 70% occupancy,' said the research.

Companies were asked how relevant having an office was to their business, as a key indicator of assessing the long-term future of offices in the Channel Islands.



'Respondents had the option of scoring between 1 & 5, with 1 being not at all relevant and 5 being essential. It is telling that the average score was 4.3 out of 5. The results at the lower end of the scale were few and far between and didn't show any particular trend, albeit one was a major employer in the islands.'

On whether their occupational requirements would change, 46% of respondents expected it to stay the same while 25% expected them to rise - higher than expected. 'Only 12% expected this to fall. These tended to be the larger employers which could have an impact on other sectors, such as town centre retail and food and beverage. Not surprisingly some occupational strategic reviews are still underway.'

When it came to office versus remote working, issues raised were maintaining staff wellbeing and training. Productivity was highlighted, although many respondents were likely to use timesheets – so this was likely less to be an issue for the surveyed group. Once systems were in place IT security was not an issue for most.

While cost was still near the top when it came to choosing an office, a high proportion of residents ranked office environment higher. Lease flexibility was neutral, indicating occupiers were still prepared to enter into long term lease commitments locally. Covid resilience was not a major consideration for the majority of firms.

The findings demonstrated local market resilience, concluded the research, with the high score against relevance of the office not replicated in other jurisdictions – particularly the UK.

'It is also telling that across our managed portfolio (£450m+), rent collection over the past 12 months currently stands at 100%, well ahead of the UK. This bodes well for the investment market, as one of the key attractions of the local investment market is the opportunity to buy buildings let on long leases to strong covenants,' added the report.



'Although a more flexible working culture is inevitable and welcomed, the need for the office to enable effective training and mentoring, as well as being the physical embodiment of the brand and culture remain high priorities.

'Crucially, this survey has confirmed that the majority of the respondents strongly believe that in order to retain and attract the best staff the office environment is critical and certain key areas, such as staff wellbeing, are extremely challenging to maintain in a purely "working from home" environment.

'There will inevitably be a period of consolidation, where some businesses contract and others expand, but in essence, the office is still highly relevant. There is no doubt in our mind that offices in the Channel Islands will continue to have a major role to play as part of our working culture, where people want to go to work and as a place to encourage and drive business.'



Commentary

Phil Dawes, Managing Director of D2 Real Estate, reflects on 2020 and looks ahead to the coming months.

IT is extraordinary to think that when we issued our annual office market review at the beginning of 2020, little did we realise that one of the most significant medical crisis since the Spanish Flu was so imminent.

By March 2020, the UK was in lockdown, quickly followed by both Guernsey and Jersey. The FTSE fell by 25%. As a relative 'sideshow' there was continued Brexit turmoil post the UK general election in December 2019. Against this backdrop it is not surprising the year 2020 has been a challenging one.

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on how we live our lives, run our businesses and on society as a whole. Companies have been forced to fast track their digital strategies with agile working becoming the norm. It is testament to us all that we

have been able to quickly adapt while going through a work-place evolution.

As businesses implemented their 'working from home' strategies, the big topic was what the future held for offices and everyone had a view, normally based on anecdotal evidence. In my own view, if you want colleagues to join you in the office, which for our business is vital, then we need to create the right environment.

I suspect that those landlords who do not work collaboratively with occupiers will quickly get left behind.

In terms of commercial real estate performance in the Channel Islands, when compared to the UK we have had a relatively easy ride. The market is seen as a safe haven for investors seeking yield and long leases let to strong covenants, so demand has been reasonably strong and yields have held up well. Take up in Guernsey and Jersey is on par with 2019, albeit in Jersey this is below the five-year average.

With the vaccine now in circulation, the economic outlook is set to improve and we expect demand for investments in the Channel Islands to continue.



The real estate winners and losers of Covid-19

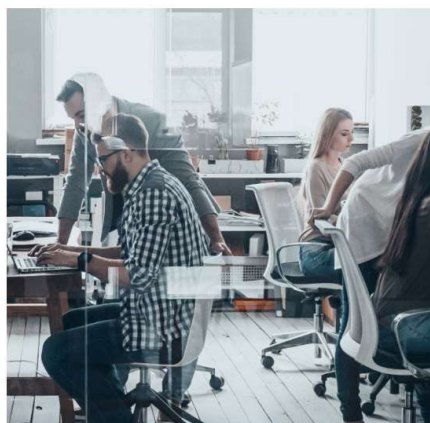
Real estate investment success has been anchored in the daily patterns that have governed our lives for so long, but with the ‘work experience’ changing so drastically for so many of us due to Covid-19, what does the future of real estate investing look like? Mourant Partner **John Rochester** applies a global perspective to the real estate asset class and asks who the real estate winners and losers are going to be of people’s increasingly blended lives

THE Covid-19 pandemic has changed the lifestyles of many people around the world; the virus has affected the ways we interact, work and live. Many of us find ourselves in temporarily (or perhaps more permanently in some instances) altered circumstances but, with vaccine rollouts progressing and restrictions easing, it’s understandable to have an eye on what comes next and what our lives will look like in that most fabled of existences: ‘the new normal’ – perhaps better termed ‘the *next* normal’. It is inevitable that lifestyles will be different but what impact will this have on the real estate asset class, whose fortune is inextricably linked to the way we live and work?

At Mourant we work with some of the world’s major banks and onshore law firms to support the structuring and financing of real estate deals, giving us a truly global perspective on the future of the asset class. Current wisdom suggests that the ways that our work and home lives intersect are going to be more complex than ever, and a blend of flexible working, remote working and office working is likely to be more commonplace. But for an asset class that relies on where we are and how we live, who will benefit from our newly blended lives – and who might not?

THE LOSERS (Some) offices

If the author and humourist Mark Twain felt reports of his death were exaggerated, he should have been around in 2020 to read some of the doom-mongering predictions for offices. If some of the more sensationalist commentators were to be believed, none of us would step foot in an office again; they would be gathering dust and preserved for all time as a monument to a moment in the cycle of the economy. These predictions are a good distance wide of the mark, however.



It is true that the way we use office space is going to change, and this is certainly being borne in mind by fund managers, but there aren’t many signs that offices are being abandoned altogether by real estate funds and investors.

Our blended lifestyles will likely be characterised by flexible working, for those who are able. This means some time in the office, and some time working remotely. It’s therefore logical that some companies will look to downsize and have fewer desks. This is not a new phenomenon, however; audit firms, to take one example, often have half of their workforce working elsewhere, so may only have office capacity for 70% of their total workforce. It is likely that some other industries may now follow this lead.

Another case for the defence on office space is that the pandemic has – quite rightly - refocused the corporate lens and wellbeing is far higher up the agenda. Fewer desks may well be the consequence of our blended lives, but that space could house break-out spaces, canteens, yoga rooms or co-working facilities instead, fostering a more proactively collaborative working environment.

(High street) retail

Another trend that was already underway but has been hastened by the pandemic is that of the demise of physical retail. The case of Arcadia is perhaps the perfect parable for the plight of the high street in 2021: well-known brands (Dorothy Perkins, Burton, Topshop et al.) being sold off to online retailers (ASOS and Boohoo) who take ownership of the brands and the inventory but close the physical shops.

The rise of ecommerce has certainly left gaps in the traditional high street in the Channel Islands, the UK and around the world. Traditionally real estate funds have been more heavily invested in shopping centres than the individual shops on your local high street, but nonetheless the fact that more of us are shopping online will have an impact on rent returns and the viability of future retail ventures.



(London) apartments

The capital remains a hotbed for property investment; its light has not been dimmed by the pandemic. But one area that might experience a short-term slowdown is apartment blocks.

With unemployment on the rise, especially among the young, and wages being either depressed or remaining steady, it seems unlikely that demand for apartments is going to remain at pre-pandemic levels. Covid-19 has driven workers and residents out of London and the possibilities for remote working mean that some may not return – at least not in a way which requires them to have a residential base in the city.

That being said, London property supply was not meeting demand before the pandemic, so there is scope for catching up. The capital will always be a cultural and professional hub, so real estate investors are unlikely to be deterred for too long.

THE WINNERS

Online retail

The flip side of the high street coin is that online retail is booming. According to the IMRG Capgemini Online Retail Index, online sales in the UK were up 36% year-on-year in 2020, the largest annual growth since 2007.¹ Unable to go out shopping, it's no surprise that people went online for some retail therapy.

With ecommerce showing no signs of slowing down, the future investments of choice for many real estate funds are going to be the infrastructure that enables online retail. That means that warehouses, fulfilment centres and distribution centres are all in high demand and will likely continue to be.

Communications infrastructure

One of the consequences of blended work and home lives is that home connectivity needs to be greater than ever before. Telecommunications providers no longer having the luxury of providing high-quality connections to a city centre or business district and adequate connections to people's homes; fast, resilient and reliable connections are needed everywhere.

This demand has led to a rapid rise in the building of telecoms exchanges, mobile phone antennas, data centres and cloud storage server facilities. With more and more of us working online and needing seamless access to files, data and our colleagues the infrastructure needs to keep up.

Again, this was a trend that was already underway, but the acceleration in the use of software such as Zoom, Office 365 and Webex means that even more data is being transmitted across our telecommunications networks, from a greater variety of locations.

UK regional property

If London, and other major cities around the world, has experienced outward migration, then the upshot of that is that the UK regions have made population gains. The expected reality of flexible working for more of the workforce means that a flat in London may no longer be a necessity when the worker can buy in Bedford, Brighton or even further afield, and commute in for one or two days a week of office-based work.

Areas with good transport links may therefore see a population boost and that presents an opportunity for developers to build apartment blocks, first time buyer developments and family homes.

As the workforce looks for a better work/life balance in a post-lockdown world the desirable areas of the UK's green and pleasant land will become even more attractive. Cornwall, Suffolk, Warwickshire, North Yorkshire and the other desirable areas of the country will have a greater number of house hunters than they did before, crucially from a broader demographic than before.

In the Channel Islands, of course a prime example of these desirable locations, there is already evidence of inward migration which will lead to long-term population growth and an impact on the housing market.

Another trend which may experience a post-pandemic boost is moving work to other UK cities. Some companies have for several years been basing large numbers of employees in places like Leeds or Birmingham and having them do 'London work'. The benefits are clear in that the overheads are lower thanks to cheaper rents and not having to pay London wages; and the perks for employees are that they avoid the cost of living in London. This could result in office space in other UK cities maintaining its appeal for real estate funds.



How society builds back from Covid-19 will clearly have a huge impact on the future success of real estate funds. It is truly an asset class that is shaped by our behavioural patterns and sociological factors as well as economic ones. What is clear is that volatility creates opportunity and fund managers are constantly re-evaluating where and how to invest.

Our blended lives are changing the composition of real estate funds, it remains to be seen how they will impact the funds' fortunes.

For a global, future perspective on real estate funds get in touch with the real estate team at Mourant.

¹ <https://www.retailgazette.co.uk/blog/2021/01/online-retail-sales-growth-hit-13-year-high-in-2020/>



Driving success through flexibility

Will Green speaks to Equiom's **Sarah Gomersall** - which has offices in both Jersey and Guernsey - about how it's doing things differently to the benefit of staff and clients through its 'Inspiring Action' people strategy

WORKING 9 to 5. It's been a part of our culture for decades - inspiring songs, books, and films. But is there a better way? Equiom, the global professional service provider, thinks so - and had already been taking action before Covid-19 required working from home. Importantly, the experience through the pandemic has provided proof of concept - productivity has been maintained while delivering benefits for staff and clients.

Chief People Officer Sarah Gomersall picks up the thread, saying: 'We were starting to work more flexibly and having a more flexible approach as to how to do things. That was led in part by our new CEO, who joined us in June last year. So that gave us a chance to reset strategy.'

'The other important driver stemmed from the clients. We have local business and a global client network and need to cover clients across all those different time zones. But also, the needs and requirements of clients are changing as well. They're not the same as they were 40 years ago. They don't work Monday to Friday, 9-5, but we still were.'

'So, there was a piece around technology in terms of how we deliver for clients and being globally available to them when they need us to be.'

Looking through the employee lens, she adds: 'You had people sitting in Asia who were having to cover European clients and vice versa, so the day was stretching, and staff were covering those longer hours. That's not good for them on a personal level. It's not good for us on a business level either because you start to get people working beyond their capacity.'

Sarah explains flexibility was a work steam pre-Covid, adding: 'What the pandemic did, which has helped ironically, was necessitate acceleration of the infrastructure that we needed to make it happen. Things like improving our video conferencing technology.'

The Lifesize video system was immediately extended out to the whole business, with Microsoft Teams offering a second more informal channel for colleagues to work collaboratively. Moving to digital signatures was another element.

'It provided proof of concept that it actually worked, and it provided that very quickly,' notes Sarah, reflecting on the pandemic's effect. 'Productivity stayed high.'

Clients have been positive about it and seen Equiom as an entrepreneurial business as a result. Colleagues saw benefits too, while those who thought they needed to sit next to someone to work with them also had peace of mind it worked. Staying connected and regular communication has been key, along with training for managers to help them manage remotely.

In practice, the flexible approach means a discussion within teams to see what can be facilitated and then go for it if it's doable. In some cases, this has meant extended leave. For the most part, it's about changing working patterns to fit in for example the school run or caring responsibilities. Anything that supports families, while still meeting business objectives has to be applauded.

Sarah explains that staff are at the heart of Equiom with a common culture embedded across the business - with colleagues knowing where they fit, are all connected and facing the same direction. Investing in people is critical, from enabling a better work-life balance or supporting talent through Equiom's new academy with online resources. 'It's about bringing your best self to work,' says Sarah.

The feedback has been positive from productivity being maintained to reducing anxiety levels. In a survey of new starters 100% cited the flexible approach was an 'important' factor in choosing Equiom as a place to work with a third saying it was 'very important' - with Equiom determined its policy helps differentiate it as an employer of choice. That in itself is a vote of confidence that it has the right strategy.

www.equiomgroup.com

Equiom (Guernsey) Limited and Equiom Trust (Guernsey) Limited are licensed by the Guernsey Financial Services Commission. Equiom (Jersey) Limited and its affiliates are regulated by the Jersey Financial Services Commission.

The Equiom Way

Putting our people at the heart of our business is a key strategic priority for Equiom.

With our staff-focussed 'Inspiring Action' programme we are committed to becoming an 'Employer of Choice' in all our markets. As part of this, we have introduced 100% flexible working and unlimited paid leave policies enabling everyone to have more control over their working lives.

This market-leading approach provides staff with greater say in how they perform their roles, work at their most productive level and be most fulfilled.

If you would like to know more or are interested in working for Equiom please contact Sarah Gomersall at sarahgomersall@equiomgroup.com



[equiomgroup.com](https://www.equiomgroup.com)

Equiom (Guernsey) Limited is licensed by the Guernsey Financial Services Commission. Equiom (Jersey) Limited and its affiliates are regulated by the Jersey Financial Services Commission.

A better approach?

The Guernsey Chamber of Commerce and the Jersey Institute of Directors offer their perspectives on working patterns



The Guernsey Chamber of Commerce

Multi-channel methods of working are already being adopted by progressive employers navigating a way through Covid and beyond according to feedback received by Guernsey Chamber.

The island's largest business organisation will include questions on day to day operation in a business impact survey in late spring and is already aware that many companies are carrying out their own in-depth reviews.

'It is not a question of whether a business decides to be office based or not, but rather which combination of options works best for them. Certainly, from our feedback, many will adopt a hybrid of enabling staff to work from home for some of the time,' said Chamber Director Kay Leslie.

'Flexible working is not a "soft" focus arrangement: it has been clearly proven to enable teams and individuals to be more focused and efficient. There are also proven mental health benefits and, because employees are usually keen in making it work, the level of engagement for the business is very high. It is a hugely strong positive in creating drive and focus, coupled with being trusted to carry out the role,' she adds.

Chamber is aware challenges in larger organisations can include persuading some layers of management to accept teams are working when not in the office. 'We have heard instances of boards agreeing to change and line managers opposing it on the basis of "not knowing" whether the employees are working. But trust is part of any healthy employment relationship and it can be coupled with subtle electronic observation - for instance, Office365 as an admin clearly shows activity on that platform.'

An additional bigger step was also reviewing whether staff hours could be cut slightly without denting productivity, with

economists studying four-day weeks where possible, although some organisations would still need Monday-Friday or equivalent operations.

We will obtain detailed feedback from our 700 members and make that data available for all so that progressive organisations can identify the best working arrangement for them,' concludes Kay.

IoD Jersey

The changing environment of work and employment was the subject of much debate long before the pandemic. The revolution that has taken place over the last year has fast tracked the issues and focused minds on the best way forward; but this isn't simply a debate about home versus office working, or what hours you put in and when. Lisa Springate, the Chair of IoD Jersey.

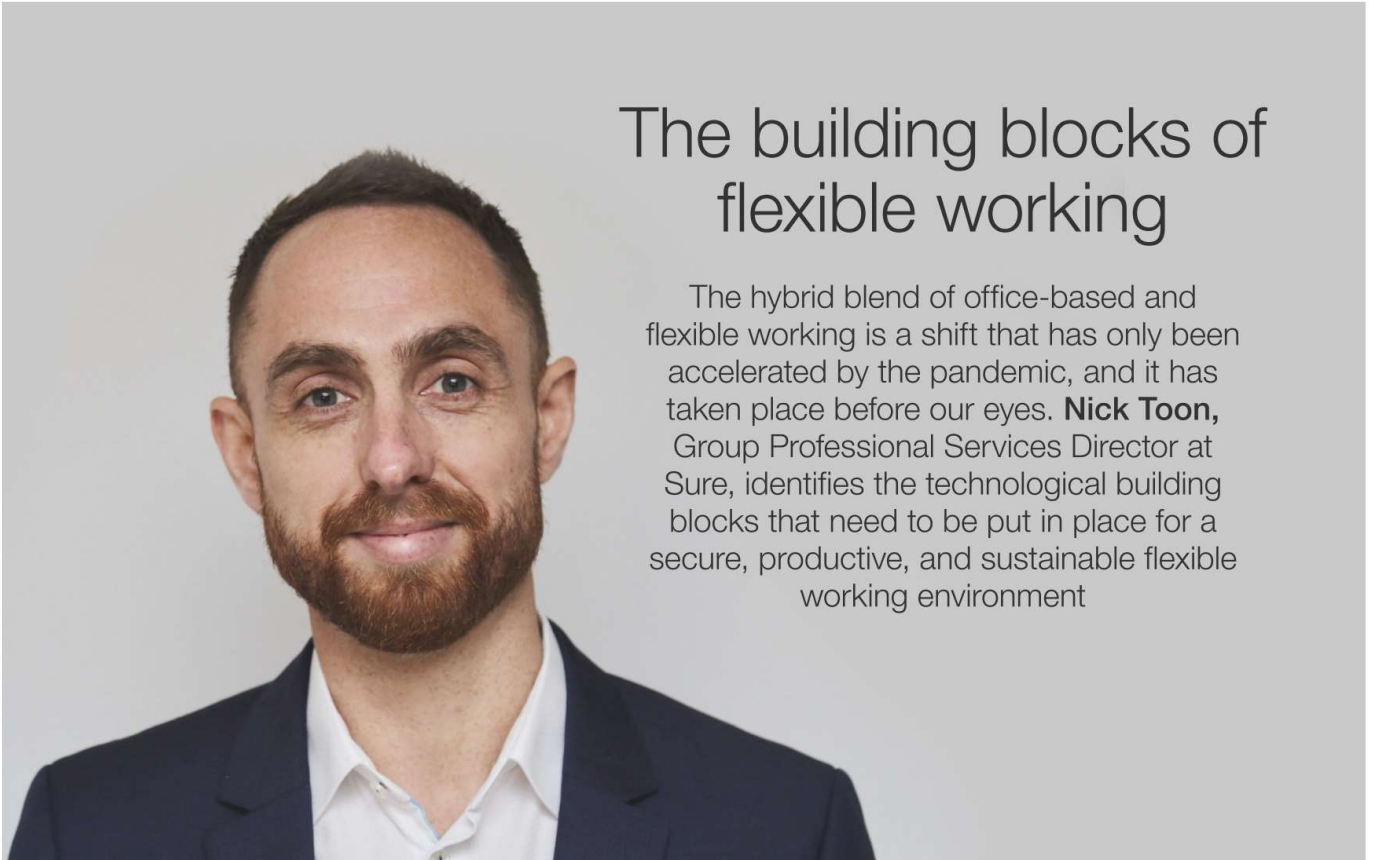


'The IoD in the UK has been asking for clarification on employment status and rights for some time. Gone are the days when people worked in the same job, the same company, all their lives. To protect both the employer and the employed, how Government categorises employment status for tax and pension purposes, as well as other employment protection and benefit schemes, needs to be reviewed.

'Our social security and tax systems are set up for those in regular paid employment, however the 'gig economy' (remote freelance/ contract based working) has risen in importance, long before Covid. With a substantial number of people losing their jobs during lockdown, and the realisation that remote working can work for many roles, this is likely to increase. Why pay expensive house prices and commuting costs if you can live somewhere more conducive to your lifestyle and still work? It's a win-win, because employers can get the best person for the role, not just whoever lives nearby.

'There is also the issue of an ageing population. We need people to work longer, and yet UK statistics show that after those under 24, those hardest hit in employment terms during this pandemic are the over 55s. This older, experienced age group is the perfect fit for more flexible working, and UK statistics show one in three who work into their late 60s, want to go it alone.

'There is a need now for us all to work with government and review the regulations and employment practices for the protection, not just of employers who want to take on these individuals, and the workers themselves, but Jersey's economy as a whole.'



The building blocks of flexible working

The hybrid blend of office-based and flexible working is a shift that has only been accelerated by the pandemic, and it has taken place before our eyes. **Nick Toon**, Group Professional Services Director at Sure, identifies the technological building blocks that need to be put in place for a secure, productive, and sustainable flexible working environment

BEFORE the pandemic, opinions on flexible working tended to be against the idea: C-suite traditionalists felt that employees working away from the office would be less productive due to lack of focus, supervision, and direction. However, research and analysis greatly support the opposite, with more than 90% of respondents to Gartner's survey last summer reporting the same or increased levels of productivity and 80% of company leaders saying their organisations plan to permit employees to work remotely at least part of the time, post Covid-19.

Collaboration tools

Employees working at any location should be able to directly communicate and collaborate with colleagues, partners, and customers. Effective collaboration doesn't just happen, it starts with a platform of unified communications based on cloud, WiFi, internet and security solutions, delivered in a way that suits the organisation. Workplace systems must be securely accessible from desktops, laptops, and smartphones, irrespective of location. Voice and video calls, screen and document sharing, messaging, and a reliable presence indicator are all core components of an integrated collaborative environment.

Cloud Services

The hosting of business systems and information in a secure and accessible environment, combined with continuity protection against system failures and data loss, are compelling reasons to invest in cloud services. Initial concerns around security and control have been overcome, and organisations are realising that physical infrastructures are more vulnerable than state-of-the-art cloud services. There's an acceptance that one size doesn't fit all. The deployment of a bespoke hybrid cloud service that blends elements of datacentre, and private and public cloud are vital for effective and secure hybrid working.

Networking & Connectivity

The internet has changed the way we work. Life without connectivity is almost unthinkable. Reliable and secure networking is extremely important for both an employee and company level.

Our 'always-on' network keeps people and businesses connected through a state-of-the-art system with dedicated points of presence (PoPs) in London, Paris, and Dublin. We continue to make multimillion-pound investments to upgrade the network's capacity, resilience, and security to new levels of excellence.

Security & Business Continuity

The ongoing arms race between cybersecurity experts and criminals, profiting from illegally gathered information, is firmly on the boardroom agenda. The need to protect operations, customers, revenue, and reputation is paramount. Cybercriminals quickly identified the pandemic as a major opportunity to make money with schemes and attacks that are increasingly sophisticated. The internet is inherently insecure and robust safeguarding measures must be in place to protect intellectual property and keep a business operational in the event of an attack. Hybrid working practices must follow suit and adhere to strict security protocols to ensure safe working for all.

Service & Support Service

Support comes in all shapes and sizes, from fully managed services that monitor infrastructure and security on a 24/7 basis, to more standard help and support when you need it. We help organisations plan for the future by anticipating needs and desired outcomes - based on capacity requirements, growth expectations and business trends. Our Professional Services consultants will help translate technical complexity into business enhancing solutions.

If you're looking for a bespoke flexible working solution, you can contact Nick at: contactus@sure.com





Investing for the future

Covid-19 has accelerated our journey to the future of work. But, will it be a brighter future? **Susie Crowder** of Bright Futures, offers her analysis

BY April 2020, 2.6 billion people around the world had gone into lockdown. 81% of employment places were fully or partially closed. Zoom daily active users increased from 10 million users to 200 million users. The very fabric of life and work as we knew it has fundamentally changed.

The pandemic accelerated trends in e-commerce, remote working and automation. E-commerce results for January reveal that UK online sales grew 74% year-on-year in January 2021, which is the largest rate of growth since the start of the first lockdown in March 2020. Three quarters of first time digital users are likely to continue this consumer behaviour. Online meetings and flexi home working are likely to remain albeit in a less intense fashion, potentially reshaping the geography of work. Commercial property is likely to be negatively impacted as will business travel as virtual meetings continue.

Given the economic consequences of the pandemic, many businesses are in survival mode, concerned with cash flow and building resilience back into their balance sheets. For many, the future is opaque and external influences will continue to impact businesses as we learn more about Brexit and the extent of the economic impact of the pandemic. One thing is for sure, organisations are looking much more carefully at efficiencies. Cost reduction and organisation redesign are hot topics, enhanced by the confidence that outsourcing to other jurisdictions is a tried and tested potential option. Automation could finally have its day as boards begin to seriously consider the role of tech in delivering their goods and services.

The labour market is also changing, regardless of the landmark ruling of Uber and the gig economy of late, the number of self employed persons or 'gig workers' has increased largely due to fear of life after furlough or redundancy. The number of remote working jobs advertised in the UK has more than tripled in the past year with organisations looking to secure the right talent at a fair price.

There are also some good news stories. For some, the pandemic has forced a more innovative and responsible approach. Investments into FAANG's have performed extremely well during lockdown and digital connectivity seems to be firmly on the political agenda. The productivity puzzle remains a challenge but the dial can be moved with the right vision, leadership and investments into critical aspects of our businesses. Personal investment into up-skilling or re-skilling appears to be on the rise as people prepare for a brighter future. The global e-learning is expected to reach \$336.98 billion by 2026, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.1% from 2018 to 2026 (Syngene Research, 2019).

If we are to prosper and thrive in our changing world then we must better equip people with the technical, digital and soft skills, including resilience and stress management coping strategies throughout the various chapters of life. The legacy of Covid-19 will hopefully spur policy makers and employers to invest more into their workforce, perhaps setting a KPI % of total turnover into human capital development. Afterall, it is the human capital of a business that will drive its growth and attractiveness in a crowded and highly competitive global market.

The potential scale of workforce transitions forecast over the coming years increases the urgency for businesses and policymakers to invest in infrastructure that will facilitate growth in a sustainable manner. Companies and governments exhibited extraordinary flexibility and adaptability in responding to the pandemic with purpose and innovation that they might also harness to re-tool the workforce in ways that point to a brighter future, for all.

Contact Susie Crowder, Founding Director of the charity Bright Futures LBG to explore how they could help you on your recovery journey. info@brightfutures.org.gg

A year of reflection

By **Jim Coupe**, Managing Director, Skipton International



As we approach the one year-anniversary of the start of the pandemic that shook the world, Skipton International is reflecting on what we have learnt as a business and how this can inform us moving forward in what has become a very different working environment.

For the banking industry it has resulted in many permanent changes and acted as a catalyst for some growing trends. The move to a cashless society, banking on the go and gravitating more towards a digitalised service are all now features of our new modern world. Yet despite this, Skipton still places huge value on a highly personalised service and we want to offer our customers the choice to bank how suits them best.

The pandemic has changed what global customers need from a bank, so Skipton offers an agile and flexible service that meets and exceeds our customers' expectations. For many, the last year has resulted in becoming 'unexpected savers', accumulating a pocket of funds from not being able to travel, enjoy holidays or indulge in those little luxuries we have all become so used to. We are on hand to ensure our customers can save or invest these funds wisely, with competitive personal savings accounts and easy access accounts that will allow you to make the most of savings whilst having access to funds should circumstances change.

Perhaps those savings have allowed some people to reach their goal of hunting for a new home? The property markets in both Jersey and Guernsey remain buoyant, with a continued demand keeping our mortgage teams busy. We are doing our part to try and help as many people as possible become home owners, recently reintroducing our 100% loan to value 'Next Generation' mortgage and waiving our mortgage fees for a limited period of time. Despite the disruption to the market during periods of lockdown we were able to refine and enhance our processes, making purchasing property with Skipton even easier.

No business has escaped the past year without facing challenges and implementing significant change. The trick has been to evolve with these changing times whilst remembering to honour what it is that makes our business so great. For Skipton we are always brought back to people; servicing our customers, our team and the communities we operate within across the Channel Islands. We have spent time ensuring we remain one of the best employers possible, checking in with our team throughout lockdowns and taking on board their feedback as to how we can become a

more flexible employer to provide them with the best environment possible to breed innovation and success.

We have continued to give back to the islands we call home, making donations of £10,000 to staff nominated charities in both Jersey and Guernsey which we felt would need that extra helping hand when the pandemic first struck. In addition, our Skipton Community Fund now moves into its third year of operation, helping those little, lesser known causes and projects to have a big meaningful impact within the community. We have now committed almost £100,000 to numerous deserving projects and welcome applications for any worthwhile project or cause.



Whilst some things must change, others remain the same and we are proud to announce that we have maintained our Platinum Trusted Service Award from independent customer service feedback review company Feefo for yet another year. This follows positive customer reviews on our exceptional customer experience. To have maintained this accolade during a time when we had so many challenges to overcome really means a lot to us and shows us that our focus of putting the customer at the heart of everything we do will continue to reap rewards. It is with this in mind that we start the journey of adjusting to a world post-pandemic, one full of opportunities as a business to stay connected, supportive and mindful of all those around us.

Reflections on our new reality – what have we learnt from Covid?

Neale Jehan, Senior Partner,
KPMG in the Crown Dependencies



I COMMENTED when announcing the merger of our Channel Islands and Isle of Man’s firms, that our ability to operate virtually cross border was a factor in our thinking. This has piqued some interest, but it is only one element in looking to the future as a business in the islands. Navigating the world post Covid will involve new ways of working, rapidly evolving business sectors, continued recruitment challenges and a new focus on our impact.

Silo mentality bought on by physical barriers has been fundamentally changed by lockdown remote working. We have achieved more in KPMG working virtually in the last year, than we might have otherwise done in many years. Maintaining relationships via video calls will fundamentally change our travel requirements in the future and whilst meeting new people virtually was initially odd, we now have pitched and won new business successfully virtually many times. *Travel will still be required in the future but the time spent will be more focussed and less mundane, with the day to day done virtually and from anywhere.*

The question of continued remote working is an interesting one. Many have said that remote working will be the future and there will be less need for office space. Well, I’m not yet convinced. Maybe we aren’t a typical business, we have a young average age and our people mostly crave social interaction. Our offices, when allowed, have been busier than ever and we are needing to create more space and desks, rather than less. And we have a flexible policy, allowing our people to work from home when it suits. *The gains from Covid may just be in a more open attitude to remote working, rather than it becoming the norm for most.*

If you analyse different business sectors and identify those that have succeeded (digital, healthcare) or struggled during Covid (retail, hospitality), there are also one or two that have been predicted to surge ahead (asset management, private equity). Our islands sit in a niche of servicing asset management and private equity businesses. Those businesses in a drive for returns are also increasingly looking at more illiquid asset strategies (e.g. infrastructure) and also impact investing (a focus on ESG) which are also niches that we service. *Several key factors are converging to drive new business and meaningful growth to the islands for the first time in several years and this will help bolster our economic recovery.*

Attracting people to move to work to small islands in the North Atlantic can sometimes be more challenging than for our colleagues in the Caribbean. We employ as many young locals as we can find each year, but that is never enough. Our offer is one of experience in fast paced and dynamic industries and a bridge to opportunities in practice and private sector in larger European and Global markets. As digital methods change our work, our teams focus on the subjective, high value tasks and these still need people. *Whilst our governments are good at attracting high net worths to our islands, an equally valuable asset would be attracting young people starting out in finance careers.*

KPMG has launched its Global Impact Plan, which details our commitments to People, Planet, Prosperity and Governance. Whilst this might be characterised as an ESG plan, it is so much more than that and about who we want to be as a business and employer going forward. As we roll this out in the islands, we will be making local commitments to match this global ambition, tailored to the specific challenges that island communities face. *Every business has a responsibility to consider its wider impact and for many this will be fundamental in attracting people and investment in the future.*

Our islands are well positioned in the short term, but this surge won’t last forever and longer term economic recovery can only succeed if the drivers of our pre-Covid economic malaise are properly addressed. Whilst each island is in a different position, Infrastructure investment in many areas is now overdue. *As businesses have faced the challenges and rapidly evolved to new business models and ways of working in the last year, now is the time for our islands to invest and evolve.*

For KPMG in the Crown Dependencies, we look to the future with excitement, a renewed commitment to our islands and a focus on our impact. We are growing driven by the surge sectors and, whilst investing in automation, are employing more people than pre-Covid-19. We are recruiting across all three islands and giving our people the flexibility to gather experience across wider sectors, businesses and service lines. *There will certainly be challenges ahead for our sector and clients, but we are ready to face the new reality post Covid.*



Our impact plan

Working together for a better future

KPMG's environmental, social and governance commitments. Holding us accountable for progress so we make an even more positive impact on the world.

kpmg.com/channelislands

© 2021 KPMG Channel Islands Limited, a Jersey company and a member firm of the KPMG global organisation of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.





Lockdown learning

We caught up with Avado, digital learning provider for The Digital Greenhouse, to find out how Guernsey and their wider network of learners – including **Lyndsey Longson** - are dealing with the effects of the pandemic on their plans to upskill

LATE last year, Avado released an independent poll with Prospectus Global that helped them better understand learners and how employers support them. Read on for highlights from their findings, along with first-hand experiences from one of our Guernsey learners, Lyndsey Longson from Sovereign Group, who is part of the first local cohort on our Data Analyst Apprenticeship.

How has the pandemic affected learning?

The pandemic has increased awareness among employers about the value of new skill development for their employees.

What do people really value in an online learning experience?

A lot of our interviewees weren't sure how to identify what makes a high-quality programme. 'There's a real problem that people aren't receiving a connected learning experience, or even understand what that is,' said Christine Olivier, Avado's Learning Solutions Director. People need that social aspect of learning, and working through things with peers. 'Avado prioritises this kind of connected learning with flexibility because we know that it is the best way to solidify information and new skills, which is more important than ever in our current virtual state.'

What has been the feedback from Guernsey?

According to Lyndsey Longson, who is undertaking a Data Analyst Apprentice with Avado, developing her career at Sovereign Group, she predicted that learning remotely would be a challenge. 'Thankfully, my concerns were soon allayed by the reassuring tutor and the excellent virtual classroom setup,' she reflected. 'The tutor was able to frequently check that we were present and comfortable with the content by way of a virtual 'hands-up'

system, and the group chat allowed us to pose questions to our tutor and gave an opportunity for some banter.

'Another challenge has been finding time to dedicate to my studies, whilst also trying to juggle home schooling and a full working day during lockdown! Thankfully, my employer Sovereign has been supportive and flexible, providing me with opportunities to study without work-related interruption.'

How important are different learning methods?

For Lyndsey, the kind of learning that stood out involved replacing those in-person aspects of learning in a virtual way. 'Topics were presented by way of slides, real-time demonstrations, videos and hands-on learning, which provided variety and encouraged engagement.'

'I personally found it easier to maintain focus than in a classroom setting due to the wide variety of learning styles accommodated.'

Avado's interviewees said learning methods were really important, with self-paced studying the most highly rated, and tutor support coming in at a close second. They favoured a mix of live video and audio with recorded content, and 55% of learners believed learning methods were the most important thing when undertaking online learning.

This year Guernsey businesses and individuals can join funded learning opportunities with Avado, run through The Digital Greenhouse. A range of short and longer programmes are available, visit digitalgreenhouse.gg/upskill

AVADO LEARNING OUTCOMES

The benefits of learning journeys, according to attendees:



said they felt they grew on a personal level



found it enjoyable, confidence building or gave them a sense of accomplishment



will use their learning day-to-day



found the learning motivating



Flexibility is our new workspace

A necessary outcome for all businesses during these challenging times has been the need for flexibility. **Alex Belcher**, Managing Director, Polygon Serviced Offices, shares his view

WHETHER this flexibility has been on a day-to-day basis, to cope with the often constantly evolving situation, or in the way we have had to adapt our working practices, I am sure most of us will agree that 2020 has shown us the potential for a simpler existence. This has led some of us to question our working patterns, work/life balance and, in some cases, even reflect upon our choice of career.

For the majority in the Channel Islands it has given us a chance to appreciate and explore our surroundings, engaging often with the great outdoors. There have also been numerous examples of engagement with our wider community and it is hoped that those acts of kindness, support and community spirit will now continue to prevail for a better future together.

Some businesses continued as normal to support our infrastructure like the many essential services in health, logistics and construction, but with the need for flexibility and adaptability as they learned what worked and what did not during this period, often under increased pressure.

From the employer's perspective, however, more profound questions had to be asked, firstly on cost and finding affordable solutions, but more significantly on responsibility. As we know, responsibility goes both ways and, despite there being many engaged and motivated self-starters, some may admit that productivity has seen a downturn during the heavier prolonged lockdown periods.

The responsibility that the employer takes is wider than we first think; naturally, this is to shareholders, governing bodies and clients, but there is also an increased responsibility for the mental health and general well-being of our staff which has come to the fore now more than ever before.

The sharing of knowledge has, by necessity, become more focused to empower our workforce in different ways whether by sharing practical information with our trainees on, for example, how to generate a useful formula for a spreadsheet; process complex transactions or simply by effective collaboration online through software like Teams or Zoom. Many of these activities have been challenging in a 'work from home' setup.

Many middle managers have benefitted greatly from a renewed sense of empowerment, allowing them to grow and demonstrate previously hidden skills and talents adapting to working from home. I suggest that there is a deeper level of satisfaction earned by passing off these often intangible skillsets to the next generation, one where there has been a significant brain drain over the past year, and one where we will be certain to seek to rebalance in future. This again has been made challenging when not operating face to face.

The need for our business community to thrive will be continually more important in the years to come, however, organisations will still need to deliver to the 'old rationale' of responsibility to stakeholders as before. Responsibilities will not change but evolve in priority.

The opportunity to work from home has been proven and we can never step back from that and, as organisations adapt to new ways of working, so too will your workspace requirements.

Current high demands from workspaces will increase and flexibility, short term leases and hot desking are likely to be here to stay. Businesses will need to be more agile than ever and retain that flexibility to deliver to a new set of expectations placed on them.

At Polygon Serviced Offices we are passionate about property and the service we provide to our clients so, whether you are looking to relocate to temporary or permanent office space, please feel free to come and have a look at our state of the art facilities in our relaxed and comfortable surroundings.

If you would like to find out more about flexible office accommodation for these turbulent times, or would just like to put the world to rights over a cup of coffee, then please drop me a note on alex.belcher@polygon-servicedoffices.co

 Polygon Serviced Offices



Where tech and healthcare collide

Jon Gollop, Senior Investment Manager at Ravenscroft

A YEAR on from the start of the global pandemic, the world is slowly easing its way back into some form of normality. We take a moment to look back at the impact this pandemic has had on certain investment sectors and what it might mean for returns going forward.

Whilst the impact on our personal and professional lives has been significant, it is perhaps the role that technology has played which has made much of this bearable. It has saved businesses that operate in the digital age from going bankrupt and been an enabler to the solution that gives up all hope for a return to normal - an effective vaccine.

Technology has been a market darling for many years. Typically asset light and disruptive in nature, tech has provided investors with a potentially endless opportunity set with little upfront cost. Couple this with an ability to scale services rapidly in return for regular and 'sticky' subscription revenues, it's easy to see why investors have been hot for tech's stock. So when the pandemic struck and WFH became the norm, companies whose products facilitated this effort were duly rewarded. Zoom, Microsoft, Slack, DocuSign etc. have been able to bring forward subscriptions and associated revenues that would have taken years to accumulate under 'normal' circumstances in just a matter of days. The great 'pull forward' not only enriches starting values by validating the 'maybe' into reality, it also means all future growth is coming off a higher base. Investors duly piled into these companies once Jerome Powell and friends had stabilised markets with their multi-trillion liquidity fix.

Investors also noted that companies who had invested in technology which facilitated sales through e-commerce and digital engagement channels were also going to do well and were bid-up in return. Valuations in companies such as Nike and L'Oreal, for example, have never been higher.

Arguably though, technology's most important role has been in the search for a reliable vaccine that will reverse the course of the pandemic, reduce hospitalisations, and open-up economies.

Technology has been at the heart of success for companies who rely on innovative drugs as their source of income. Increasingly powerful machines and software that break down biological structures to the molecular level have sped up and improved the drug discovery process. If there was ever a time to demonstrate humankind's ability to innovate in the face of adversity, this pandemic was a perfect example. There was no effective vaccine, yet in a matter of months candidate drugs were being tested in

mass trials. By the end of 2020, the market was getting to grips with the news that these drugs were incredibly effective and that it would need to consider the investment implications of an end to restrictions and a reopening of economies.

So where does this leave us from an investment perspective? Well, first and foremost one has to distinguish between what is a good company and what is a good investment. We would argue that a good company is one that offers customers a relevant product, its leadership can steward it through its business cycle and allocate resources prudently, maintaining above all else a competitive edge. Couple these attributes with a tailwind that assists growth and you are a good way to making a good investment. However, if you pay too much, the investment you make may not yield the returns you would hope for. Astute gamblers don't bet on the odds-on favourite, but look for realistic outside chances that are attractively priced. It is the same when it comes to investing. Astute investors are always on the lookout for investments where the odds sit in their favour. It helps mitigate risk and improve potential returns. Therefore, it may pay to focus on those companies that have struggled as a result of the global restrictions as they may offer better value and potential returns should economies open up quicker than expected.

So what is Ravenscroft doing on behalf of our clients? It has become blindingly obvious to us that the UK market is on sale for a variety of reasons. Brexit uncertainty and the pandemic have given the UK economy, its stock market, and currency a one-two sucker punch that has left it reeling on the ropes. However, there are reasons to be optimistic; one, valuations are attractive - especially in predominantly domestic facing businesses; two, the currency is arguably undervalued and is appreciating now we have some clarity around Brexit. This may hinder the larger multi-national businesses who have enjoyed the positive impact a weak currency has had on foreign based revenues but it will help domestic businesses who may import goods and services from afar. And three, despite the calamity of the UK's lockdown strategy, there is a lot to like about its vaccination programme. It is ranked the third best in the world based on its current vaccination rate per 100 people (source Our World in Data as of 1st March 2021), meaning there is a real chance the UK economy could open up sooner rather than later, providing a real tailwind to those businesses that have got through this rather tough period.

Ravenscroft is a trading name of Ravenscroft Investment Management Limited, which is licensed and regulated by the Guernsey Financial Services Commission.

Working SMARTly

by **Nicola Reeves**, Group HR Director of JT



WHEN we moved into lockdown, we were lucky enough to have the network infrastructure to be able to go seamlessly from the office to home and everything 'worked'. However, while the technology was there to make that happen, most industries were faced with a new challenge - how to look after an entire company; remotely. The challenges were new and varied, we created processes as we went along and relied heavily on the trust, resilience and the capabilities of our teams.

Where there's change, there's also an opportunity to make things better and Covid-19 gave us the cause to completely rethink the way we work. We moved quickly and listened to our people about what they needed and how they wanted to work.

Smart Ways of Working

As restrictions eased, we began a phased return to our offices for those that wanted to or needed to, and last September we introduced what we called our 'Smart Ways of Working' principles. This new policy gave our people a choice on how much time they spent working in the office, at home, or at any other suitable location.

This was the result of a company-wide collaborative approach. It meant any change to our way of working was only going to be made with the involvement and contribution of our people, as well as the full support of our executive team. Our regular feedback surveys, put in place to assess the well-being of our people, received an average response rate of 70% and it was based on these results, that our exciting new flexible approach to working framework was created initially as a 12-month trial.

With well-being a hugely important part of our business, we were delighted to be able to offer options for our people to split their time between home and work freely as it suited their working day. We know that by being flexible with hours, location and the surroundings our teams are working in, there are benefits to their mental and physical well-being, the environment and business productivity.

The well-being of our people

Well-being is always important, but never more so than during a pandemic. By reviewing and adjusting employee benefits during this time, to ensure they were fit for purpose made a huge impact on our people remaining positive and engaged. For example, enhancing well-being programmes and providing access to mental health and stress management services became a vital part of our workforce support. As did access to Covid-19 testing where needed, as it really showed we understood the challenges they faced and that as an employer we were there to support them.

An office fit for the future

We also had to remember that as an essential service provider our core business needs people to be available in certain locations and at certain times, and so for some of our team, due to their roles, we needed them to be back in our central offices to service our customers.

The challenge of enabling these people to return to the office was making sure they were able to do so in a safe and well-prepared environment, whilst being as flexible as we could to meet their needs.

What we found was, whilst the Government presented us with the need to adjust, we were able to enhance new requirements further through the use of new technology and systems to create an office fit for the future. These systems ranged from tracking capacity to manage the numbers of people in the building, to temperature alarms.

Technologies, such as these are linked to the Internet of Things (IoT) and in some cases were already in place, for example many of us are already using AI to help manage our own homes in a similar way. We can all adapt to these smart solutions to help us manage and support a new flexible lifestyle – being adaptable is key to facilitating change.

A sustainable future for all

With the environment and climate change playing a much bigger part in our lives and driving our consumption behaviours, another benefit of these new smart ways of working was that by being flexible we can also reduce the need for unnecessary travel. For those who do choose to come back to the office, we're actively encouraging a more sustainable commute, such as walking, cycling or public transport. Also last year we launched a cycle subsidy scheme for our people and we'll continue to shape and incentivise these decisions. As a business we have committed that will only be making trips off-island when absolutely necessary, and instead of travelling we will be linking up by using the collaborative technology that has become second nature to most of us in the last 12 months.

Businesses have had to become flexible in 2020, but that is a good thing. This will continue for the foreseeable future and technology will be at the heart of how that is delivered. It has been tough, but this is an exciting new phase for JT and for our people and presents us all with an opportunity to re-shape the way we do things, with our people at the very heart of those decisions.

For more information on careers and current vacancies at JT visit www.jtglobal.com/careers



Human cost from the pandemic

Twelve months ago, **Susie Crowder**, Human Capital Advisory Director of Grant Thornton, highlighted the impact of lockdown on people's overall wellbeing by surveying hundreds of Channel Island professionals. A similar exercise has recently been conducted, which shows a further decline in wellbeing following Guernsey's second lockdown. As business leaders, what can we do to improve our team's wellbeing?

The pandemic effect

Wellbeing has risen up boardroom agendas over the past few months following an increase in the number of people suffering with stress, anxiety or depression. Our research highlights that 40.1% of respondents have suffered with heightened stress, anxiety, or depression and 43.7% stated that their overall wellbeing had declined during lockdown.

Compared to other countries battling Covid-19, Guernsey has been relatively fortunate, with the community able to come together with minimal restrictions during the summer and Christmas period. However, enjoying an island bubble meant limited opportunities to travel, enjoy holidays and visit friends and family.

While I'm sure everyone in Guernsey is appreciative of the 'freedom' we had following the island's first lockdown, the second lockdown has brought new challenges. Financial insecurity, juggling work with home-schooling, bad weather and bereavements have all taken their toll.

Technological gains and pains

It's almost impossible to compare the last year with any other. The way we work, operate and live has changed forever. Working from home with the use of tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams has accelerated the use of technology. As the world went into lockdown, the number of Zoom users ballooned from 10 million to 200 million in April 2020. Despite its popularity, a Stanford

University study reported in the Financial Times, highlights that 'Zoom fatigue' can also have a detrimental impact on your wellbeing.

While technology is designed to improve our lives, it also means a disconnect from face-to-face contact. As much as businesses try, Friday Zoom drinks can't replace the real thing.

The switch to WFH coupled with the rapid advance and adoption of new technology has also demonstrated that talent can be easily sourced from anywhere, not just on the island. Increasingly, firms are exploring the outsourcing of cost centres and other functions such as accounts to cheaper jurisdictions.

What can your business do to help?

Your balance sheet may not have any entries for employee enthusiasm, engagement or entrepreneurship; however, these intangible factors are crucial to performance. Grant Thornton is here to help your business evaluate, measure and manage the crucial ingredient to success – your people. Employee wellbeing is vital for a thriving successful business and community.

If you're looking to organise culture audits, establish sustainable KPI's around culture, pre or post-merger and acquisition alignment support, employment brand positioning or leadership development make sure to contact Susie Crowder at susie.crowder@gt-ci.com or 01481 753 489.



Human Capital: The Critical Ingredient

Grant Thornton has a wealth of unique, deep, industry knowledge and Human Capital expertise with which to help build and develop the necessary capability to drive sustainable value and competitive advantage.

Whether you are an SME or a global organisation, we are here to help you forge a path to achieve future proofed, value focused, our focus on Human Capital solutions will which help your business to achieve competitive advantage in a fast evolving, disrupted and aggressive market place. We are here to help you analyse and realise the value of HR focused strategic business transformation.

For pre and post M&A support, culture benchmarking, bespoke talent development or offsite strategy development support / facilitation, we are here to help.

[grantthorntonci.com](https://www.grantthorntonci.com)



For more information please contact:



Susie Crowder
Director, Human Capital

T +44 (0) 1481 753489

E susie.crowder@gt-ci.com

© 2021 Grant Thornton Limited. All rights reserved.

'Grant Thornton' refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL) and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. GTIL and each member firm is a separate legal entity. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL does not provide services to clients. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate, one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions.

Navigating the Covid-19 crisis

Will Green spoke to **Paul Luxon**, CEO of Condor Ferries, which provides critical ferry links to the Channel Islands, about the pandemic and looking to the future



‘THERE was a real palpable feeling of intense “this is very different and very, very big”,’ says Paul Luxon, CEO of Condor Ferries, when reflecting on the emerging Covid-19 crisis last year.

The immediate focus was on working through what it means for passengers and crew, keeping them safe when it came to repatriation sailings to bring people home as borders closed to control the virus’s spread. Then what it meant for Condor Ferries as it was ‘right on the frontline of implication’ as a ferry business.

‘There was a very early appreciation of the significant scale, but we couldn’t remotely forecast what actually was going to happen in real terms. But then very quickly what we did was we sat down as a management team with our shareholder board and we created a six-phase crisis management plan’ explains Paul via a video call.

This dealt with what actions needed to be taken immediately right through to the worst case scenario to recovery. ‘The difficulty for us is all four jurisdictions went into lockdown differently, and had different unlock strategies and then the fine detail was different. So all of that made it difficult for us to be able to be certain about any plans about restarting passenger services,’ says Paul.

The human and financial cost

A key element of the strategy was ensuring the company could chart a path through the pandemic and safeguard people working in the business, through measures such as split shifts and use of personal protection equipment.

‘When we realised that it was clearly going to be a significant issue all the way through 2020 we then had to make some difficult decisions about resizing the business. Unfortunately, we had to reduce our people resource by just around about 37%,’ notes Paul sadly.

Some 205 roles went as the ferry operator faced not having any meaningful passenger services through 2020. The need to remain

vigilant to manage the business as effectively as possible given the locations, financial and practical implications, have remained.

Giving colour to the situation facing Condor, Paul sets out some key metrics. Just 4.5% of the normal full year passengers sailed in 2020. In the worst week, freight reduced by 40% - although it slowly recovered through the year. The CEO also stresses the ferry operator has acted with its status as a lifeline transport operator to the Channel Islands in mind throughout.

With ongoing costs, the company took a £40m-plus financial hit. There will also be an impact in 2021. The shareholders have been ‘incredibly supportive’ with additional funds injected into the business, says Paul, as well as Condor Ferries looking at its lending facilities to ensure adequate liquidity.

Looking to the future

To the backdrop of vaccination programmes taking effect, Condor Ferries is monitoring the situation to be ready should any tourism be possible this summer. The focus is on marketing the Channel Islands as the ‘staycation-plus’ option. Their natural attributes and how they have broadly handled the pandemic play strongly, says Paul.

He adds: ‘You get the ability to relax and feel comfortable. We’re also extolling the virtues of travelling by sea on that basis because, of course, harbour terminals and on-board ships, you do have more space or room. You can move about without being so claustrophobic.’

That will only be possible once the islands are feeling comfortable, notes Paul, with the ferry operator being patient and awaiting decisions from governments given Covid-19 will be around a while yet. But critically Condor Ferries is focused on being prepared and ready.

Food for thought

One year on from Lockdown 1.0, key figures from both islands highlight how their businesses have pivoted and adapted to survive



**Dominic Jones, CEO,
JP Restaurants**

Our business has 10 sites, so when people stopped going out, it was a huge impact. You can't just pare down high fixed costs. We adopted two key strategies: pushing existing technology in the business to drive more efficiencies and enhancing the customer experience as we adapted to Covid restrictions. For example, our app-based technology for ordering pivoted

to being used for Click & Collect when we were unable to serve dine-in customers.

We also took the opportunity to fast forward projects such as removing tipping which enabled us to become a living wage employer. Covid made us rethink so many things about how we operate our business.



**Martin Sayers, Managing Director,
Quayside and Vittoria, Jersey**

We had to reinvent ourselves as nightclubs haven't been open and regrettably, this decision has been at huge personal expense and sacrifice. We obtained a restaurant licence for the nightclub, and in the mid-summer months were successful, but it must be remembered that in the early months and recently we've been closed, so business has been devastated.

We've created a dining experience with a Teppanyaki area plus open kitchen. With the two-metre rule, our capacity has dropped from 100% to 40%, which is not profitable. But we're grateful to be open and for the staff to feel fulfilled in what they're doing.



**Alan Sillett, General Manager
Duke of Normandie Hotel
and President, Guernsey
Hospitality Association**

With the first lockdown, everything happened so fast; decisions were made on the hoof, which was incredibly stressful. It's been tough, but we are grateful to have the payroll/grant support which has been excellent and cushioned the blow. Takeaways and staycations – plus visitors from

the Isle of Man – helped but didn't make up for a normal year. With extremely low room sales our revenue plummeted. We would like to get back to where we were last June when the on-island food

and beverage trade was reasonably strong. The ultimate goal is finding the right pathway to re-open the borders and welcome visitors back to the island.

The GHA is in regular dialogue with the government, and we are willing and able to play a part in any recovery strategy.



**Julia Hands, Chairman and
CEO, Handpicked Hotels**

With hotels in four different jurisdictions, it's been complicated to keep abreast of what you're allowed to do. The need for good and positive communication has been more important than ever. Zoom has been an incredibly efficient medium for getting our general managers or chefs together.

Having to close hotels last March was a body blow,

something I'd never come across in 20 years. Guernsey has been by far the most successful in managing the situation and getting business back to normal in a speedy, efficient, and effective manner.

Once lockdown lifted, we had a hotel that functioned normally for seven months. Our Sunday lunch boxes have been incredibly successful; it's an efficient way of running a secondary string to your in-house catering and we're definitely going to carry it forward.



**Andy Coleman, Managing
Director, La Barbarie Hotel,
Guernsey**

The beginning was difficult - we had a responsibility to make sure staff felt safe, were fed, and housed. In a way, that was a fairly easy thing to do. The financials and how we were going to survive was more difficult. My key thought was that, whenever the pandemic finished, we had to come out intact and solvent.

Worries of the unknown I had in March and April eased in June when I could see that Guernsey folk were being so supportive. We had to focus on what we could influence, mainly cutting everyday costs like utilities - communication to our guests and staff was also key. We adapted with takeaways - initially afternoon tea in a box - and we're now doing a slightly bigger takeaway menu.

While we were very grateful for last year's staycations, if I put it into context, accommodation revenue was down 82%. I'm thankful for the support we received from government and hope there will be a bounce back once borders are open.

Educating through the pandemic

Carl Howarth, Principal, Jersey College for Girls reflects on the past 12 months



WORKING within education is an honour. There are celebrations, and challenges to overcome, every single day. We are more than an educational community focused on the development of remarkable minds and self-belief. We are a family where our students refer to their College as their second home.

As a business we employ, and have responsibility for, many colleagues across our College who support, care for and bring to life the joy of learning and personal discovery for those who study with us. When the world called us to respond quickly to the pandemic, our agility helped us to keep on track.

As a community, living the College Values of Aspire, Inquire, Excel and Belong, we found different ways, in particular using technological innovations, to run our College, grow our confidence, teach and care for our students and, in some instances, we found a better, smarter way of achieving these outcomes.

We redesigned and reimagined; we did not allow any aspect of our provision for our students to be halted. We evolved, demonstrating flexibility, resilience and resourcefulness to make this happen. Our adaptability and determination to not be beaten by Covid has meant our community has remained strong and our students have not had any noticeable loss of learning.

As a community we all worked tirelessly to support the wellbeing of each other. Despite not physically being in College we enabled our staff, students and parents to feel connected through the use of multiple digital platforms – the creation of the JCGTV YouTube channel, online Form-Time, online assemblies and Zooms. More recently we have held online Q&A sessions for Year 11 and 13 students to discuss exam changes, implemented online parent / teacher evenings, A level and GCSE curriculum options evenings, parent information evenings, practice university interviews and medical workshops for Year 12, and taken our school tour booking system online. Our online assemblies have allowed for outside speakers around the globe to speak directly to our students.

Our social community continues to grow organically with daily interaction from colleagues, students, parents and our alumnae, across Facebook (2,050), Twitter (1,693), Instagram (546, launched

mid pandemic) and LinkedIn (launch this month). A recent funny email exchange between adjacent builders and myself regarding our Food and Nutrition group creating distracting smells of 'deliciousness', saw worldwide coverage and 300,000 views. Humour and conversation are clearly key to survival in times of adversity.

In connecting to our wider community, we live-streamed important events: the announcement of the new Student Leadership Team, our annual Prize Giving (watched as far away as Singapore), the Christmas Carol service and staff panto.

Our Head of the Creativity and Performance, Jacque Rutter, worked with ArtHouse Jersey to produce the Skipton Forget Me Knots project and Map of Wonders, enabling students from across the island to engage with mindfulness projects based around creativity.

We also continued with our service to the community. Fundraising for House charities continued by moving our Cavell House Action online raising £2.5k. Year 13 organised and publicised the Sixth Form Challenge, 'The Jersey to London Nightingale run' raising £8k for Brightly and Caring Cooks. Our new Esty shop sold Christmas hampers made by students and staff for our Sixth form charities raising over £2k.

The confidence, rate of growth and development of staff and student IT skills was immense, and we have continued to capitalise on this new expertise when we returned to face to face learning. We continue to offer access to lessons via Microsoft Teams and OneNote for those students unable to attend school because they are isolating or shielding.

We do not look back with regret. Our ability to learn quickly, to change direction while still keeping our balance and knowing how to apply our energy, will give us those skills needed to tackle dynamic challenges all around us.

In this, our 140th year, we have found there is no better time to re-evaluate our ambition, our identity and our purpose. We owe our young people nothing less.

Are you in or out?

Phil Eyre, Founder, Leaders



EXCELLENT leaders know how to foster a healthy workplace. They know that achieving consistently excellent performance requires a high-trust, positive environment. The question is, are you ready to commit to your company values, or are they little more than corporate wallpaper?

Here are three headline ways that effective leaders make company values come to life.

1) They catch people IN

Good leaders put their emphasis on catching people in, rather than trying to catch them out. They identify, highlight, affirm and celebrate people who are living the values. They are seeking to encourage, rather than police, the company culture.

This doesn't mean ignoring those who are 'out' (see point 3), but it does mean choosing to seek out the positive examples.

This requires a few things of the leader:

- Be in touch with the people and not 'too busy' to know what's happening on the ground.
- Adopt a positive, affirming mindset rather than a negative, suspicious one. We're wired to see what we're thinking of. If your focus is on those who are performing then, guess what, that's what you'll find.
- Promote those good examples. This might include career promotion, putting a spotlight on the positive examples or private encouragement. Praise the effort and attitude first, in priority over the outcome.

2) They make the values real (and short)

A short and highly relevant statement is more effective than a polished set of values with long explanations. Effective leaders distill the 'one thing' (or very few things, I suggest a maximum of three) that must be tacked in practice, here and now, in order to improve performance.

Even better if these can be expressed in the positive: 'be' or 'do' rather than the negative 'don't'.

Examples from three of our clients include:

'Be early'. A more positive call to action than 'don't be late' for a business infected by tardiness.

'Make the call' (pick up the phone). Essential for a business that had matured from its energetic start-up days and had become complacent.

'Think it through' (think to the finish). This company had become addicted to urgency and had forgotten how to plan ahead.

3) They are courageous

Too often, we encounter toxic people who are tolerated, typically because they are close to some important clients. Leaders who tolerate toxicity are effectively enabling it. The result? It's the good people who leave. Challenging bad attitudes and behaviour, potentially to the point of exiting a source of trouble, is essential and takes courage.

What can you do that will help to bring your values to life in your business?

LEADERS
ADVANCING PHENOMENAL PERFORMANCE



Passion and focus

Will Green meets **Cees Vermaas**, Chief Executive Officer of The International Stock Exchange Group

WARM, friendly and personable. But also with a sharp business analysis. That's the impression I get from Cees Vermaas.

He is passionate about what he does, and is bringing that and his decades of stock exchange experience to his CEO role at Tise. The objective is to take the exchange forward – building on the group's current success to take its services and products, for example around being a platform for debt financing and securities, even more global. Smart use of technology will underpin developments.

Previously, Cees has held executive positions at several international exchanges. These include CEO of CME Europe Ltd, CEO of Euronext Amsterdam and Head of European Cash Markets for NYSE Euronext. He has more than 20 years' experience working within international financial market infrastructure and, prior to that, spent a decade working in IT and programme management roles within leading Netherlands-based companies Philips and Delta Lloyd Group.

Why Tise?

Asked what made him switch from London to Guernsey-headquartered Tise, which also has offices in Jersey and the Isle of Man, he says: 'I developed myself into an exchange animal. I have been working in the exchange industry since the end of the '90s. I mainly worked at global international platforms.'

'I'm also an entrepreneurial type, and Tise came along and I thought actually there is some work to be done there developing the next phase of a small specialised entrepreneurial exchange. I could bring and add some experience from my international platform life. So why not?'

With his warm personality coming across, he adds: 'A very important reason was a personal one. I grew up near the seafont in the Netherlands. I sometimes say to my friends or people I see, I have seawater going through my veins – and that's really true.'

When it comes to being near the sea, you can't get much better than Guernsey. Even the Tise offices are just a few metres walk from the sea in St Peter Port, with incredible views from them. 'I love this type of environment,' he says. 'It's a phase of life where I wouldn't mind leaving city life.'

Cees talks fondly of being on his boat and kitesurfing too, and notes many of his friends across financial centres such as London

or New York are moving out to the countryside in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Building on strengths

His focus now, though, is his new job, having joined last November, gaining insights into the business and how to take it forward. That is absolutely clear.

'We are pleasantly surprised to see actually an up-tick in our business,' says Cees in reference to 2020 when the pandemic wrought havoc in other sectors. 'What you see is a sort of shift. Obviously there is a lot of refinancing taking place from companies which are actually facing difficulties in order to survive or change their business model because of this pandemic and everything that is happening.'

'It's great that Tise is offering to be there in order to provide these solutions. We play our role in order to maintain as much as possible the real economy keeping on going.'

He continues: 'How that moves forward from here, we are confident that we have a good name in the market. Our clients are very focused in order to build success. I noticed in the time I've been here, there is a very talented team.'

'For my point of view, it's also heritage – what Fiona [Le Poidevin, his predecessor] left, this incredible team. She did an incredible job, [former Chairman] Jon Moulton how he restructured, facilitated.'

Cees also highlights the strong business community that has been built around the exchange, with firms such as Ravenscroft and Carey Olsen, Ogier, and top clients. Work has been particularly busy from Jersey at the moment. 'That gives a very good faith for the future'.

Looking to the future, he says: 'Tise is very good at what it does today, complex debt securities. It's quick, and agile and responsive and trustworthy. That's very important because it keeps your visibility with clients if they need something in the future – and that has shown in the last year.'

'That concept is great. It's maybe obvious or logical, but I think one of the major important things is to try and to internationalise further that kind of model.'

The changing ESG landscape: keeping Guernsey ahead of the curve



In the last few years, Environmental, Social and Governance investing, or ESG, has evolved into a financial industry megatrend, one that has been accelerated by the Covid pandemic and shows no sign of slowing down. Analysis from **Craig Cordle**

INSTEAD of fading out as a result of the global health crisis, there has been a marked expansion in funds with a strong sustainable focus – answering the calls of investors for the recovery from the pandemic to be green. But with this has come an ever-changing regulatory landscape.

Against the backdrop of the introduction of the EU Sustainable Finance Disclosures Regulation (SFDR) on 10 March, there are concerns that the speed at which ESG regulation is moving and the number of differing regimes could act as a barrier to investors committing to invest.

According to Ogier partner and investment funds and asset management lawyer Craig Cordle, now is the time to take stock and consider how Guernsey is positioned to build on its funds offering in this changing environment.

‘The pandemic has been an important catalyst, instigating discussion around the environmental sustainability of our practice, processes and systems – in essence, how we do things. One of the outcomes of the pandemic will be for funds and managers to look carefully at their governance procedures – and by this, I don’t just mean ESG funds, but all funds. There is a strong case for that review to include a look at issues around sustainability and looking at the wider indirect environmental impact of private equity vehicles from cradle to grave,’ he said.

‘While some jurisdictions are working hard in this space, notably Hong Kong and, increasingly, the EU, and Guernsey has its Green Finance Principles, there is no standard set of ESG rules

across the world. Everyone accepts ESG is a good thing, but with so many different frameworks in place, it can be a barrier to businesses wanting to make these products robust and scalable across multiple jurisdictions.’

Navigating this landscape, understanding what ESG rules are relevant and what key actions are required, is essential and asset managers are at the centre of this challenge. But with investor momentum firmly behind sustainable investing, there is an opportunity – and competitive advantage – for those jurisdictions that can offer advisory expertise combined with a simple, flexible fund regime.

‘What is clear to me is that with continuing developments such as the fast-track licensing of managers of overseas collective investment schemes and Guernsey’s Green Fund regime, Guernsey remains a very attractive destination for PE managers looking to launch new funds or migrate their management of funds to Guernsey.

‘In particular, the Green Fund regime is in exactly the right space at the moment for what investors are looking for – and Guernsey is well-placed with its Green Private Equity Principles – demonstrating Guernsey’s thought-leadership in this space.’

Ogier has a dedicated ESG and Impact Services team which offers bespoke ESG and Impact design, integration and implementation solutions. To find out more please visit www.ogier.com.

Local businesses are the engine room of the Channel Islands’ economy. With nine offices around the globe and a diverse practice, we’re known for our work with international organisations. But our heart is in the Channel Islands and we’ve never taken our focus away from the local market.

Local legal services in Guernsey and Jersey

- Business and commercial law
- Commercial and residential property
- Competition law
- Construction, planning and environmental law
- Data and privacy law
- Dispute resolution
- Employment and immigration law
- Offshore relocations of businesses and HNWIs
- Private wealth and family offices
- Regulatory law
- Wills, probate and estate planning

ogier.com

Ogier



The implications of the Budget in the UK for the Channel Islands

Broken down by **David Waldron** (Tax Partner) and **Tom Cowsill** (Tax Director) of PwC Channel Islands



ON 3 March 2021, the UK Chancellor delivered his Budget. The UK will be hoping it's past the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic but there is still a long way to go and this was reflected in the Chancellor's approach, with what has been dubbed a 'spend now, tax later' budget.

Promising to do 'whatever it takes' to support British businesses through the crisis, Budget 2021 had a strong emphasis on encouraging capital spend as a kickstart to an economic recovery.

There were stark warnings of future tax increases, though; with borrowing at its highest level since the Second World War and debt expected to reach 97.1% of GDP in 2023-24, the Chancellor gave notice that 'Once we are on the way to recovery, we will need to begin fixing the public finances'.

We've highlighted below some of the tax announcements of most relevance to Channel Island businesses:

CORPORATE TAXES

Increase in corporation tax rate: The rate of corporation tax will increase from April 2023 to 25% on profits over £250,000. The rate for small profits under £50,000 will remain at 19% and there will be taper relief for businesses with profits between £50,000 and £250,000. The Diverted Profits Tax rate will increase to 31 %, maintaining the current differential of 6% between the DPT and the main rate of corporation tax.

Capital allowances

From 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2023, companies investing in qualifying new plant and machinery assets will benefit from a 130% first-year capital allowance. Investing companies will also benefit from a 50% first-year allowance for qualifying special-rate (including long life) assets.

The main rate of capital allowances on plant and machinery will remain at 18% and the special rate relating to integral features is also unchanged at 6%.

Extended loss carry-back

The trading loss carry-back rule will be temporarily extended from one year to three years. This will be available for both incorporated and unincorporated businesses, although it should be noted that the availability to property investors except where their activities are treated as a trade.

Hybrids

Proposed changes to the hybrid mis-match rules were first announced in a policy document issued by HMRC on 12 November 2020 that was then subject to further consultation. A further policy document has now been issued confirming the changes, which differ only slightly from those announced in November.

In particular, these changes should make compliance with, and managing, the UK hybrid rules significantly simpler for partnership fund structures. Repeal of provisions relating to the Interest and Royalties Directive Legislation in the Finance Bill 2021 will repeal the domestic legislation that gives effect to the EU Interest and Royalties Directive. This legislation currently provides an exemption from withholding tax on intra-group interest and royalty payments between UK and EU companies. Repeal will mean that from 1 June 2021 withholding taxes will apply to payments of annual interest and royalties made to EU companies, subject to the terms of the relevant double taxation agreement.

Property taxes

Taxation of non-residents on disposals of direct and certain indirect interests in UK immovable property: No changes were announced in the Budget itself, but regulations were laid following an earlier consultation. One key change resulting from these regulations is that overseas life insurance companies and offshore CIVs (which are either non-close or meet the GDO condition), and also meet the non-UK real estate condition (ie broadly, by reference to its prospectus, UK property is not expected to comprise more than 40% of its investments), will be outside of the scope of the indirect disposals charge where they have a disposal of a less than 10% stake in a UK property-rich CIV which is a company. This change is retrospective to 6 April 2019.

Stamp Duty Land Tax

(SDLT)

The temporary increase in the residential SDLT Nil Rate Band to £500,000 in England and Northern Ireland is extended until 30 June 2021. From 1 July 2021, the Nil Rate Band will reduce to £250,000 until 30 September 2021 before returning to £125,000 on 1 October 2021. In Scotland and Wales the equivalent taxes are administered by the devolved administrations.

The existing 3% additional dwelling supplement for buyers of second homes, corporate buyers and other property investors will remain. As previously confirmed, a 2% SDLT surcharge will also apply to non-UK residents purchasing residential property in England and Northern Ireland from 1 April 2021.

PERSONAL TAXES

Capital Gains Tax - no changes

Despite some speculation, no changes were announced to the CGT rate or to business asset relief. The CGT annual exempt amount will remain at its current amount of £12,300 for individuals and personal representatives and £6,150 for most trustees of settlements for the tax years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

Income Tax

The income tax personal allowance will increase slightly to £12,570 from 6 April 2021 (£12,500 for 2020-21). It will then be frozen at that rate for all years to 2025-26. The basic rate limit will also increase slightly from 6 April 2021 to £37,700 (currently £35,500) and will also be frozen at that rate until 2025-26.

Inheritance Tax

The government will introduce legislation in the Finance Bill 2021 so that the inheritance tax nil-rate bands will remain at existing levels until April 2026. The nil-rate band will continue at £325,000, the residence nil-rate band will continue at £175,000 and the residence nil-rate band taper will continue to start at £2 million.

TAX ADMINISTRATION, AVOIDANCE, EVASION AND NON-COMPLIANCE

OECD mandatory disclosure rules

A consultation will be launched later this year on draft regulations to implement the OECD's Mandatory Disclosure Rules. This is consistent with the announcement earlier this year when the UK changed its approach to EU DAC6, such that only those hallmarks aligned with the MDR would be reportable. The introduction of rules more fully aligned to MDR should result in closer alignment to the Channel Islands, which have already introduced legislation based on the OECD MDR.

OECD reporting rules for digital platforms

The government will introduce a new power in Finance Bill 2021 which will enable regulations to be made to implement OECD rules that will require digital platforms to send information about the income of their sellers to both HMRC and to the seller themselves. This is designed to help taxpayers in the sharing and gig economy get their tax right, and help HMRC to detect and tackle tax evasion when they do not. A consultation will take place in Summer 2021.

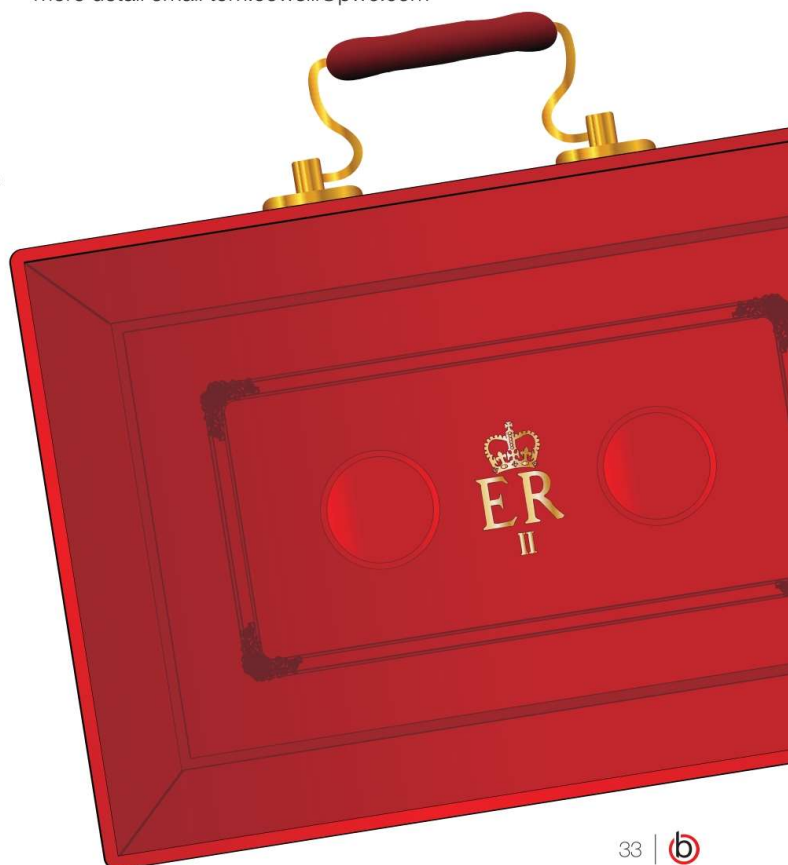
Interest harmonisation and reform of penalties for late submission and late payment of tax

The UK government will reform the penalty regime for VAT and income tax self-assessment. The new late-submission regime will be points-based, and a financial penalty will be issued only when the relevant threshold is reached.

Tackling promoters of tax avoidance

The government published a summary of responses following the recent consultation 'Tackling Promoters of Tax Avoidance'. This sets out a package of measures to strengthen existing anti-avoidance regimes and tighten the rules designed to tackle promoters and enablers of tax avoidance schemes.

Keep an eye out for further developments over the coming weeks and in the meantime, if you'd like to discuss these implications in more detail email tom.cowsill@pwc.com



Digital Jersey – Digital Start-up of the Year: The Summit



Amanda Eulenkamp talks
to founder **Ben Symonds**
about his entrepreneurial
journey so far

'WE were literally running for about two weeks when lockdown started last year,' says Ben. 'All those coffee meetings stopped, and contacts were dropping offline; everyone was panicking, and I thought: "This is going to be an interesting start".'

Deciding to start a business at any time takes guts and determination, but to have obstacles such as Covid and lockdown so early on has to be daunting. Ben is philosophical and says his business, The Summit – a dedicated business analytics specialist – simply had to adapt and go online like everyone else.

'Eventually, when businesses started to look forwards again, the conversations started to open up and actually more than ever, businesses were starting to look into the future and look at their own situation and want to understand more about their own business performance. And that's exactly where we fit in. It's understanding the now, where they want to go, what they can do to improve, and in some cases survive all the change that's happening.'

Growth

His career prior to starting The Summit was 'quite commercial', and he says he had good exposure to financials and business stakeholders, and a lot of what 'makes businesses tick'. 'You've got to find experts in their field and bring them in to support you – like a good accountant, and someone who is going to help you with complicated procedures to get your business off the ground. You've got to leverage the specialists that are out there to support you so that you can do what you do best.'

Year one saw the business grow and expand the team, with the latest recruit, Matt Duffy, joining in January this year.

'We've also started to generate quite a good following in the market and growing our reputation for stellar business analytics, and we needed to quickly expand. We found other people in the market that were looking for opportunity.'

Challenges and communication

Ben says that the unforeseen challenge in 2020 was around meeting and talking. 'Face to face was a big part of how we would spread news of what we could do for prospective clients. That was difficult last year because setting up meetings and going for a coffee and having a chat is much more informal, it's much more human.'

'Pitching via video conferences is a bit more intense, a bit more focused, and a bit more commercial. So that was a challenge, but again we adapted, and then there was part of the year when restrictions were lifted, and you could go for a coffee and a walk. Hopefully, this year we can return to normal circumstances again.'

From the offset, The Summit operated as a fully cloud-based business with a remote working set up. 'Being a tech-focused business, we leverage as much tech as possible to make our lives efficient,' he says. 'But it's even more driven at home as everything's got to be paperless, everything's got to be digitally signed, connected and integrated so that we can run as effectively as can be. It's part of what we do, looking into improvements, efficiencies and that's certainly helped us to thrive. But also keeping things simple. It's what we're trying to do with our clients. Nice and straightforward. It works really well.'

Ben explains that, as data professionals, for privacy reasons they would typically spend more time on site at a client's premises. 'That's obviously become a no go, so we've had to find remote working solutions with them.'

He talks about the speed of technology, acknowledging that it's important to be kind to yourself and manage your time

when working remotely. 'You have to be agile; you're hopping in and out of calls with each other, or instant messaging within teams. It's a different behaviour from email which is more formal and quite slow. With modern instant messaging tools, it's very fast-paced.'

Of their clients and how they manage the speed and change of tech, he says, 'We can build sophisticated digital automation for a client, but if it doesn't enable people, it doesn't enable value. A lot of our projects are run jointly with our clients – we use their knowledge of their industry and processes and the context of their data. If we're bringing something new to the table and bringing in new technology or changing the way that they think about data, we have to make sure that they benefit from whatever we've built. A huge part of what we do is with people – it's not just crunching numbers – they're curious, but not everyone moves at the same pace.'

'We have to make sure that they're not alienated by this new tech – we try to build solutions that are fit for purpose and user-friendly. It's bespoke and it has to be right for them.'

Mentors

Ben acknowledges that he's always had a kind of entrepreneurial spirit and had some good, inspiring mentors around him. 'I like motivating other people, I've always liked making things better, and I guess this job is using technology to make things better,' he says. 'Starting the business was my opportunity to build something.'

While Ben has mainly had personal mentors around him, he acknowledges Digital Jersey as a place to find new mentors. 'We've used the hub, for example, as somewhere to meet. It really helps small businesses in particular, it gives you a physical presence.'

'Sometimes it's really beneficial to get everyone in a room and start to think – draw diagrams on the whiteboard, pitch, get that creativity going. A lot of people have given great advice. It's like a mentor network has opened up.'

Winning Digital Jersey award

Adapting the business at such an early stage was crucial for Ben and his small team, but has reaped rewards and awards, namely winning Digital Jersey's 'Digital Start-up of the Year'. 'Even to be on the nominees' shortlist was exciting,' he says. 'It's great for showcasing local businesses, businesses that have been built from scratch.'

'A lot of the time you'll find that businesses aren't aware of the startups that exist, so it's really good exposure for the businesses that were nominated. It's enabled visibility of what we've got to offer and, hopefully, we can build relationships off the back of it.'

Tips

Asked what advice he'd give to budding entrepreneurs, Ben says, 'Be confident, back yourself, and trust your instinct. At the same time, it's a skill to be able to really listen to others and take their ideas and feedback on board.'

Ben says he was actually on holiday when the idea of the business solidified. 'When you go away you are able to process your own thoughts – it's where the idea started to flourish.'

He advises trying to find established entrepreneurs that have done it before as they are often willing to share their experiences.

'Typically, an entrepreneur will believe in what they're trying to do. And then that inspiration flows down to the people that are joining them on that journey.'

Going for gold

UK Athletics has named Healthspan, which is headquartered in Guernsey, as its official sports nutrition supplier to UK Athletics in a three-year partnership.



Healthspan Sales and Marketing Director Chris

Fisher said: 'For several years we have been supplying Britain's best athletes with our batch-tested, Elite vitamins and supplements. It feels very natural to now make our relationship official so we are delighted to have been chosen as British Athletics' preferred sports nutrition and vitamin supplier.'

'Good nutrition is an essential part of an athlete's daily routine which assists their training, health, recovery and performance. So, it is excellent news that through this partnership, athletes on the British Athletics World Class Programme have the opportunity to access a comprehensive range of high quality, batch-tested sport supplements to support their nutrition needs,' said Tommy Yule, Head of Performance Sport at UK Athletics.

Jersey Government Chief Executive



The Government of Jersey has a new Interim Chief Executive. Paul Martin has been appointed on a 12-month fixed term contract following the departure of his predecessor Charlie Parker.

Paul is currently the Chief Executive of both the London Boroughs of Wandsworth and Richmond upon Thames, where he has worked since 2010 and 2016 respectively. He has worked in local government and the UK Civil Service for more than 38 years, the last 22 years of which have been in Chief Executive roles.

Senator John Le Fondré, the Chief Minister and Chair of the States Employment Board, said: 'Paul Martin brings with him decades of senior leadership experience in the public sector. His career experience will be of direct benefit to the Government as we navigate the effects of Brexit, Covid-19 and a global economic downturn.

'Paul will provide an experienced and steady hand on the tiller as we look to appoint a permanent Chief Executive.'

Mary D'Keeffe

R e l o c a t i o n



Referral only service enabling HNWIs to relocate to Jersey

Experienced | Expert | Bespoke

Email: info@mary.je Tel: 0044 (0)7797852273

www.Maryokeefferelocation.je



Appleby

The firm acted as Jersey counsel to Advanz Pharma in connection with its sale to Nordic Capital for an equity value of \$846m.

Advanz Pharma is a specialty pharmaceutical company headquartered in London, with operations globally. The acquisition is via a members' scheme of arrangement under Jersey company law – with the deal subject to various regulatory approvals. It is expected to close in Q2 of 2021.

Appleby Partner Andrew Weaver who led the firm's team said: 'I am very pleased that we have been able to support Advanz Pharma on this next stage of the company's development, following our work with the company on a series of transformative transactions over the years. This transaction showcases Appleby's strength as a leading firm in public and private M&A and court regulated transactions.'

Carey Olsen

Carey Olsen remained the leading offshore law firm for London Stock Exchange clients for the fifteen year running in the latest edition of an industry guide.

The Corporate Advisers Rankings Guide shows the firm now advises 91 LSE clients - 80 more than in 2005 when the guide was first published. That is more than double the number of clients advised by the next nearest offshore law firm.

In addition, Carey Olsen was also named as the leading offshore

legal adviser to FTSE 250, AIM and financial and real estate sector clients.



'To have been the leading offshore legal adviser to LSE clients for the past 15 years is a fantastic achievement. As the figures show, we have experienced extraordinary growth during that time,' said partner Ben Morgan, Head of Carey Olsen's corporate and finance practice in Guernsey.

Ogier

The firm assisted Bristows LLP, representing Waterland Private Equity Investments, in their £1.1bn acquisition of the Priory Group from Acadia Healthcare Company.



Waterland, one of the best performing private equity firms globally, said it would combine the Priory Group with Median, Germany's largest provider of rehabilitation and neurology treatments, to create 'Europe's leading rehabilitation and mental health services providers'. The combined group will be able to treat 260,000 patients across 570 clinics.

Ogier advised on the Jersey corporate and finance aspects of the acquisition. Macfarlanes acted as UK corporate counsel to Waterland.

Partner James Fox who led on the deal working alongside Oliver Richardson, Robin Burkill and Lara Morand, said: 'We were delighted to assist Waterland on this major acquisition in the healthcare sector, which is an example of Ogier's strength in advising private equity clients, and demonstrates our market-leading corporate practice's involvement in significant transactions in the Jersey market.'

'It is indicative of a trend we are seeing of private equity funds investing in the medical and healthcare sectors with the benefits that this brings for those businesses and those who use their services.'

Guernsey Financial Services Commission

Advocate Simon Howitt has been elected to the role of vice-chairman of the Guernsey Financial Services Commission.

Advocate Howitt has more than 30 years' experience as an advocate and is a consultant at Babbé having previously been a partner.

A past president of the Guernsey Chamber of Commerce, he has served on a number of States committees as a non-member. Advocate Howitt is a member of the board of examiners for the Guernsey bar exams and a member of the editorial board of the Jersey and Guernsey Law Review.

He succeeds Bob Moore who has stood down as a commissioner after nine years' service.

Commission chairman Dr Cees Schrauwers paid tribute to the significant contribution made by Bob Moore, who served



as vice-chairman since 2017. Welcoming Advocate Howitt to the role, Dr Schrauwers said: 'He has already made a valuable contribution to the work of the commission since his appointment as a commissioner and I look forward to continuing to work with him.'

Focusing on the glass half full



WHILE it's safe to say that the honeymoon period of our new political assembly is now over as we approach the six month mark, Chamber has been encouraged with the level of engagement and interest shown in the business community by our new States and is offering strong engagement as part of the Government Work Plan going forward.

It has been humbling to see the strength of community response to the second lockdown and the determination of organisations of all sizes to continue to operate and retain their workers. As an organisation which spans the entire breadth of business here, Chamber is constantly mindful that they truly are the engine of the economy and we are working hard to try to make it as straightforward as possible for them to recover and succeed.

Our activities are always based on pragmatism. Events and insight are organised on the basis of addressing real issues and providing tangible, practical solutions. The challenge is substantial and one encouraging aspect of the Government Work Plan is that it clearly recognises the need to rein back layers of red tape and legislation.

It appears to be true that this challenging period of life will be defined as "pre Covid" and "post Covid" in the same way that we adopt "pre war" and "post war". A sea change is upon us, whether we wanted it or not and the requirement now is to find the positives, identify opportunities and enable business to provide its lifeline support for so many other aspects of life here.

News that the deficit is nowhere near as substantial as initially forecast is hugely welcome and is due, in

no small way, to the attitude of the whole population in continuing to work and help each other as best we could. With a year of Covid behind us, but a clear recognition that impact and awareness will be part of life going forward, Chamber is working hard to assist all of our 700 members.

There are some major topics to consider and we will be reaching out to as many of the 16,000 islanders under our membership umbrella as possible as we seek your clear views. Among the topics are air and sea links, Brexit impacts and opportunities, developing European connections for both business and leisure, considering our population size and regime and playing our part in trying to ensure that our beautiful and historic Town can evolve into a dynamic place in which to work, live and spend leisure time. We are also mindful that there is in-work poverty and families who are struggling. Our ever-growing charitable sector membership will become even more important as the use of public-private partnerships and third sector initiatives increases.

Added to that, on a daily basis, we help members to highlight their services and products to the rest of the membership and beyond and our virtual networking continued seamlessly during the recent lockdown. We know that this type of practical help, assists businesses in acquiring new clients or customers and helps them to further develop. As a business organisation, that activity is at our very heart, together with efforts to ensure that our amazing island continues to strive for a good quality of life for all.

Elaine Gray, Chamber President

Rennes is flying high

Investigating European links, Aurigny's Chairman told a Chamber insight session recently that the airline is reviewing its operations and will take on board the findings of a transport survey held by Chamber and other island business groups



CHAMBER'S membership has input in recent years that an air link with France is high on the wish list of businesses and leisure travellers. With the Breton capital of Rennes just an hour from St Malo and offering a sophisticated transport network to many European destinations and beyond, Chamber has been lobbying for it to be part of the island's outward travel focus.

While the effects of Covid have yet to be assessed, in 2019 Rennes handled nearly 1m passengers and offered flights to 27 destinations international and European destinations. It offers direct flights to 27 destinations including Berlin, Johannesburg, Dubai, Singapore, Dublin, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels and London. It is also a major charter hub for holidays to population designations in Spain, Greece, Turkey and Croatia with low cost carriers including Easyjet and Tui offering holidays.

In addition to the flight network, Rennes has a superb business centre and state of the art train links with high speed connections throughout Europe and an easy link to Paris. In 2020, the city recently beat a host of other major French centres, including Nantes and Montpellier in being awarded prestigious recognition for its "economic dynamism" particularly for start-ups.

The city's prestigious Business School and two universities add to its dynamism with more than 50,000 students and it continues to invest substantially in its education offer and appeal for corporates with a growing number of Parisian

organisations establishing offices there. The region, Ile de France, stated that some £2b of accumulated investment had been made in infrastructure and services, with recruitment playing a key role in activity. It has a major focus on 'connectivity, human capital and innovation.' The Bretagne Loire University has a special interest in digital technology and food processing and is connected with a number of global corporate brands.

The city leads international partnerships and cooperation projects with about 15 cities in Europe, Asia, Africa and America and has also launched international cooperation projects directly (in particular with Mali and Vietnam) and has a substantial partnership with Québec. It aims to become a 21st-century European city while maintaining its identity as the capital of Brittany.

Chamber has hosted Rennes city officials and will be including the city in its external relations going forward. Other French connections include a strong working relationship with the Bureau des Iles Anglo-Normandes and our organisation has hosted visits from Alexandre Wahl, director of ADN (Agence de Développement de la Normandie), and Herve Morin, President of Normandy.

If you would like to be involved in our external relations initiatives going forward, please email office@guernseychamber.com. We hope to be able to organise visits to Brittany and France for Chamber members as soon as travel allows.



Future direction of “our” airline explained

Aurigny Chairman Kevin George presented insight into how our state-owned airline will navigate it’s way through these uncertain times when he spoke to around 90 attendees at a Chamber speaker event online

THE pandemic’s effect on all sectors has been considerable but the aviation industry has probably been the worst affected and the landscape going forward is still far from certain, Chamber attendees heard at the zoom event.

The Aurigny Chairman, who presented and answered a substantial number of questions, has been in role since last summer and pointed out that, with new Chief Exec Nico Bezuidenhout, the management of Aurigny is keen to carefully consider the airline’s core objectives and activity.

While many jurisdictions were left without links during the worst of the pandemic, the island was able to continue operating Aurigny as a lifeline service. As the after shocks of Covid continue to have an impact, Mr George said there was opportunity for the airline and confirmation for islanders that there was benefit in it being owned by the state as airlines all around the world struggled to continue.

Asked to think objectively, rather than from an Aurigny perspective, about open skies, he stated that a population of 60,000 was unlikely to prove

attractive in the long term for other airlines and believes that creating working partnerships, e.g. with British Airways or Emirates, was a more viable way to expand connections and destinations further afield.

He believes that Aurigny needs to closely review and ideally change the number of different aircraft it operates and the fact that they are “sitting on the ground” for large parts of every 24 hours. ‘Every time an aircraft is on the tarmac, it is costing a substantial amount of money. It is important that, as an airline, we make sure it is as efficient as possible and get the aircraft working harder.’

Mr George said the Aurigny fleet is on the ground generally from 8pm to 7am: ‘We will look at whether that needs to change to make best use of them and to provide services which the community wants.’

Aurigny owns five types of aircraft: four ATRs, the Embraer and Dorniers. ‘There is a great deal of complexity in that and it might well be that we need to simplify it.’ The future of the jet will be part of that consideration.

Mr George has a track record in ferry operations as well as the airline industry. He is a director of Scillies believes that partnerships will prove the most effective way to provide the island with its best-possible travel links. 'I managed Monarch, in the days when it was profitable, and would like to think I bring a good perspective on the airline industry, together with Nico. Aircraft are very expensive assets to own. We need to look closely at our business and social links.'

He told the online gathering that he was struck by the high number of Aurigny routes which use only the SE. 'There are opportunities further north and potentially in Scotland.' The Chairman was also keen to 'look to Europe as a massive market'.

The airline will carefully consider the findings of the recent airlines survey from the G5 business groups (Chamber, IoD, CIPD, Giba and Cgl). 'We need to know what people want for both business and leisure. If they would support a connection to France or wherever in Europe, we will definitely investigate that.'

One element that is being constantly reviewed post Covid and as a basis for Aurigny is a London connection. 'The airports have been hugely affected by the pandemic. It might make them more amenable to smaller airlines and, for instance, the use of ATRs which Heathrow had said were undesirable but that may have changed.'

The position of Alderney's air links are an important part of the airline's operation. 'I am delighted that work with the States has meant that we are near a PSO and that brings certainty for Alderney and a clear contract for Aurigny.'

Mr George said the framework would help the airline to review its size and shape and to address topics such as the tension between social versus commercial operation of Aurigny. He appealed to the business community and island as a whole to make clear what it wants from its airline, which he hopes will become clear through the survey findings as well as general engagement.

Answering questions, he comment that, on a sustainability level, Aurigny's management is keeping abreast of progress with electric aircraft. Asked whether the airline will retain its Southampton link, given that another airline serves that network, he said that Southampton would continue to be an important part of Aurigny's connections, particularly given its role in transporting medical patients.

The air links survey has now closed and its findings will be released by Chamber and the other business groups, as well as forming a basis for future discussion with Aurigny's management and the States.



About Kevin George

Early career was with British Airways as an avionics engineer, progressing through to senior roles in marketing and operations. In 2007 he joined Monarch Airlines initially as their operations director before taking the position as CEO in 2011.

After more than 30 years of working in aviation, he moved into the marine industry and joined the Red Funnel Group as CEO in 2014, becoming Chairman in 2019. The organisation, under his leadership, has secured new long term investment, overseen the build of Red Jets fast catamarans and refurbished vehicle ferries.

Based in Southampton, Red Funnel carries 2.3 million passengers and over 800,000 vehicles on its ferry route between the UK port of Southampton and East Cowes and 1.1 million passengers between Southampton and West Cowes on its Red Jet Hi-Speed service.

The Isles of Scilly Steamship Group was founded by islanders almost 100 years ago to provide lifeline passenger and freight services to the Isles of Scilly. It operates eight fixed wing Skybus aircraft from Land's End, Exeter and Newquay airports, and the seasonal Scillonian III passenger ferry from Penzance between March and November.

Mr George is also Chair of UKSA Board of Trustees- a youth education and maritime training charity based in Cowes, which delivers mentoring and skills training in the maritime industry.

He is a Director of Solent Enterprise Partnership.





Onward and upward

Finding the positives in the challenge of the second lockdown, Chamber immediately launched its events series online and, such has been the success, that we will be retaining this in parallel with physical get-togethers going forward

BEING able to dip into business support sessions, insights and community topics without the need to travel anywhere and at a time that suits individuals best, has proved extremely popular with our membership and beyond. Online events attendance numbers have soared in recent weeks and have ranged from presentations on governance and culture to zoom barre fitness classes and virtual wine and nibbles.

'Whilst we are not, in any way, making light of the economic impact on our Chamber community, we have recognised that engaging online to assist, support and network, has a real benefit as part of our membership and we will continue to offer a programme on-line going forward,' said Executive Director Kay Leslie.

The island's largest business organisation saw membership applications rise substantially during lockdown as teams recognised the value of member-to-member promotions, interactive online events and very strong social communication platforms. Chamber has also emphasised its offer of rolling monthly membership to ensure that business of all sizes can easily join this business community. It starts from just £11 per month for a small business.

One of the shining stars of online gatherings has been the monthly Coffee Club with thebestofguernsey. With a chatty, relaxed style and the use of mini presentations to enable firms and individuals to introduce themselves and their services, the early morning get-together has gone from strength to strength. While attendees have had to provide their own coffee and bacon sandwiches, feedback has confirmed that many are acquiring new clients or customers from the sessions.

A panel discussion on Future Workforce attracted 80 attendees with Leyla Yilidrim from PwC, business owner Diane de Garis who is Chamber's Vice President and Andrew Clements from global start up success Edease. It was moderated by Will Green, Guernsey Press Business Editor.

The meeting heard that managers need to identify skills within their organisation, which might mean moving individuals into new roles in which they have inherent ability and to support lifelong learning as one way of offsetting the effect of automation. Creativity and enterprise were key, they were told.

Among the other formal insights provided were sessions on Governance and Culture from Perrin





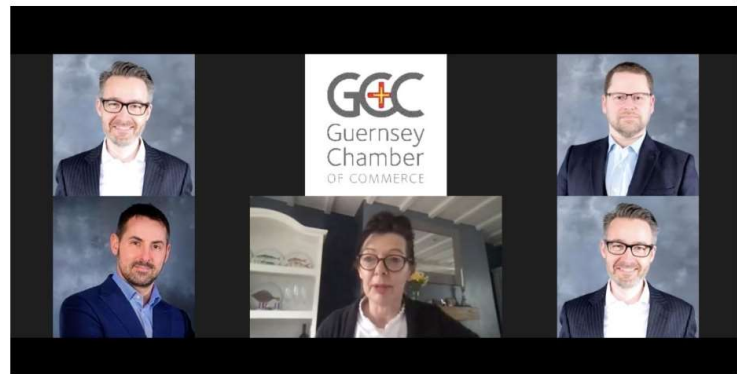
Carey and Jim Nicholls and cyber security for business leaders with Black Arrow. Consultant Bruce McDougall ran through a range of considerations for organisations to try to ensure that data was not breached during lockdown and beyond. He emphasised that, as flexible working is set to continue in one form or another going forward, it was essential for businesses to educate their teams around potential data breaches and cyber risks. The activity of hackers rose exponentially in recent months.

Perrin and Jim's event emphasised the need for corporate teams to clearly identify their culture and ensure that they were living it, rather than simply creating a wish list and not adhering to it. A sense of belonging has been identified as a crucial part of modern corporate life and it was hugely important for managers to engage authentically with their teams and enable regular input and involvement.

With health and wellbeing in mind, Chamber organised an online zoom barre class with Rianna Bailey and a sleep workshop with Dan White. Please check Eventbrite for upcoming get-togethers.

In addition to the events programme, Chamber has attended and contributed to meetings with P&R on the Government Plan and economic enablers, investigated electronic payment issues (full report next month on the back of a Chamber survey) and participated in Anti Discrimination progress meetings.

If you would like to find out more about our activities or join the ever-growing Chamber community, which now stands at 700 organisations, please email office@guernseychamber.com





A springboard to funding

Jersey's first ever crowdfunding platform is being launched this Summer to help businesses in the island secure funding for growth. Business Brief asked Digital Jersey CEO **Tony Moretta** to explain how it works and why it's needed

THERE'S one thing I am clear on when it comes to business in Jersey. There is no shortage of great ideas, entrepreneurial spirit, and a willingness to make things happen. However, for many, the barrier is often a difficulty in getting access to funding.

While, in the UK, there are a variety of schemes – including government schemes – to assist in securing investment, there's nothing comparable here. And, in a world where crowdfunding is an increasingly attractive route to success, Jersey-registered businesses have to become UK-registered businesses to legally access those options.

It's why my team at Digital Jersey has been working with colleagues at Jersey Business to put that right.

The result is Springboard.

We've created a crowdfunding platform designed to help all businesses in the island, not just digital businesses, secure funding for specific projects and purposes. But Springboard is much more than some of the existing crowdfunding sites you may be familiar with.

It is intentionally a very Jersey solution to a very Jersey problem.

The first part of Springboard is where businesses can offer rewards-based crowdfunding. We see this as a place where local businesses will go to raise amounts below £50,000 to take their enterprises to the next level.

Perhaps you're a business looking to expand, perhaps you're a business looking to reimagine what you do in a post-Covid world. But perhaps you're also not wanting to give away equity in your business. This is your solution.

Springboard will allow you to make an offer to people who like what you do. For example, if you're developing an ecommerce offering for your business, you may offer rewards such as discounts on future on-line purchases or another form of reward in exchange for a fixed amount of money. This rewards-based approach means you raise your money now, and those rewards can then be delivered to all those who supported your crowdfunding campaign at a later date.

The second part of Springboard is for those looking to access larger investment, with a willingness to exchange that investment for a stake in their business. Perhaps you're looking to raise capital to get that prototype into production. We see this option aimed at those looking to raise £50,000 or more.

For these people, Springboard will effectively be a bulletin board where investors can explore your opportunity and get involved.

For many, access to investors can feel something of a closed shop. If you don't have a route into that world, you may not get invited to events where you can make your pitch and secure your deal.

Through Springboard, you're creating a shop window through which both experienced investors as well as those who may not have a ready £50,000 in their back pocket, but may have £2,000 to invest, could see your plans and declare their own interest to you. It means you're effectively getting the best of all worlds.

Whether using Springboard as a crowdfunder or a bulletin board, you will also get access to a wrap-around package of support from Digital Jersey and Jersey Business, with access to office space, courses, specialist expertise, and mentors who've previously walked in your shoes. It's about creating a community where that engagement with investors lasts long beyond the point they part with their money. It's a place to update them on your progress and share with others the things you learn along the way.

And, crucially, Springboard is free to use. What you raise for your business through the platform is all yours.

My vision is for Springboard to become its own digital community where people share not just their rewards-based crowdfunding pitches and investment opportunities on the bulletin board, but also their experiences and successes for the benefit of all.

We've all come through a lot in this past year, and the need for easier access to funding was there long before the pandemic. But as we collectively chart our way through it and focus turns to economic recovery, I hope Springboard will be central to that islandwide effort.

www.springboard.je – Launching this Summer



The Jersey crowdfunding platform
Launching this Summer at www.springboard.je



©
Springboard
Elevating local business



How secure is your IT?

James Kelsh, Resolution IT's Head of Information Security, looks at what the GFSC's recently published Cyber Security Rules & Guidance means for businesses

AN isolated and more mobile workforce has made for softer targets for cyber criminals, with cybercrime rocketing during lockdowns. And depending on which stats you read, there is a global deficit of cyber security experts from anywhere between two to four million and rising. An increasingly heavy workload for in-house cyber security experts has got a whole lot busier.

Is it therefore realistic to expect your in-house IT dept to cover this, as well as the myriad of other day-to-day IT duties they are required to do, to not just keep the lights on but to make sure your IT is a helper and not a hinderer of your business's growth? Or is it more cost-effective and ultimately more secure for you to place the cyber security burden with third party cyber security experts? And if it is, what can they offer you?

They should be able to offer you a range of security services, including all the areas covered in the five core principles as laid out by the GFSC.

The first is Identify and our cyber security assessments clearly highlight the specific vulnerabilities within your business. When plotted against a business's own risk register, we can identify where improvements can be made.

Protect and Detect requires you to have the appropriate policies and controls in place which we can assist with; these include endpoint protection solutions, email & web filtering, mobile device management, multi-factor authentication, patch management, data loss prevention tools and so on... The Guidance also recommends certification, specifically Cyber Essentials. Having our own qualified Cyber Essentials+ assessors and IASME Gold Governance auditors, along with having gained both standards ourselves for many years, (and the first in Guernsey) we have

extensive experience in being able to assess, audit and certify for these certifications.

The Guidance also recommends training for employees, often, unwittingly, a company's weakest cyber link. We offer cyber security awareness training (all staff should attend at least once a year), as well as continuous email simulation phishing training, so staff are constantly exposed to what they should not be clicking on.

Under Respond & Recover, businesses will have to demonstrate they have cyber incident response and disaster recovery plans in place and regularly test the plans to be ready in the event of an incident happening.

We have helped numerous businesses with these plans, whether fully cloud, completely in-house or a mixture of both.

Every client has a different piece needed to complete their cyber security requirements so each request for in-house support is different. We've externally audited information security management systems, highlighted gaps and then assisted in filling them. Other clients have engaged us for our vCISO (Virtual Chief Information Security Officer) service – we take on the responsibility for their information security management system, giving them complete security of mind and systems.

By working with us, you are gaining access to a complete team of IT security experts, all with their own specific areas of specialism. You are gaining security peace of mind with an experienced and qualified information security team, who offer a range of services and industry recognised certifications. Long or short term, they are here to provide extra support for your in-house IT team, making sure you meet all regulatory requirements and more.

We help in-house IT teams conquer their temporary challenges with:

- Help Desk cover** →
- Information security expertise** →
- Digital transformation knowledge** →
- Infrastructure upgrades** →

The right resources at the right time.



Managing privacy through a pandemic

Deputy Commissioner **Paul Vane**, Jersey Office of the Information Commissioner, reflects upon the past year

TWELVE short months ago our lives were turned upside down as the Covid-19 global pandemic descended on our island. Things we take for granted every day abruptly stopped as we were forced to stay at home, wash our hands and protect each other. As I reflect upon the past year, and perhaps the relative naivety of those early days when we knew little about this virus, I do feel a degree of pride at how quickly communities have adapted to new ways of living, working, and doing things at a time of unprecedented crisis. Not only that, but the many positives that have come out of changing the way in which we do things. More efficient and effective ways of working, as well as a better balance of work and home life being just two examples. From my own perspective, it is important that we don't regress back to old ways once the pandemic is over and risk losing those positives.

Most organisations were quickly forced to move from a fully operational busy office to a remote-working environment as staff were sent home. Some had well thought-out business continuity planning long before the pandemic struck, which made the transition from office to home working quick and relatively seamless.

However, such was the urgency of the move to working from home, some of the basics were forgotten. Particularly in terms of data security. For example: Is the home working environment secure? Who else may have access to any client data held in the home? Is the employee's Wi-Fi connection secure? What happens to your client data? Do you have the appropriate measures in place to protect that data? What about the use of personal devices and laptops? And what happens when your staff return to the office? These are all valid questions which all need to be risk-assessed and evaluated accordingly. Data protection should not fall away just because of the urgency of the situation. Rather, data protection should form the spine of your work from home and remote working policies and procedures.

The fact is that an unintended consequence of the pandemic has been a sharp increase in the collection, use and sharing of personal data, not just in terms of our business clients, but also about each of us as individuals. Government initiatives designed to reduce the spread of the virus have resulted in numerous

track and trace programmes, and a voluntary mobile phone app designed to trace direct contacts of a Covid patient. Each time we go into a café, bar, or restaurant we are asked to hand over far more information about ourselves than we would do normally, and in some cases, we routinely scan a QR code to register our attendance. In short, our digital footprint is now much larger than we perhaps would like it to be. Of course, we recognise the importance of these initiatives in fighting this terrible virus, and most of us are happy to be included in that community fight-back. But it is also important to remember the fine balance between inclusion and intrusion. How much of our privacy do we need to sacrifice in the name of our safety and security? As I mentioned earlier, privacy and our safety should work together side by side rather than sacrificing one for the other.

The next phase is likely to add yet another dimension, with the introduction of vaccine passports on the horizon. Again, it is easy to see the benefit of such initiatives as we escape the pandemic and try to restore some sense of normality. However, it is equally important to acknowledge both the privacy and ethical implications of their use. For example, you will most likely need a vaccine passport to travel. But will you also need it for your weekly supermarket visit? And what if for any particular reason you have not had a vaccination? How will this affect your access to routine services and recreation? What are the social implications of such exclusion?

For some, last year's lockdown provided an opportunity to take stock, re-evaluate and re-calibrate our personal lives. It also, perhaps subconsciously, provided the space to enjoy the value of our privacy away from onlookers and the daily intrusions we have become accustomed to. Not only is privacy a fundamental human right, it is also a key component of our overall wellbeing. The damage, emotional distress and anxiety resulting from a privacy breach is only calculable if you have had the misfortune to experience it first-hand. Imagine such a situation in the midst of a pandemic, where those usual support networks are not as freely available, and not without restriction. This is why we have a collective responsibility as a community to place greater value on our privacy for the benefit of everyone, particularly our future generations.



SAN+ONDAF®

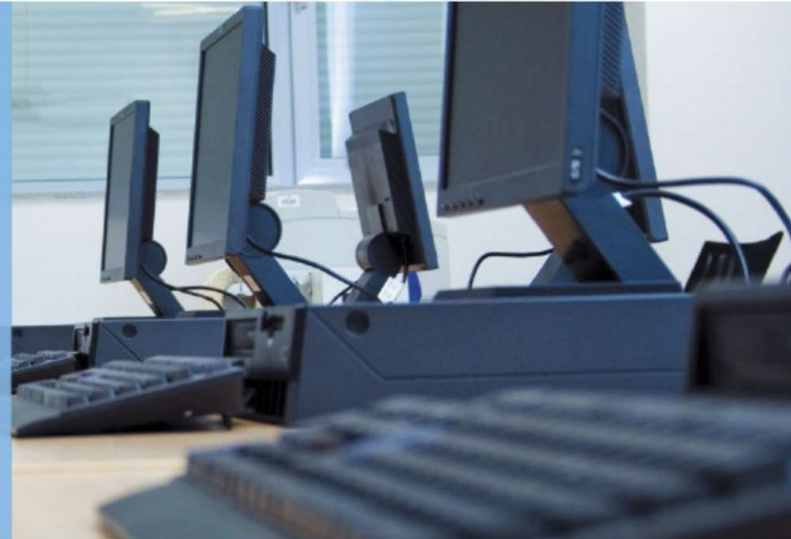
touch-less disinfection services

Advanced Infection Prevention & Control

How hygienic is your workplace?

Staff absence - what cost?

- Reduced service levels
- Reduced productivity
- Increased costs
- Poor morale
- Increased workload for co-workers
- Client relationship impact



We can help you to:

- Provide a healthier work environment
- Control workplace infections
- Reduce staff absence
- Reduce indirect costs of absenteeism
- Improve staff morale & wellbeing



- **Every surface disinfected** - wall-to-wall & floor to ceiling
- Kills 99.99% of harmful bacteria & viruses
- Safe on computers & electronic equipment
- Safe on fabrics and soft furnishings
- No odours or residues
- Environmentally friendly
- No interruption to business



Call us for more information & a demonstration



For further information on the full range of Sanondaf Disinfection services please contact the following:



info@biofogci.co.uk



01481 700 600 / 01534 888 906



PO Box 275, St Peter Port, Guernsey, Gy1 3RF



www.biofogci.co.uk

One year on from Lockdown 1.0

IoD Jersey Professional Development Committee Chair, **Mary Curtis**, and Vice-Chair, **Jo Terry-Marchant** discuss how the IoD has responded to the challenges of flexible working



ONE year on, we are only just beginning to realise the overall impact of the pandemic upon our working lives. Working flexibly offers so many freedoms, but it also requires us to make greater efforts to connect and build on relationships.

Leaders focused upon ensuring their teams were safe and valued, but flexible working can both reinforce connection and undermine it. The casual conversation over the water cooler, reading body language across a room, all served to reassure you that colleagues were in the right space to deliver the service your clients deserve and expect. Investing in learning and development is a must for employees and employers; it supports wellbeing by stimulating new ideas and reinforcing experience with theory.

The parallels are many between agile working and the world of online learning. Technology is developing at a speed we have not experienced before, and yet in the world of learning it is still trying to catch-up with the best that face-to-face delivery can offer.

So how has the IoD responded to this?

The IoD Academy has met this challenge head-on and produced a great online learning experience with the Certificate and Diploma in Company Direction. Now you connect with Directors and Non-Execs from all over the world. It is a fantastic opportunity to learn in real time about how leaders from global organisations in the private and not-for-profit sectors are anticipating and exploring the benefits and challenges of the post-Covid world.

Organisations know that succession planning and developing the next generation of directors can be a daunting task and relies on the alignment of employee ambition,

company resources, finances, and time. To help nurture the leaders of your organisation, the IoD have created the Future Directors course. Across three days, delegates will explore, analyse, and develop the key attributes of a director.

Executives and NEDs/Trustees who have attained the IoD Certificate and Diploma qualifications and board presence can also apply for Chartered Director status.

The tutors are not only international experts in their fields of governance, finance, strategy, and leadership; they are also highly skilled tutors who have made the move to digital look and feel seamless.

They employ best-in-class assessment tools, encourage participation and discussion using a blended learning model which provides the learner with accessible case studies upon which to apply their learning. Every session has tech support, so you feel supported every step of the way.

The benefits of learning online align to flexible working. Learners log-in from all over the globe and flexible working enables that to happen. Regular breakout sessions encourage sharing of good practice/lessons learnt from experienced and highly motivated participants.

The advantages of the IoD programmes, learning online and from your home, are many for you and your employer/teams. You will not regret signing up for the course and at the same time you are showing visible leadership – committing to learn and adapt in a new online world. Learning from the best and with the best.



BIOGRAPHIES

IoD Professional Development Committee

Jo Terry-Marchant is Vice Chair and Principal of Highlands College. Born and educated in Jersey, she has a MA in Education and Management, and completed the Association of Colleges Senior Leadership Management programme in 2018. She is an active member of a schools' Governing Body and also worked with the States of Jersey "I Will Mentoring and Shadowing programme" collaborating on the design and implementation plans for increasing female representation at senior levels of the Government of Jersey's public service.

Mary Curtis is Chair and Director of Calmera Business Consultancy which offers management and development training and coaching to the public, private and third sector. She is a Fellow of the CIPD and IoD and has worked both in the UK and Europe supporting organisations with developing their people. Mary is a Trustee at Durrell and a Chartered Director/ Interviewer for the IoD.



EVENTS: BRAVE NEW WORLD

For those of you who missed IoD Jersey’s interactive panel discussion webinar, ‘A Brave New World’, you can now watch it at your leisure by going to the iod.je website.

The webinar was hosted by Business Management Consultant Tim Guest. He asked panellists: ‘What has this pandemic taught us and how will successful businesses adapt to an uncertain future?’ The panel then gave insight into Macroeconomics, the Jersey perspective, change management, and wellbeing and productivity.

Professor Joe Nellis, Professor of Global Economy and Deputy Dean at Cranfield School of Management, said: ‘We will see some

recovery in 2021 but we need businesses to continue investing; investment is the engine of growth.’ Lisa Springate, Chair of IoD Jersey and Head of Legal & Technical at Jersey Finance, followed with a discussion on the Jersey perspective and said: ‘Jersey can be cautiously optimistic but not complacent. This year has made us think twice about many things and businesses have shown themselves to be resilient. In addition to technology, I have seen health and wellbeing propelled to the forefront of business priorities.’

Allam Zia, Director BDO Greenlight, added: ‘It’s important to have a function in the business that helps you manage change. A change management mindset should become part of the business culture and it should be ingrained in the DNA of every organisation.’

The webinar concluded with a presentation by Jenny Winspear, Consultant and Wellbeing Lead, Marbral Advisory, who said: ‘The pandemic has brought vital focus to corporate wellbeing. Workers with poor well-being may be less productive, make lower quality decisions, be more prone to be absent from work, and make consistently diminishing overall contributions to organisations. Ethically, an organisation should care for their workers wellbeing and take responsibility. This increases their brand reputation, employee loyalty and commitment, and overall productivity.’



THE BIG INTERVIEW

Each month IoD Jersey selects an interesting member to interview in their hot seat and their latest subject is founder of NeuroDiversity Jersey, Develop Autism and Cobra Coding and member of the IoD Jersey Diversity Sub-Committee Jonathan Channing. In the interview, Jonathan talks about the need to build a more NeuroDiverse

aware and inclusive society. He says: ‘I quickly discovered that many wins for autism in the workplace were related to creating a more NeuroDiverse friendly workplace, looking at the whole picture of NeuroDiversity and how we deliver equality in the workplace for those who think and process information differently to ensure their talent is not lost.’ Read the full, enlightening interview online at: iod.je



THE ROAD TO DIVERSITY

IoD Jersey’s ‘Road to Diversity’ Podcast has launched! The Podcast’s aim is to tell D&I stories and unearth lived experiences of diverse individuals and a new interview will be published once a quarter. The Podcast is hosted by Jonathan Channing, NeuroDiversity Thought Leader and IoD

Jersey Diversity Sub-Committee member. The series kicks off with an interview with Kate Wright of the Diversity Network talking about Kate’s journey with D&I over the years in both her HR life and her entrepreneurial and changemaker endeavors with the Diversity Network. The podcast is available now on Spotify and Apple by searching ‘Road to Diversity’.



Hawksford



Richard Summerfield has been named Chief People Officer – bringing 20 years of global HR experience to the role.

He has strategic and operational responsibility for Hawksford's people function and all related HR activities for nearly 450 colleagues across Europe and Asia. His focus will be the integration of acquisitions, hybrid working, employee experience, recruitment, employee development, performance management as well as employee benefits and rewards.

A Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, Richard was most recently Chief People Officer at Ocorian and a member of its executive board. He is a founding council member of the Jersey Good Business Charter and has held a number of business advisory positions throughout his career.

'I am passionate about the "future world of work" and have already begun implementing a strategy across the business as we focus on Hawksford's employee experience and ensuring we are in a position to attract and retain the very best talent in our industry across all of our global locations,' he said.

'My initial impression of Hawksford's culture has been very positive and the company already offers a hybrid, flexible and collaborative working model. 2020 brought unprecedented challenges to how businesses approach their working environment, culture, and employment practices, presenting real opportunities to design a modern and productive working experience for everyone, allowing for an optimised work-life balance.'



Savills

The international real estate advisor has appointed Julian Mallinson as a Director – establishing the firm's first physical commercial presence in Jersey.

Specialising in commercial and residential valuations including loan security and development appraisals on behalf of corporate and private clients, Julian has more than 29 years' experience in the Jersey property market.

Having spent the last 12 years as a Director at CBRE, Julian also undertakes rent reviews, lease advisory and capital markets work.

Tony Rowbotham, head of commercial at Savills Channel Islands, said: 'Whilst our Guernsey-based commercial team service the whole of the Channel Islands, we are delighted to be establishing a formal commercial presence in Jersey through the appointment of Julian, as well expanding our services to include valuation.

'His extensive experience and knowledge of the Jersey market will be a huge asset to us both complementing and augmenting our existing offer.'



Black Vanilla

Chloe Chescoe has joined PR agency Black Vanilla.

The firm's newest account manager, who is qualified through the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, returned to Guernsey recently after working in London.

Chloe brings her expertise and experience in global communications and media relations to the team, building the agency's capacity for corporate and financial services clients.

After starting her career locally, she went to work for international law firm Herbert Smith Freehills, where she supported the global communications team across 26 offices worldwide.

'Chloe's relationships and experience with the national press and financial services media is matched by her energy and can-do attitude, which is what our clients expect from the agency,' said Black Vanilla's director Nichole Culverwell.

'Many local firms will value her international communications knowledge and experience of working with a multi-jurisdictional firm which will also prove beneficial in her managerial role, working alongside and supporting the junior members of our team.

'Bringing Chloe on board also expands our agency's capabilities in crisis communications. We're excited to see what this year brings for us, especially when the benefits of clear, transparent communication have never been so well understood.'



The Pensions specialists

For more information
contact Mike Freer

+44 (0) 1481 728432 or +44 (0) 1534 880112
mfreer@bwcigroup.com



Brooks Macdonald International

Andrew Prosser has been promoted to the role of Senior Investment Manager while Peter Davies has joined the firm, also as a Senior Investment Manager - both based in Jersey.



In his role, Andrew takes on responsibility as Co-Head of the Multi Asset Committee which formulates the strategy and asset allocation for the bespoke and managed strategies for International.

Additionally, he has taken on the role of Co-Head of the newly acquired multi strategy funds as part of the Lloyds acquisition. The Chartered Financial Analyst Charterholder and a Chartered Accountant also assumes a risk monitoring role as well as a commercial role for the business.

Having worked in financial services since 2012, Andrew joined Brooks Macdonald in 2016 having previously worked at Ernst and Young.



Meanwhile, Peter has recently joined the direct strategies investment team, with a primary responsibility for strategy, asset allocation, selection and management of client fixed income portfolios.

Peter has also become Co-Head of the newly acquired fixed income funds range.

With more than 15 years of experience in the financial services industry, including both sales and trading roles at investment banks in London, Peter has previously worked for Morgan Stanley, KBC, Nomura and most recently for HM Treasury, where he held a senior role with the UK Debt Management Office.

Andrew Shepherd, Brooks Macdonald International CEO, said: 'I am delighted to welcome Peter to the team and recognise Andrew with his promotion. With their considerable experience and knowledge, both will play a pivotal role in our growing investment management team.'



Walkers

Advocate Chris Hutley-Hurst has been appointed a Senior Counsel in the Guernsey investment funds & corporate law practice group at the law firm.

Chris is a funds lawyer who has been in private practice for 20 years, including in London and New York, and joins Walkers from Carey Olsen's Guernsey office.

He advises on all aspects of investment fund and corporate transactions, including investment fund formation, acquisitions, disposals and regulatory matters, and also on economic substance and taxation matters having worked as an onshore tax lawyer.

He joins the team jointly-led by group partner Matt Sanders and partner Kate Storey. Welcoming his new colleague, Matt said: 'He has an excellent reputation in the Island for the quality of his work, and his arrival marks another step forward for our growing practice group.'



Ironwood Trustees Ltd

Neal Pickford has been promoted to director at Ironwood Trustees Ltd.

Having joined the firm in September last year, Neal brings more than 20 years of industry experience with him as Ironwood, a local fiduciary specialist, strengthens its team.

Ironwood's Managing Director Clive Damsell said: 'Our team is nimble and ambitious with specialists in a number of disciplines. I am excited to build

on our current offering of bespoke trustee, company and family office services and the promotion of Neal will enhance our ability to do that.

'I look forward to working with him as we continue to expand our client base. Having managed a portfolio of private clients, multi-family offices, companies and trust structures across multiple jurisdictions, Neal will be a huge asset to the team in this senior capacity.'

Prior to joining Ironwood, Neal originally worked in practice with KPMG and Deloitte, and over the last 10 years has worked with a number of trust and fiduciary providers and with both corporate and private clients.

In his new role, Neal is responsible for financial reporting and client accounting, supporting the board on corporate governance and strategic matters and will oversee a portfolio of key UHNW private clients.

The Pensions specialists



For more information
contact Mike Freer

+44 (0) 1481 728432 or +44 (0) 1534 880112

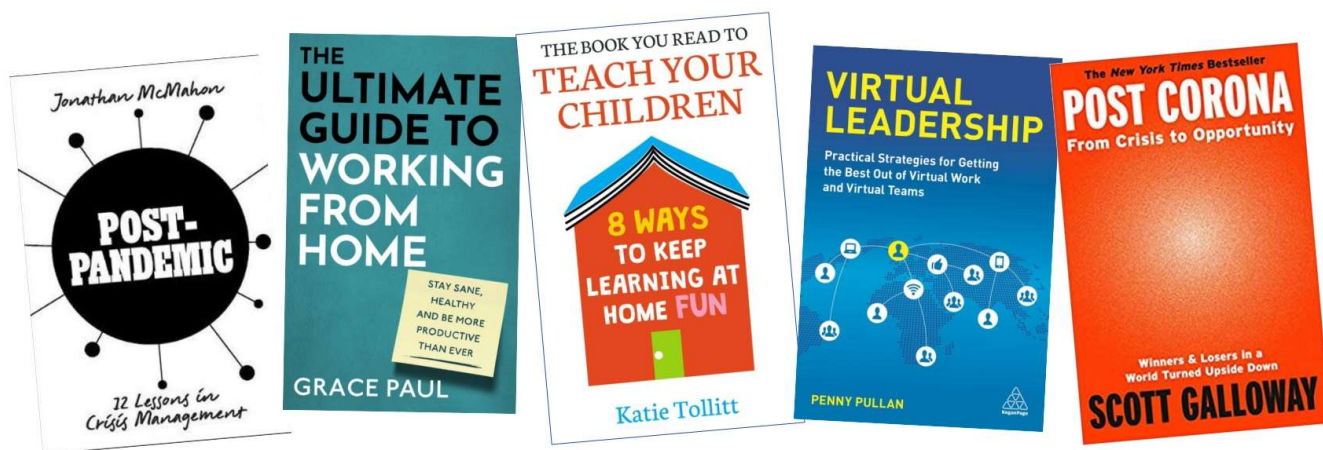
mfreer@bwcigroup.com





The 2021 reading list

Ed Jewell, Chief Librarian, Jersey Library, reflects on a transformative period



“There are decades when nothing happens; and there are weeks when decades happen.”

I've kept in a corner of my office the white board we were using to plan library services in the days running up to Jersey's first lockdown on the 23 March. The mess of scribbled notes charts what was a chaotic and unsettling time for everyone, as national and local developments relentlessly tugged away long held assumptions. The quote at the head of this column has been variously attributed to Saint Peter, Karl Marx and Lenin, all of whom were reinventing (for better or worse) the world in which they lived. In our own way we are all now working in uncharted territory. The definitive guide to managing and leading during a 21st century pandemic has yet to be published. Instead events have prompted us to read more widely and deeply than ever as we seek to find answers to immediate problems and carve out a sense of what the 'new normal' could be.

We have all had to rapidly adjust to a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment, as described by Rob Elkington et al, in their book VUCA, Visionary Leadership in a Turbulent World. The pandemic has provoked an encompassing and rolling change management process since early March 2020. Comfort zones have been completely swept away, with operating rules often changing by the day as we adapt to new public health guidelines and changing customer demand. It should perhaps be unsurprising that books like John Kay and Mervyn King's Radical Uncertainty have been a constant fixture in the bestseller lists.

One change that may well have wide-ranging consequences that outlast the pandemic is the number of people who are now working from home. This sudden change to working arrangements gave rise to a number of challenges that are addressed by Penny Pullan in her 2016 book, Virtual Leadership: Practical Strategies for Getting the Best Out of Virtual Work and Virtual Teams. Pullan

sets out practical approaches to leadership, motivation, virtual meetings and team building. While technology has outpaced some of the tools Pullan recommends, the basic principles and practices are as relevant as ever as we work to keep teams 'together' and focused.

Grace Paul's The Ultimate Guide to Working From Home offers a compact primer for those who may still be getting to grips with home working. With chapters titled 'What to do when you're having a bad day' and 'How to stay sane' alongside 'What technology will you need' this is a readily accessible book that can be dipped into for advice. Paul includes a short chapter on working from home with children, a subject expanded on in The Book You Read to Teach Your Children: 8 Ways to Keep Learning at Home Fun by Katie Tollitt. Practical and judgement free this indispensable book offers helpful insight into the learning process and useful tips for engaging activities for young people

With the rapid rollout of vaccination programmes and the publishing of 'reconnection roadmaps' there is a sense in the air that the pandemic is coming to an end. The question now is very much 'what comes next'? In many ways the economy and the way we work has changed irrevocably over the past year. While it could be suggested that previous pandemics such as the Spanish and Asian Flu pandemics had little long-term impact on our societies, we are in a very different place socially and technologically now than we were in the 1920s or '60s. The conversation of how we build-back a more cohesive society that can better accommodate new developments, like the move to home working, alongside the pre-existing challenges of automation, AI and climate change, is already happening in books such as Post Corona: From Crisis to Opportunity by Scott Galloway and Post-Pandemic: 12 Lessons in Crisis Management by Jonathan McMahon. The reading list for 2021 is incomprehensibly different to that which we expected in 2020; a year spent at home as decades went spinning past.



Wrongful trading and the pandemic

Guernsey Advocate **Raymond Ashton** offers his thoughts

ONE of the questions I am frequently asked by directors at the moment is when am I deemed to be trading wrongfully? The relevant section (434) of the Companies law in this regard can apply where a liquidator, creditor or member of the company applies to the court to the effect that sometime before the commencement of a liquidation, that a person (usually a director) knew or ought to have concluded that there was no reasonable prospect of the company avoiding going into liquidation. This requirement is modified somewhat when the director can show he took every step to minimise the potential loss to the company's creditors that he ought reasonably to have taken. This would cover where a sole director's actions over a period of time resulted in the deficit in the profit and loss account not increasing over the period under review. In this situation this would protect the director.

This is further clarified by subsection (4) which states that in relation to the facts he ought to have known, the conclusions he ought to have reached and the steps which he ought to have taken are those which would be known, reached or taken by a reasonably diligent person having the general knowledge, skill or experience:- that may reasonably be expected of any person carrying out the same functions as are carried out by the director, and of that director

In other words a person who is not sufficiently qualified is to be tested by reference to someone who is ideally qualified whilst someone who is over-qualified is to be tested by the higher standards they possess.

The fact that a company is trading whilst insolvent does not in itself mean that it is wrongful. It is only if there is not a reasonable prospect of not going into insolvent liquidation. Thus, if before the first pandemic the company was trading profitably the fact that there were losses in the pandemic and for sometime after, including the current one would not be catastrophic. In making his decision it might be appropriate to take into account any tax relief or tax repayment attributable to the losses or other special payments. The clearest statement of the obligations on a director are set out in the statement by Chadwick, J, as he was then Secretary of State for Trade & Industry v Taylor (1997) IWLR 407.

The companies legislation does not impose on directors a statutory duty to ensure that their company does not trade while

insolvent; nor does that legislation impose an obligation to ensure that the company does not trade at a loss. Directors may properly take the view that it is in the interests of the company and its creditors that, although insolvent, the company should continue to trade out of its difficulties. They may take the view that it is in the interests of the company and its creditors that some loss making trade should be accepted in anticipation of future profitability. They are not to be criticised if they give effect to such views, properly held.

Obviously there is difficulty in deciding with hindsight whether it was wrongful to continue trading. The first significant case was *Re Produce Marketing Consortium Limited (No 2)* (1989) 2BCLL520. This company traded as a fruit importer, initially successfully but over time the profitability declined and the company went into creditors' voluntary liquidation. The company showed a decline from one with no overdraft to a substantial one with an excess of liabilities over assets. Knox, J, held that whilst they did not have accounts they should have realised there was no way of trading out of the situation on the directors knowing the business intimately.

It is important to point out that this was a simple case of a fruit importer where produce was bought and sold, a very simple production process. Greater vigilance is needed where there is a complex production process where a view has to be taken of the value of work in progress. The value of this may change over time and this is something that should be taken into account on a regular basis.

The question of wrongful trading is a question of fact and degree. This is crucial but the more complex the production process the more difficult the decision. This in the case of engineering the decision is likely to be more difficult than in the case of a simple retail shop. The other significant factor which emerges from the cases is the use of accounts. Too often this writer has seen this business exercise taken by not having accounts available. This factor can be the key to avoiding liability for wrongful trading and the nearer the accounting date the accounting date to the insolvency date the more convincing will be the claim for no liability for wrongful trading. The lesson is simple: some accounts prepared by a qualified accountant is indispensable to this decision.



Herman Miller
Aeron

Comfy chair

Joe Peacock, Client Advisor –
UBS Wealth Management, Jersey



What do you do?

I am a Client Advisor with UBS Jersey specialising in advising the Jersey intermediary market and UK Resident Non-Domicile clients

What's the most important part of your role?

I have to ensure I explore every opportunity to provide our clients with direct access to the best thought leaders and the most creative investment ideas. This involves listening and taking the time to understand what's important to agree on solutions that protect and grow our clients' wealth.

What motivates you?

I thrive on pushing myself towards pre-set goals and going above and beyond what is expected of me. I find it makes it more enjoyable to include a bit of friendly competition thrown in as well.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

'Your word is your bond'. Growing up my parents always told me the one thing you will always have in life is your word and reputation. Trust is key for both your business and personal life, so always stick to your word, be honest and transparent.

What's a typical day like for you?

Coffee in the morning is essential! Since I started working from home, I have been going for an early morning run before I power up the laptop, which has been a great opportunity to explore the beautiful sights of St John's. I speak to my team members and clients throughout the day, which is extremely important in the remote working environment. The most crucial part of my role is prioritisation; ensuring all time-sensitive tasks are dealt with efficiently and appropriately. The best part of my day is interacting

with clients, intermediaries and prospects. I enjoy discussing various subjects, from macro-economic views to recent sports events. My day is very people-focused and it is important that I am always available to answer any relevant queries.

What would you tell your 20-year-old self?

Don't constantly worry about your future or compare yourself to others because you don't know what is around the corner. Sometimes the most unexpected things become the best opportunities. Set yourself goals and aim to achieve them, but don't worry too much. As long as you work hard and remain driven you will succeed.

Tea or coffee?

As above, I cannot start my day without a nice hot cup of coffee!

Sports car or family SUV?

Sports car. I am not a big petrol head, but I wouldn't say no to the Tesla Roadster.

Night in or night out?

Night out!

Play sport or watch sport?

Both. I love to be active, but I also really enjoy the social aspect that watching sport brings.

First in, last out at work, or last in, first out?

Although I am usually first in last out, we've all learnt from the pandemic that a degree of flexibility is important. I always aim to push myself and exceed my goals.

**Buy Herman Miller,
Buy once!**

Comforting to know Herman Miller chairs come with a 12 year guarantee.

Pop in and try one out!

PBS GROUP.CO
One Source for Business

One Liberty Place, St. Helier, Jersey, JE2 3NY. Tel: 01534 875 611 Web: www.pbsgroup.co



Cisco Webex Teams. Communicate without boundaries.

With an unprecedented increase in remote working happening worldwide, clarity and collaboration are more important than ever before. Bring your teams together, wherever they're located. With Cisco Webex Teams your business can enjoy:



Instant
Messaging



Calls



Video
Meetings



White
Boarding



Document
Collaboration

For more information, visit:

www.jtglobal.com/webexteams



First time every time identity verification.

Vaie **Identify**.

The smarter way to verify identity.

Verify your customers' identity in seconds with fast, secure and easy to use ID authentication, facial recognition and liveness checking.

Discover more. Visit vaie.com/identify



Vaie **Identify** is brought to you by vaie.com
Vaie is part of the Jersey Post Group.