



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S WELCOME...

Whilst it seems the world is a very different place right now, it wasn't so long ago that we were operating with relative normality in a pre-coronavirus environment. This update harks back to those halcyon days in much of its content, when we could all get into our organisations and see the impact we were making. However, despite the challenges we have collectively faced I'm pleased to say that we have continued to make significant impact across East Kent since lockdown began, and you'll get to read a bit more

about one of our core strategic operations in our acquisition of Ashford College and the former Hadlow College Canterbury Spring Lane site in this update as well. And although the world may well appear a very different place right now, I'm pleased to say that we continue to deliver for the communities we serve across the whole of the East of our county.

Graham Razeley

KENT DIRECTOR ENLISTS HELP OF ASPIRING FILMMAKERS

Level 3 Filmmaking and Creative Media students from The EDGE at Folkestone College have collaborated with Actor and Writer, Ben Shockley, to shoot his latest feature film titled, 'Dan Hawk Psychic Detective'.

The film, exclusively shot by students from the College, tells the story of Dan Hawk, a Writer and former Detective who is reinstated into the Folkestone Police Force after returning to his hometown. In a turn of events, a serial killer dons the guise of a character from one of Hawk's most successful novels. With the help of his deceased wife, Hawk goes on a mission to track down the killer.

The College's Film and Creative Media Lecturer, Steve Thomas, worked with Ben to support the students through all stages of the production.

Talking about the knowledge and experience the students have gained, Steve commented: "Working as a film crew on a feature film has given the students the type of experience that they would not normally get until the end of a university course. They have gained insight into how films are made and have learnt valuable skills such as sound recording, boom operating, camera grips, focus pulling, camera operating and lighting."



A teaser trailer for the forthcoming feature film was recently released online, sending waves through the cult and indie film scenes.

The film is currently 75 per cent complete, with production halting due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Production is set to resume once lockdown measures are eased and it is safe to do so.

EKC GROUP ENHANCES LOCAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES WITH TWO NEW SITES



In April, EKC Group welcomed Ashford College and Canterbury Spring Lane into its family of Colleges and Business Units.

The addition of Ashford College and Canterbury Spring Lane to the EKC Group family strengthens the Group's education and training provision in the East Kent area, equipping local students with the skills and knowledge needed to prepare them for successful careers or further study, and enabling the Group to boost the social and economic prosperity of the new communities now served by it.

EKC Group's acquisition of Ashford College is in response to recommendations made by the Further Education Commissioner in 2019. The Group has also welcomed Hadlow College's former Spring Lane site, based in Canterbury, into the fold.

Chief Executive Officer of EKC Group, Graham Razey, said that this would usher in a new era of technical and vocational education within the whole of East Kent for the first time.

He said: "Now that our Group has incorporated both the Canterbury Spring Lane site, and Ashford College, into its family of Colleges and Business Units, we can begin to systematically plan skills delivery across the whole of our area. Having both Ashford College and the Canterbury

Spring Lane campus within our Group will enable us to better serve our local communities, ensuring that we are able to truly deliver on the skills priorities needed to enable us to achieve our mission, of enhancing the social and economic prosperity of the communities we serve.

"Despite the current challenges we face, we know that our county's employers will be well positioned to face them, and I am really proud that we'll be there to support the whole of East Kent's recovery once the UK has beaten Coronavirus."

Chairman of EKC Group's Full Governing Body, Charles Buchanan, said: "We have a strong track record of bringing new provision into our Group, and I am confident that this transaction will see us grow and develop the provision which is currently delivered within the Ashford College and Spring Lane campus.



Spring Lane Campus

"I am looking forward to visiting both of these sites once we have beaten Coronavirus and welcoming these new colleagues so that we can move forward as a truly East Kent provider of technical and vocational education."

BUDDING CATERERS COOK UP A ROYAL FEAST

Catering students from Canterbury College showcased their culinary and hospitality skills during a celebratory dinner for the 'Round 13' winners of The Queen's Anniversary Prizes 2018-20 in February.

The group of Level 2 students were part of a multi-college team responsible for creating and serving an outstanding three-course meal to the 22 prize winners and 418 distinguished guests at London's Guildhall on the eve of the formal prize presentation which took place at Buckingham Palace.



EKC SCHOOLS TRUST SPURS REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION



EKC Schools Trust officially launched earlier this year with four pioneering Primary Schools forming it, to bring a systemic change to education provision in Kent.

The Trust will work alongside its sister organisation EKC Group, to offer access to industry standard technical and vocational learning environments in order to introduce Primary School aged children to different learning pathways.

The Trust formed on 1 March, when all four schools closed before re-opening as Academies in EKC Schools Trust. The schools which have formed EKC Schools Trust are Bysing Wood Primary, Briary Primary, Holywell Primary and Queenborough School and Nursery.

Tammy Mitchell, Chief Executive Officer of EKC Schools Trust, led the creation of the new Multi Academy Trust.

She said: "It's wonderful to launch EKC Schools Trust as it brings to life a concept unlike any other in Kent. Our schools are able to retain their independence, making their own decisions, and remaining embedded within the community which they serve. We believe wholeheartedly

in the unique and individualised nature of these excellent schools, and as a consequence EKC Schools Trust will work to help them retain and grow local relationships, and personalised approaches and curriculums while celebrating their distinctiveness. This launch really marks an exciting moment in education within Kent."

Graham Razez is the Chief Executive Officer for EKC Group, which will work closely with the Trust to offer pupils the opportunity to engage with technical and vocational pathways at an earlier stage in their education.

Graham said: "Working with EKC Schools Trust will enable us to offer our industry standard facilities to pupils at an earlier age, showcasing the wide range of opportunities available through technical and vocational learning. We're committed to delivering the next generation of skilled workers, and as part of that we want to show our community the learning opportunities and amazing careers that are available through our family of further education Colleges. The Trust will be unique in this, with no other College locally doing anything like this."

For more information about the Trust, visit: www.ekcgroup.ac.uk/ekc-schools-trust

ENGINEERING EXHIBITION CHAMPIONS GREEN INNOVATIONS

Sustainable engineering was top of the agenda for Canterbury College's Level 3 Engineering students during the College's annual Engineering Exhibition in March.

More than 50 final year projects were available for the public to explore including an array of innovative green solutions.



Isabel Matanle and her algae prevention device

Among the sustainable inventions was Level 3 Extended Diploma in Engineering student, Isabel Matanle's algae prevention device. Isabel designed her creation, powered exclusively by wind and solar energy, to move across a body of water, disrupting the surface to prevent algae from forming.

Isabel described her motivation for creating the device saying: "Algae can damage ecosystems, especially in closed water environments where species rely on the warmth and visibility the sun provides."

She continued: "The process of designing and creating the prototype has been interesting and I've definitely learnt a lot. I like the idea of being able to help the environment, and I wanted to create a something that can be scaled up or down to support the sustainability of different sized habitats."

Isabel hopes to progress with the development of her device in the future.



Hugh Austen presents his green irrigation system

Elsewhere, fellow student, Hugh Austen, continued the theme with his green irrigation system. Hugh designed his invention to reduce water waste by optimising the release of water into plant beds.

"The System tries to mitigate water wastage by using an Adaptive Data Rate (ADR) mechanism to ensure the water is released at the optimum time, for example, at night when water is less likely to be evaporated", explained Hugh.

"I'd like to develop the system further so that it can link to peoples' smart devices, giving people the option to release water when they want.

"I'm also looking to integrate weather data so that the system can recognise when rainfall and droughts are due and make changes to the irrigation patterns," added Hugh who hopes to follow a career in the renewable energy sector after college.

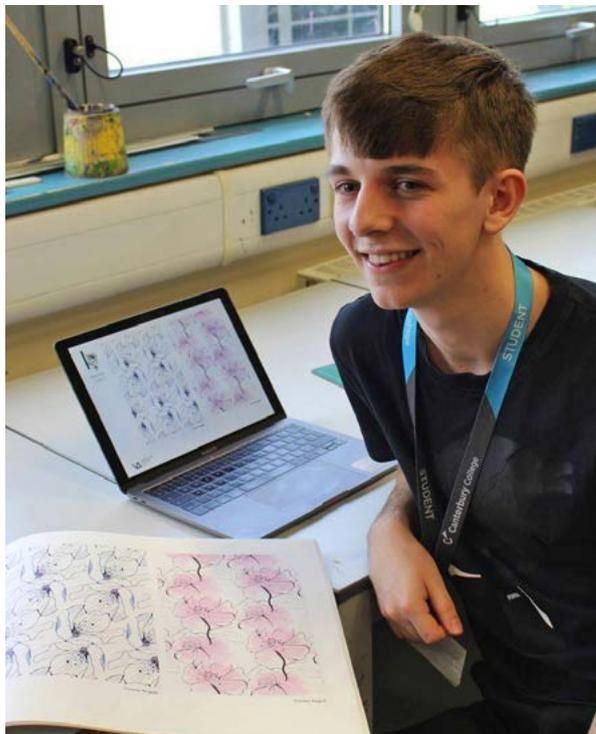
Alongside the sustainable prototypes, students designed a variety of clever solutions to everyday problems, displaying items including pioneering assistive robotics, inventive car accessories, surveillance system modifications and child-friendly safety devices.

Head of Engineering and Motor Vehicle at Canterbury College, Paul Lewis, commented: "Our annual Engineering Exhibition is an excellent event that showcases the skills and creativity of our students. It's a great opportunity for them to display their final projects and interact with members of the public, local businesses and industry professionals. The valuable experiences our students gain through the design and development process helps them to prepare for their future careers."

FLOURISHING DESIGNER LIVENS UP NEW HOME DEVELOPMENT IN KENT

A wallpaper design by Level 3 Extended Diploma in Graphic Design student, Tommy Regan, from Canterbury College, has been selected for use in Hyde New Homes' forthcoming housing development in Kent.

Tommy's design will be used on the external hoardings around the 'Blossom Grove' development in Teynham, as well as in the on-site Marketing Suite. Speaking about the achievement, Tommy said: "I was very surprised to have my design chosen but it will be a great opportunity to move forward in my career."



TOP UK YOUTH MENTOR SHINES RAY OF LIGHT DURING LOCKDOWN

EKC Group enlisted the help of one of the UK's top Youth Mentors and founder of youth mentoring company, 'UShine IShine', Efe Ezekiel BEM, to help support, motivate and inspire its 13,000 students across East Kent during the lockdown period.

The trailblazing initiative encouraged students from the Group's Colleges in Ashford, Broadstairs, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone and Sheppey to take part in a series of interactive online talks and workshops with the award-winning Mentor and happiness guru, specifically designed to build the students' confidence, resilience, emotional awareness and readiness for work and life.

STUDENTS SCOOP TOP MEDALS AT REGIONAL SKILLS COMPETITION

An impressive 58 students from EKC Group's Colleges recently made it through to the finals of the 2020 Kent Further Education Skills Competition, taking home 33 medals.

The students from Broadstairs College, Canterbury College, Dover Technical College, Folkestone College and Sheppey College, competed in a range of industry categories showcasing their skills and knowledge in areas such as Culinary Arts, Web Design, Automotive Technology, Early Years and Performing Arts.

Nine students scooped the top prizes in their categories including Level 2 Painting and Decorating Apprentice, Kayleigh Woods, from Folkestone College, who was delighted to take home the Gold Medal for Painting and Decorating commenting: "The Competition has been nerve-racking, and I am shocked to receive the first-place prize as I have never really won anything before. Taking part has helped me to see what I am good at and what I can improve. It has also been great to meet so many

talented people who have the same interests as me."

Meanwhile, 15 students took home Silver Medals, and 11 students took home 9 Bronze Medals, including a team award in the Digital Video Production category.

Folkestone College were the big winners of the day taking home almost half of the Group's overall medals. Principal of Folkestone College, Victoria Copp-Crawley, was thrilled with the results commenting: "We are delighted with our successes at the Competitions, and extremely proud of the students that competed and performed so well with the support of the staff that have coached and nurtured these incredible talents. The development of confidence, teamwork and managing pressured situations is a huge benefit that students have learnt over the lead up to the competitions and will support them in their next steps and future careers."

For more information about all of EKC Group's winners, visit: www.ekcgroup.ac.uk/news

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS UNITE BUSINESS LEADERS FOR FOLKESTONE CONFERENCE



Local business leaders and students gathered at Folkestone College for the second annual Entrepreneurship Conference in March.

The Conference, organised by Folkestone College's BTEC Level 3 Enterprise and Entrepreneurship students, brought together a range of industry professionals, including guest speakers, Chris Eley, from the Peter Jones Enterprise Academy, Alex Macintyre from Fortem Financial Management, and Terry Botfield from The Marsh Network and Botfield Associates.

The guest speakers took it in turns to share their experiences and career journeys, offering students from across the College valuable advice about what it is like to start a business, and the different routes they can take to become entrepreneurs.

Folkestone College alumnus and Director of Fortem Financial Management, Alex Macintyre, was delighted to return to the College commenting: "It's fantastic to be back at the College and to see the facilities and support available to students. I'm glad to be able to impart my knowledge to the students and give back to the College where I started my journey."

The Conference was followed by a networking event where the students had the opportunity to speak with a range of local businesses.

BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Enterprise and Entrepreneurship student, Chelsey Spearing, who helped to organise the Conference, was pleased with how the day went saying: "I'm really happy with how the Conference

has gone. My classmates and I have worked hard to make it a successful event, and we have learnt a lot over the past few weeks about the importance of teamwork and communication."



Folkestone College alumnus and Director of Fortem Financial Management, Alex Macintyre

Chelsey added: "It's been great to listen to the speakers and to hear about their different pathways to becoming entrepreneurs. The information from the speakers has been fantastic and I feel confident that if I wanted to start my own business, I would now know how to get started."

Folkestone College is one of only 21 Peter Jones Enterprise Academies (PJEAs) in the UK. The Peter Jones Enterprise Academy is a flagship programme by the Peter Jones Foundation which aims to 'bring the boardroom into the classroom' and equip students with the skills, knowledge and experiences needed to succeed in their chosen careers. For more information, visit:

www.folkestonecollege.ac.uk

HOTEL DONATES NUTRITIOUS MEALS TO THANET RESIDENTS IN NEED



During the early stages of the Coronavirus pandemic, The Yarrow hotel in Broadstairs produced and donated hundreds of meals to help those in need in the Thanet area.

The pre-portioned nutritious meals were created by the four-star Hotel's team of chefs using produce from the Hotel's kitchen and EKC Group's Broadstairs College's training kitchens which would have otherwise gone to waste.

The initiative was devised by The Yarrow's Hotel Manager, Lee Osborn, and Head Chef, Ben Williams, who commented: "It was really important to us at The Yarrow to do something proactive during this difficult time to help the local community. We created individual portions of homemade soups and bread and donated the meals to Changing Minds Kent's Lifeboat Project and the Salvation Army for distribution to those in need."

Ben added: "We're proud to have been able to produce these meals whilst minimising food waste. It's great to support the community and we hope that the meals will help the people and families who need them most."

The Yarrow is part of the EKC Group and is the only hotel of its kind in the UK to offer students high-quality training experiences in a luxury establishment.

The Hotel is currently closed in line with the Government's Coronavirus guidance.

For more information about The Yarrow, visit www.yarrowhotel.co.uk

SALON PLAY AREA INSPIRES SHEPPEY CHILDREN



The role play area before and after its transformation

Earlier this year, the Hairdressing Department at Sheppey College transformed the hairdressing role play area at Sheerness' soft play centre, 'Kidz City', into a miniature replica of the College's Salon.

The revitalised play area now includes real 'Sally Heads' for the children to play with, along with a variety of hairdressing accessories and fresh decor. Principal of the College, Alan Salter, commented: "Play is important in shaping the futures of young people, and we hope local children will enjoy using the updated facilities to explore the different careers available to them."

ENTERPRISING STUDENTS ON A MISSION TO END HYGIENE POVERTY IN DOVER

Vocational Studies students from Dover Technical College have been raising money to purchase items for the Dover smART Project's #BeSmart Hygiene Shop.

Having originally planned to host a sponsored walk between Dover and Folkestone, the students had to cancel the Event when the national lockdown was implemented. Undeterred, the students were able to donate the money raised to Dover smART Project's '#BeSmart Project' to purchase essential items to end hygiene poverty in the area.

The #BeSmart Hygiene Shop is set to open in Dover high-street this year, providing hygiene products at low and no cost to Dover residents in need. The Shop will be run by college students alongside participants from Dover smART Project's 'ART of Age group' who are living with a dementia.

The #BeSmart Project is part of an innovative partnership between Dover smART Project and Dover Technical College, which aims to provide opportunities for students and young adults in the wider community to enhance their skills and gain work experience.