TOP MARKS FOR INSPIRATION FOR INNOVATION SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

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**Mid-term report: Schools project smashes Year 1 target**

Silverstone Park’s pilot schools project ‘Inspiration for Innovation’ which provides greater engagement between students and the business community has already surpassed its Year 1 targets after just six months.

Latest analysis shows that by February the project’s volunteer businesses had achieved 2,336 ‘encounters’ with students at three partner schools; Kingshorte College in Northampton, Silverstone UTC and The Buckingham School.

Evaluation data returned by students showed that 93% of encounters have been classed as ‘positive/meaningful’ – more than double the project’s Year 1 target of 1,000.

The data has been gathered by Gaia Innovation which specialises in careers pathway guidance for schoolchildren and which is managing Inspiration for Innovation pilot project for Silverstone Park.

Gaia CEO Julia Muir comments: “Inspiration for Innovation has been particularly valuable in informing the youngsters about the jobs of the future and the local employment opportunities, and the volunteers have found it very rewarding.

“We hope to scale up the project next year and would appreciate any potential new volunteers getting in touch.”

Silverstone Park Commercial Director Roz Bird adds: “We are delighted that our business community at Silverstone Park has already been able to make a positive impact on students in our local schools, based on feedback from students themselves.

“The more we get involved, the more we find that the work is crucial to inform young people about all the jobs available in the Silverstone Technology Cluster.”

**Evaluation facts:**

- Schools and students have reported over 2,336 meaningful experiences.
- The data has been gathered by Gaia Innovation.
- Inspiration for Innovation is having a significant impact on students.
- The programme is being scaled up for the future.

The positive impact that Inspiration for Innovation is having on students is evident through comments that we are receiving from parents and teachers, as well as the reactions and comments from students who are now thinking about their futures and aspiring to careers that they had before never heard or thought about.

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**Talks helping to inspire ‘Super Cluster’ development**

The Silverstone Park and Silverstone Technology Cluster success stories are now being used as evidence to demonstrate the type of action needed to aid development of the government’s Cambridge-Oxford Arc.

The findings have been presented by MEPC’s Roz Bird, the Park’s Commercial Director and STC Chair, to senior level audiences at locations including Cranfield University’s new Barclays Eagle Lab and the UK Science Park Association’s 2019 Conference (University of Birmingham).

Roz says: “Only when you start working with the likes of local enterprise partnerships, central government, the wider business community, developers, other clusters, education establishments and their students do you realise just what it takes to make a difference.

“The feedback I’m getting – direct approaches on-event or by email or phone later – is that what I’ve said is inspiring people to get involved, understand where they fit in and how they can contribute to maximising the potential for economic growth of the area.”

“Next steps,” explained Roz, would include engaging with a soon to be appointed government minister, business chair and board for the Arc.
Seven more companies located to Silverstone Park early in 2019 with lettings totalling 35,000 sq ft of commercial accommodation, ranging from large industrial units and R&D workshops to office space.

Among them is Dragon Racing, a team competing in the world’s premier electric motor racing championship, FIA Formula E. One of its fellow FE teams, Envision Virgin Racing, already occupies sizeable premises on site which it is now expanding (see page 10). Dragon Team Manager Gary Holland comments: “There’s a lot of innovation and future thinking with the technologies we are developing and, importantly, Silverstone Park offers us the correct infrastructure to achieve this.” He adds: “For us it is absolutely the place to be if we are to grow and succeed as a business.”

The six other companies to locate to the estate operate in a variety of sectors including high-tech engineering, travel/logistics and recruitment/headhunting. They are: Lunaz Design; AF Corse UK; Edge Tech; Pro-vide Global Ltd; Virtually Entertained; Supernova 360 Ltd.

Furthermore, MEPC confirmed that all companies with lease breaks and expiries in the first few weeks of 2019 chose to stay at Silverstone Park.

Local letting agent Carter Jonas’s Jon Silversides says: “We are seeing growing levels of interest from a much wider scope of companies which bodes well for the future phases of development under consideration.” National agent DTRE’s Jamie Catherall adds: “The latest lettings highlight occupiers’ continued demand for high quality space at Silverstone Park.”

It’s a WRaP! Visitors impressed by Park’s new agile work space

Businesses and guests at Silverstone Park can now take advantage of a colourful new ‘agile work space’ which provides them with an attractive place to ‘work, rest and play’ (hence its title, The WRaP). The colourful work space is designed to add to both the welcome experience and sense of community that developer MEPC has created for customers at the high-tech business estate; these include occupiers, their clientele and industry at large.

MEPC’s Roz Bird, Commercial Director at Silverstone Park, explains: “This newly designed space reflects the personality of our community: a relaxed and modern environment with aspects of a stylish home but also plenty of utilities and creature comforts such as clean work benches and tea and coffee making facilities.”

Included in The WRaP are:

- Relaxing sofa area with TV/fire place (can be used to give presentations)
- Acoustic swirl booth for private phone calls
- Kitchen-style work desk with PC and mobile device (USB) power points
- Courtesy high-speed Wi-Fi connection
- Games console (Playstation™)
- Bistro tables
- Live TV news feed
- Complimentary light refreshments (tea/coffee)

Roz says: “We continue to respond to our customers’ needs so upgrading our Innovation Centre, to meet contemporary working trends within this workspace, was based on customer feedback.”

For more information, please email enquiries@silverstone-park.com or call 01327 856000.

This again highlights how MEPC’s development of the estate in terms of infrastructure, facilities, presentation, networking and connectivity with industry is acting as a magnet for innovative businesses with growth ambitions.

Join the Cluster, take advantage!

Joining the STC membership, which now totals almost 100 influential companies in engineering and business growth, could not be easier. Visit the silverstonetechnologycluster.com website to see who has joined so far. Tech companies of all sizes are encouraged to attend the STC’s special interest group meetings and annual conference. Email CEO Pim van Baarsen at pim@silverstonetechnologycluster.com for more details.
May’s STC Conference will be “informative & powerful” for tech community

Silverstone Park will support the Silverstone Technology Cluster’s second Annual Conference which will be held on Tuesday 21 May at Hexagon Manufacturing Intelligence (HMI) in Milton Keynes. A taster of what visitors can expect – presentations, Q&A sessions and networking opportunities – has already been confirmed on the SilverstoneTechnologyCluster.com website. Places are limited. Those interested should email jackie@silverstonetechnologycluster.com

Silverstone Park is a founding member of the STC and frequently hosts many of the Cluster’s special interest group events in its state-of-the-art Metrology Facility which is managed by HMI.

MEPC’s Roz Bird, Commercial Director at Silverstone Park and also STC Chair, comments: “Since 2018’s inaugural Conference, the STC has continued to evolve at a rapid rate in terms of profile and influence – industry and government are increasingly recognising its world class capabilities and it now has a strong voice in the future direction of the Cambridge-Oxford growth corridor (super cluster). “We therefore want to build on 2018’s Conference by giving Cluster companies an informative and powerful event that again enables them to engage with peers as well as leading global businesses and organisations.”

HMI’s Milton Keynes premises are home to its only factory-accredited service and calibration centre in the UK. It is also a training base for staff and customers.

Business podcasts revealing “desire to collaborate”

The Silverstone Park website’s blog section has now become home to a growing library of lively podcasts dedicated to interviews with business leaders at the estate. Behind them is Chris Broome, owner and chartered financial planner of Silverstone-based lifestyle financial planning firm Longhurst, which riches in tech and high-growth. It’s also a member of the Silverstone Technology Cluster.

Chris enthuses: “I listen to lots of business and entrepreneurial podcasts so when we launched Longhurst we knew there was a niche opportunity to launch a podcast in the region.”

Already uploaded to the site are interviews with: Ben Rooster-Turner & Darren Kirk, Directors, Virtually Entertained Roz Bird, STC Chair and Commercial Director of Silverstone Park Pim van Baarsen, CEO, Silverstone Technology Cluster Jean-Philippe Launberg, MD, Autostrat Consulting

Chris adds: “It’s certainly given me a great insight into how their businesses work, and there is definitely a common thread – each has a desire to collaborate, which is becoming increasingly important in the future of high-tech.”

ACES ‘incubator’ for larger UK automotive voice

The STC’s Autonomous, Connected, Electrified & Shared (ACES) ‘incubator’ for larger businesses and entrepreneurs was among 3000 people at Beijing’s EV100 conference in January. Simon Holloway after its latest event at Silverstone Park attended by over 50 people.

Hearing from over 3000 people at Beijing’s EV100 conference in China (Beijing) event is massive… much of what is proposed is turned into legislation.

“However, what I’m sensing is that this SG could be the incubator for something similar in the UK.”

See SilverstoneTechnologyCluster.com for more on this story.

Packing a Punch!

Silverstone Park-based Flybrid is emerging as a leader in the development of the latest hybrid energy storage solutions following significant investment from world renowned automotive powertrain manufacturer Punch.

Flybrid’s partnership with Punch is leading to new advancements with, and opening up other markets for, its famed hybrid flywheel knowledge. MD Tobias Knichel explains: “By combining our flywheel energy storage module with electric motors, sourced from volume production suppliers, we are able to create a very effective hybrid-electric vehicle technology.”

Another exciting new offering called ‘TIGER’ (transmission integrated energy recuperation) is also being created. This integrates Flybrid and Punch technologies and its efficiency should appeal to both the heavy duty and automotive markets.

“It’s attractive for OEMs because it’s a finished hybridised transmission product so a complete package for them,” says Tobias.
Visit “of enormous value” for DIT’s automotive delegates

A Department for International Trade conference in February continued Silverstone Park’s calendar of senior industry events for 2019. DIT Automotive Sector Team delegates from eight countries visited the estate’s Innovation Centre to hear from companies within the Silverstone Technology Cluster (STC) which specialise in cutting edge technologies. The delegates represented embassies in Canada, China, Germany, Hungary, Japan, South Korea, Spain and the USA. Ian Harrison, DIT Director of Exports for the Midlands, says: “The Silverstone Technology Cluster is at the heart of the UK automotive and motorsport industry and plays host to a whole range of innovative businesses at the cutting edge of technology development and engineering.” He adds: “The visit was of enormous value to the delegates, helping them to not only understand UK R&D capability, but also how the sector is contributing to the Grand Challenges articulated in The Industrial Strategy.” The senior industry events at the Park have continued since with a packed room – including business owners and finance community representatives – attending the STC’s first meeting of 2019 for its Autonomous, Connected, Electrified & Shared (ACES) special interest group (see page 7).

Networking events ‘encouraging people to speak out’

Silverstone Park’s first two business networking events of 2019 have attracted large audiences of people from across both the high-tech and professional services sectors. Speakers have included the National Physical Laboratory’s Dr Claire Elliott and award winning innovator Kieron Salter, MD of Brackley based company KW Special Projects. The audiences have comprised tech start-ups, SMEs and larger organisations plus professionals from law, recruitment, marketing and finance. Claire’s talk focused on how awareness of internationally recognised units of measurement can help businesses seeking to trade overseas.

Kieron, meanwhile, gave an honest account of how, despite numerous scares along the way, he has gone on to successfully build his businesses by transferring skills learnt in motorsport to other industries such as ink-jet technologies and medical devices. He says: “These are very enjoyable events – networking with like-minded people is invaluable for any business. “More than that, though, the spirit of them encourages people to speak out and discuss taboo things such as the rollercoaster of running a business.” Details of the next event and speaker will be confirmed soon.

“Young, innovative fresh thinkers” behind new Lunaz electric classic car designs

Lunaz has become the seventh ‘vehicle electrification’ business to locate to Silverstone Park but it is offering something rather different – converting prestigious classic/vintage cars to electric power. Inside new 7,000 sq ft premises, Lunaz’s technicians have already started working on their first projects: a 1950s Jaguar XK120 and a Rolls Royce Phantom. Methodically, each will have its internal combustion engine and transmission replaced by more powerful battery/electric drivetrains – designed and developed in-house.

Founder David Lorenz and Managing Director Jon Hilton predict their current full-time workforce of six will increase to 17 by the end of 2020. Jon previously oversaw title-winning Formula 1 engine designs for Renault and went on to launch Flybrid at Silverstone Park which became the world leader in hybrid flywheel technology. He is in no doubt that the estate offers Lunaz its best chance of fulfilling its ambitions. He said: “People in this region are such bright engineers – young, innovative fresh thinkers who aren’t worried about how things have been done in the past. Many will come from motorsport backgrounds so are flexible in their approach because they’re used to reacting quickly to changes to the rules…” He added: “We have some very experienced people here, but overall it is a youthful minded company which I believe is a major plus.”

This is the first event we’ve attended and we were attracted by both the subject and the networking opportunity as we are looking to expand our markets.

Daniel Andrew, Paramount Electronics (sub-contract manufacturer)
Tech recruiter “off to a flying start” in Innovation Centre

Edge Tech, a ‘head hunter’ recruitment agency specialising in the world of cutting edge technology, says Silverstone Park’s Innovation Centre has helped give it “a flying start” since launching in November 2018. The three-strong team is based in a 250 sq ft serviced office.

And joint founder Oliver Sulley comments: “It’s a place with lots of networking and the opportunity to spark off other tech-minded companies. “We looked at various locations but, to be honest, everywhere else was a faceless business park that didn’t have a story or a message.

“Now, after being here less than two years, we’re in a position to implement the second phase of the development.”

Meanwhile neighbour Lotus Silverstone has announced it will become home to a second dealership for another iconic British sportscar brand, Caterham.

Caterham Silverstone will sell the manufacturer’s full UK range of lightweight sportscars, as well as comprehensive after-sales products including service, warranty and parts support.

“Lotus’s biggest UK dealership have both confirmed they are growing at Silverstone Park. “The UK is our biggest market ahead of France and Japan and we want to make sure that we are serving as many of our home customers as possible,” commented Caterham’s Chief Executive Officer Graham Macdonald of the company’s Silverstone Park news.

Lotus/Caterham Silverstone’s and Envision Virgin Racing’s premises form part of Lotus/Caterham Silverstone’s and Envision Virgin Racing’s premises form part of the second phase of the development.”

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Community spirit “buzzing” with record turn-out

Silverstone Park has become a partner to the popular MK Geek Night’s events in 2019 – each providing talks and networking opportunities for the region’s digital and creative communities. These take place at the Milton Keynes’s contemporary art house MK Gallery, on Midsummer Boulevard.

Remaining dates include: 20 June; 5 September; 5 December.

“MKGN’s co-founder Richard Wiggins is well connected within creative and digital circles through his design agency Pixel Creation. He comments: “The evenings attract some really excellent speakers within industry and can cover all manner of subjects – people are always learning and coming away feeling inspired and refreshed.”

MEPC’s Roz Bird, Commercial Director at Silverstone Park, adds: “MK Geek Night complements our own popular business networking events which are held in our Innovation Centre. These are also about bringing together like-minded people for some interesting debate and potential collaboration so it’s a perfect fit.”

Mercedes-AMG F1: Closest challengers were 3C Test, the Silverstone Technology Cluster and Spyder Club…

Silverstone Park’s Occupier Liaison Officer Ruth Williams who chairs the estate’s social committee comments: “It’s fair to say the community spirit at Silverstone Park is buzzing!

“We listen carefully to our occupiers to ensure our social calendar offers something for everyone. Already we have plenty more dates planned for 2019 – including our summer BBQ and a revised date for our sports evening.”
MEET THE TEAM:
Kirsty Edmonds, Photographer

It’s been photography all the way for Silverstone Park’s appointed ‘snapper’…

Kirsty is a familiar and friendly face among businesses on site taking photos at company and park networking events.

“It’s such an innovative place where you always feel like good things are happening,” she says.

“I fell in love with photography as a child – my grandad let me take one Polaroid photo a day if I helped in his allotment and this image appearing was just magical.”

For over 20 years she’s been a professional photographer – much of it with the Northampton Chronicle. Celebs like Sting and Lionel Richie plus “all the Royals” have been snapped, although her biggest passion is sport, particularly cricket.

Much of her work has appeared in the nationals.

Yoga and gardening help to calm her after a deadline, as does listening to her vinyl record collection – including a very rare 1950s Ella Fitzgerald album.

Silverstone’s F1 weekend is inevitable where “Lewis Hamilton used my pic of him crowd surfing and (Hollywood actor) Woody Harrelson trod on me – it didn’t hurt as much as when I fell off a gate in front of Prince Charles in Banbury, though …”

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Silverstone Technology Cluster Annual Conference:
Tuesday 21 May: Hexagon Manufacturing Intelligence, Milton Keynes

Sports Evening:
17:30-19:30, Thursday 30 May, Silverstone Park Grounds

Weekly Pilates:
Every Tuesday, 17:45, Silverstone Park Innovation Centre

Weekly Five-a-Side Football:
Every Wednesday, 17:30, Silverstone UTC

Weekly Walks:
Every Wednesday, 12:30, from the Innovation Centre

Boot Camp:
Every Thursday, 17:30, Silverstone Park Grounds

Summer Occupier BBQ:
Thursday 18 July, Silverstone UTC Terrace

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