

Do you read the News?



With a never-ending barrage of bad news, Covid related gloom and it's associated downturn for the highstreets, hospitality and travel sectors, it's easy to miss the good news that is still out there.

By digging a little deeper down the news feed, it's possible to come up with signs that things are getting better, not only at national level, but locally too.

In Greater Manchester, the Kraft Factory has had an investment of £140m to allow 50 new jobs and their famous Tomato Ketchup is being produced in the UK again.

Liverpool has Seqirus, gaining a £50m investment creating 120 new jobs at their high-speed filling and packing facility for syringes.

An on our doorstep, Essar's plans to decarbonise the Stanlow Refinery has been handed a financial boost having been awarded a £7.2 million grant from the Government's Industrial Energy Transformation Fund. This will enable the refinery to be the first within the UK to be fuelled entirely by Hydrogen, the first stage to be completed and on stream by 2025.

As the world and our economy is opening – the return to the office for staff seems closer to being fulfilled, as Apple Corp have published their wish for all staff to return to office working from September 2021.

However, as this happens, we are facing a skills shortage driven by several factors, as this article from The Recruitment and Employment Confederations shows:

As the recovery gathers momentum and the economy opens, employers are again faced with a long-running issue that was made worse by the Coronavirus pandemic and the EU trade deal – many are struggling to find skilled candidates. This was echoed by the latest Department for Education's (DfE) [Employer Skills Survey](#), which found that one in four (24%) of all hard-to-fill vacancies were due to skills shortages, an increase of two percentage points since 2017. What is most concerning, is that almost 60% of these shortages appear in middle and high-skilled occupations.

REC - June 2021 edition of [Report on Jobs](#)

Indicators are that Agencies will be fundamental in aiding in the shortfall of people, be it on temporary or permanent basis.

It will be interesting to watch developments in the forthcoming months.