SOUTH EAST JOBS MARKET WARMS UP

MANPOWERGROUP EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK SURVEY REVEALS MOST OPTIMISTIC HIRING INTENTIONS FOR A YEAR

- **Outlook of +5% for the region**
- **Brighton and Portsmouth are hiring hot spots**
- **Demand for smart meters fuelling energy sector jobs**

13 DECEMBER 2016: Employment optimism in the South East is on the rise, increasing by two percentage points to +5%, according to ManpowerGroup, the world's workforce experts. However, despite being the most positive Outlook since the beginning of 2016, hiring intentions going into the New Year continue to lag below the national average of +7%.

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is based on responses from 2,104 UK employers. It asks whether employers intend to hire additional workers or reduce the size of their workforce in the coming quarter. It is the most comprehensive, forward-looking employment survey of its kind and is used as a key economic statistic by both the Bank of England and the UK government.

Krissie Davies, Operations Director at Manpower, said: "It's good to see employment optimism beginning to pick up after a slow 2016. Demand for smart meter readers in the South East is soaring, so we're seeing lots of opportunities for technicians in the energy sector. Today's survey results are also good news for candidates looking for customer service and call centre positions, particularly around Brighton and Portsmouth, where local firms are making big investments in customer services. The Isle of Wight is another hiring hotspot, with manufacturing and production roles on the rise.

"Engineering and technical skills are in huge demand at the moment, but local employers are finding it very difficult to find people with the right experience. We're also seeing the usual requirement for staff in NHS call centres over the winter period. Christmas trading and the January sales have sparked demand for warehouse and sorting office roles with companies like Ikea, Royal Mail and Lidl, who recently took on 400 new workers in Southampton. As demand becomes more seasonal, employers are increasingly looking to fill jobs with temporary staff, with the majority of positions being filled by 16-25 year olds and the over 50s."

The national seasonally adjusted Net Employment Outlook has risen to +7% for the first three months of 2017, the highest level of optimism in three years. Across the country the private sector plans to hire at its highest rate in three years (+8%), with the construction (+9%), business services (+9%) and utilities (+13%) sectors all reporting very positive Outlooks.

Mark Cahill, ManpowerGroup UK Managing Director: "UK companies are going into 2017 hungry for top talent. Employers are still unsure about what exactly Brexit will mean, but are not letting that uncertainty deter them from hiring. In fact, some employers may be looking to bring in talent while they can before any curbs to freedom of movement across the European

Union come into effect, as more than half of all the jobs created by UK employers this year went to EU workers."

All twelve regions of the UK reported positive Outlooks for the first three months of the year, with only two regions reporting a decline in hiring optimism. The East is the most positive region (+10%), followed by London (+9%). Yorkshire & Humberside reports the biggest increase, rising nine points to join the East Midlands, West Midlands, South West and Scotland on +8%. Northern Ireland reported a five point increase to +4%, while the North East and South East both report two point rises to +7% and + 5%, respectively. The North West (+3%) and Wales (+2%) are the only two regions to report falling Outlooks, both down two points on Q4 2016.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

A 'Net Employment Outlook' is calculated by subtracting those employers who plan to reduce staffing levels from those who plan to hire staff. A positive result indicates that more employers plan to increase rather than decrease staffing levels; a negative result reflects the opposite. [% increase - % decrease]

Commentary and full details on every sector and region can be found in the survey report at manpowergroup.co.uk/meos, or by calling the Press Office on 0207 404 5959/ manpower@brunswickgroup.com

For international comparisons and visual library with graphs, visit manpowergroup.com

Commentary is based on seasonally adjusted data where available. Full survey results for each of the 43 countries and territories included in this quarter's survey, plus regional and global comparisons, can be found in the ManpowerGroup Press Room at www.manpowergroup.com/meos. In addition, all tables and graphs from the full report are available to be downloaded for use in publication or broadcast from the ManpowerGroup Web site at: http://www.manpowergroup.com/press/meos.cfm

Note that in Quarter 2 2008, the Survey adopted the TRAMO-SEATS model for seasonal adjustment of data. As a result, you may notice some seasonally adjusted data points change slightly from previous reports. This model is recommended by the Eurostat department of the European Union and the European Central Bank, and is widely used internationally.

About the Survey
The world leader in innovative workforce solutions, ManpowerGroup releases the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey quarterly to measure employers' intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforce during the next quarter. It is the longest running, most extensive, forward-looking employment survey in the world, polling nearly 59,000 employers in 43 countries and territories. The survey serves as a bellwether of labour market trends and activities and is regularly used to inform the Bank of England's Inflation Reports, as well as a regular data source for the European Commission, informing its EU Employment Situation and Social Outlook report the *Monthly Monitor*. ManpowerGroup's independent survey data is also sourced by financial analysts and economists around the world to help determine where labour markets are headed.

About ManpowerGroup
ManpowerGroup® (NYSE: MAN) is the world's workforce expert, creating innovative workforce solutions for nearly 70 years. As workforce experts, we connect more than 600,000 people to meaningful work across a wide range of skills and industries every day. Through our ManpowerGroup family of brands – Manpower®, Experis®, Right Management® and ManpowerGroup® Solutions – we help more than 400,000 clients in 80 countries and territories address their critical talent needs, providing comprehensive solutions to resource, manage and develop talent. In 2016, ManpowerGroup was named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the sixth consecutive year and one of Fortune's Most Admired Companies, confirming our position as the most trusted and admired brand in the industry. See how ManpowerGroup makes powering the world of work humanly possible: www.manpowergroup.com.

About Manpower UK
Manpower is the global leader in contingent and permanent recruitment workforce solutions. It is part of ManpowerGroup, the world's workforce expert, which creates and delivers high-impact solutions that enable clients to achieve their business goals and enhance their competitiveness.

With a network of offices in cities across the country, Manpower has provided organisations in the UK with a continuum of staffing solutions from the incidental to the strategic for nearly 60 years, working with businesses such as BT, IBM, Royal Mail and Xerox to help them win.

In the Human Age, where talent has replaced access to capital as the key competitive differentiator, Manpower UK leverages its trusted brand to develop a deep talent pool, providing clients with access to the people they need, fast.

Manpower UK creates powerful connections between organisations and the talent they need to enhance their competitiveness and unleash their workforce potential. By creating these powerful connections, we help everybody achieve more than they imagined, and power the world of work.

For more information, see www.manpower.co.uk