

HRI Ltd Newsletter

AUTUMN EDITION OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

We are drawing to the close of 2007 and it has been an interesting sort of a year in the UK. A change in the country's leadership always sparks hopes for improvements in public services and the transition from Tony Blair to Gordon Brown was one that a lot of people viewed with great interest, having expected it for a long time but not quite believing that TB would ever throw in the towel!

Six months on however, confidence in the Gordon Brown administration is at an all-time low with only a quarter of the population believing that his government is competent and capable. After a year during which some disastrous political blunders have hit the headlines, the most recent being the Government's loss in the post of the personal details of 25 million citizens, to seemingly regular news from the Home Office of monumental mistakes such as letting violent criminals loose on the streets and wrongly labelling hundreds of innocent people as criminals after errors by the Criminal Records Bureau, it hasn't been a great beginning for Mr Brown. Some people believe that he should have got in early and gone for an election at the beginning of his tenure when people were just relieved to have finally got rid of Tony but perhaps weren't desperate enough to vote conservative. But he's well and truly missed that opportunity and now things are looking somewhat shaky for him.

Health news

It was recently reported by the press that the residents of the one of the most prosperous areas in Great Britain were regularly consuming 'hazardous' amounts of alcohol. The area being Surrey (of which you can read more below), also recently identified in a very popular TV programme as having 8 out of the top 20 places to live in the UK, this caused significant consternation amongst its well-heeled residents, used to regularly drinking 'good' wine in amounts that have long been said to contribute significantly to heart disease, strokes, cancer, liver disease and all manner of unpleasant illnesses.

Also reported, but getting less coverage, was the news that the recommended weekly alcohol limits to be consumed by adult men and women were not based on any reliable medical evidence but amounts plucked out of thin air! Doctors knew that drinking too much wasn't good for the

general populace and wished to advise their patients of the risk but had no way of predicting what the limits should be for each individual as there was no actual data. So they made an "intelligent guess"! Since then more studies have shown that drinkers can have a longer life expectancy than teetotallers so perhaps the Surrey tipplers will have the last laugh after all!

Newsflash

It was announced recently that the NHS will have underspent by nearly £2 billion at the end of this financial year. The NHS was under orders to balance its books after amassing debts of over £500 million in the financial year 2005/06. After 2 years of constant news of massive hospital debts resulting in cutbacks and job losses, it seems measures have gone too far in the opposite direction with the result that some patients are being denied life saving drugs as they are too expensive. To add insult to injury, NHS workers were informed by the Department of Health that they will have to make do with a sub-inflationary 2% pay rise in the next year.

The underspend is yet another embarrassment for the government which has been announcing loud and long that there has been record investment in NHS services in recent times. And it seems the money has been invested but tucked away for a rainy day by Strategic Health Authorities to try and avoid potential deficits rather than being channelled in the direction of hospitals needing new equipment and sick patients waiting for expensive drugs. This should bode well for employment in 2008 however as the 18 week target mentioned in the last newsletter looms large on the agenda of every primary care and hospital trust in the UK. It will hopefully help to spell the end of the recruitment freezes and redundancies that were a feature of 2006 and 2007.



The Home Counties

The Home Counties is the collective name for the counties bordering the area of London, otherwise known as the commuter belt, and comprise Buckinghamshire, Essex, Berkshire, Kent, Surrey and Hertfordshire. A traditional conservative stronghold, the Home Counties have a rich and interesting history with people and landscapes that vary from each other quite dramatically, considering that they are all fairly close together.

As mentioned above, Surrey is perhaps the most prosperous of these counties and is home to some of the richest people in the UK. Its close (but not too close!) proximity to London and abundance of pretty, leafy villages make it a haven for those clinging on to the idea of the traditional English way of life.

Essex on the other hand is the area to which the residents of London's East End gravitated following the Blitz when there wasn't much of their home left. Its somewhat down market reputation is partly due to the fact that these cockneys from London were not the traditional landed gentry types who populated the neighbouring counties of Hertfordshire & Kent and they were looked down on as refugees and latecomers. Essex is a very beautiful place however and well worth a visit.

Buckinghamshire is a historic county that also has more than its fair share of affluent residents. Like Surrey, it is a haven to many commuters and celebrities who appreciate its idyllic, rural charms in the knowledge that London is only a half hour train ride away.

The Royal County of Berkshire is the home of Windsor castle, one of the official residences of the Queen, Eton College, the most famous public school in the world and Ascot racecourse, all very popular tourist attractions.

Hertfordshire is the site of one of the most important Roman cities of England, St Albans or Verulamium as it was known in those days. Now it is more famous for being the home of the Beckham family, when they're in the UK and for the TV studios at Borehamwood responsible for giving us EastEnders, a relentlessly miserable soap opera based on the lives of supposedly typical Londoners. Everyone loves it!

Kent is known as the garden of England. Traditionally full of apple orchards and hop fields, poor families from London used to take their annual holidays there and make a bit of spare cash picking hops, earning around 2 pence for each bushel in the 1930s. Hops were used to brew beer and still are for that matter, although sadly hops and apples are no longer as prevalent as they once were. Kent is still a beautiful, lush, green county with its proximity to France making it a very handy location.

The 6 Counties' total population is more than 6 million people giving it a 10th of the whole population of the UK. There has been a lot of investment in district general hospitals throughout these counties in the last few years and they need a constant supply of nurses and Allied Health Professionals, perhaps you might be one in 2008!

Next featured area: Norfolk & Suffolk in the Winter issue

Check out our website at: www.hospitalrecruitment.com

