



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Business Breakfast 8th December 2015

Speaker Biographies

Rob Bennett is one of the Founding Partners of BBP Regeneration, with extensive senior experience working for the public and private sector in the property industry across the UK. Rob has a wide-ranging track record of identifying, initiating, developing, funding and managing major urban regeneration projects. In many instances this has included the evolution of appropriate infrastructure and development strategies, establishing delivery mechanisms and structures including public-private joint ventures. Rob is actively involved with many public / private organisations, including his role as Chairman of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership since 2001. In 2011, he co-founded E3 to pursue an interest in optimising links between low carbon development, enterprise and upskilling communities.

Simon Cook began his career at 16 when he left school to become an apprentice chef. He then embarked on a phenomenal career in hospitality and catering, taking him to work at prestigious 5 star London hotels, then on to Germany where he worked in some of the very best restaurants in the country, before moving on to open a restaurant with four colleagues which soon gained a Michelin star. He then moved to South Africa where he met his wife, with whom he returned to England to start his second career in teaching. Simon quickly progressed within further education colleges and joined MidKent College in 2013 as Vice Principal, before being appointed Principal in June 2015. Simon is passionate about the impact further education has on shaping careers and opening opportunities for all ages, something he believes is nowhere more important than in Medway during its current economic transformation.

Ann Komzolik is Director of Business and Commercial Services at North Kent College and is a member of the Senior Management Team. Ann leads on the College's strategic business development opportunities to ensure that it is well placed to meet the needs of new and existing communities in line with the regeneration and economic development of the area. Ann is also responsible for the National Maritime Training Centre, SusCon, Bright Beginnings, college refectories and marketing. Prior to joining North Kent College, Ann worked in a number of HR, consultancy and management roles, particularly in the retail sector.

David Liston-Jones has been Chief Executive of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) since 2006. He joined the Partnership following a career in Central Government where he specialised in urban regeneration, working in the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister, Department for Trade and Industry and the Cabinet Office. David's relationship with the Thames Gateway dates back to the 1990s, when he was one of the first heads of the Thames Gateway Unit in the Department of the Environment.

Richard Longman is Head of Policy at TGKP, where he is responsible for the Partnership's policy and strategy development, economic analysis, project facilitation and delivery. For many years Richard was a Civil Servant, holding a wide range of posts in the Department of Environment and its successors. He also spent nearly four years on external secondments to Arts Council England as Regeneration Policy Adviser, Project Director of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), and MAA Director with TGKP. Since leaving the Civil Service in 2011, Richard worked as a freelance consultant before re-joining TGKP in March 2013.

Iain McNab is a member of the cross-Departmental Cities & Local Growth Unit. For the past four years Iain has been the Government's relationship manager for the South East LEP. He has just taken up a new role as lead officer for the Thames Gateway, supporting the Minister for the Thames Gateway and, he hopes, bringing some renewed focus to the area. Prior to working in BIS he had a variety of roles at the Government Office for London. When not thinking about work he indulges interests in cinema, reading, history, cricket and, in the rare good times for his team, football.

Tudor Price is Head of Business Development at Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce. He is responsible for all aspects of Business Support and International Trade within the Chamber and represents the organisation on relevant matters of policy and political engagement. Tudor sits on numerous committees to advance the interest of business and the economy and is also the lead bid writer for the Chamber. Formerly a senior executive within the transport and logistics industry and a one time professional actor, Tudor has worked for the Chamber since 2011 and is part of the senior management team.

Professor Alan Reed is an Engineer by training, and has been involved in higher education in various capacities for over 30 years. He is currently the Director of Regional Development at the University of Greenwich, at its Medway Campus, Chatham Maritime. He is also a founding Member, Trustee and Governor of the recently opened Medway University Technical College (UTC) based at Chatham Waters.

Martyn Saunders is an Associate Director responsible for Economics and Regeneration at Bilfinger GVA. Martyn leads BGVA's economic development projects across London and the Greater South East. Prior to joining BGVA Martyn worked in the economic development team at Gravesham Borough Council for 5 years. Martyn has advised on a range of high profile growth and infrastructure projects including Crossrail 2, High Speed 2, Crossrail, Discovery Park and the former Manston Airport. He retains an excellent understanding of the Thames Gateway and North Kent and is currently advising Gravesham, Medway and Maidstone Council's on a range of property, regeneration and growth issues.