



**Welcome to the Spring edition of the Kent Branch newsletter.**

Although the calendar year has just started (having said that, I admit it is flying by), planning for the next financial year is well underway. As a branch we are conscious that we need to provide quality events for you, our members and non-members, to attend and learn from. However, although important, this is not all we do.

For example, we have for the last year also been contributing a regular column to the Kent Messenger *KM Business* publication; exploring the different facets of marketing and hopefully offering advice. The blog on [www.cimkent.co.uk](http://www.cimkent.co.uk) does the

same thing, but in a more informal way; allowing comments and feedback on the content. We have also launched some evening networking events with the second one taking place last week in Maidstone, and the next one scheduled for 11 May.

In the following pages you will find a round-up of some of the events which have taken place since the last newsletter in December, as well as some of the future plans and proposals for 2011-2012.

Please feel free to comment and share your thoughts on these ideas by e-mailing me at [neil@cimkent.co.uk](mailto:neil@cimkent.co.uk). This feedback will help us to meet your needs going forward. Equally, should you have any ideas, or feel there is a topic that we are not covering, please let me know. The format of next year's events has not yet been decided and we would love to hear your views.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and look forward to seeing more of you at our events.

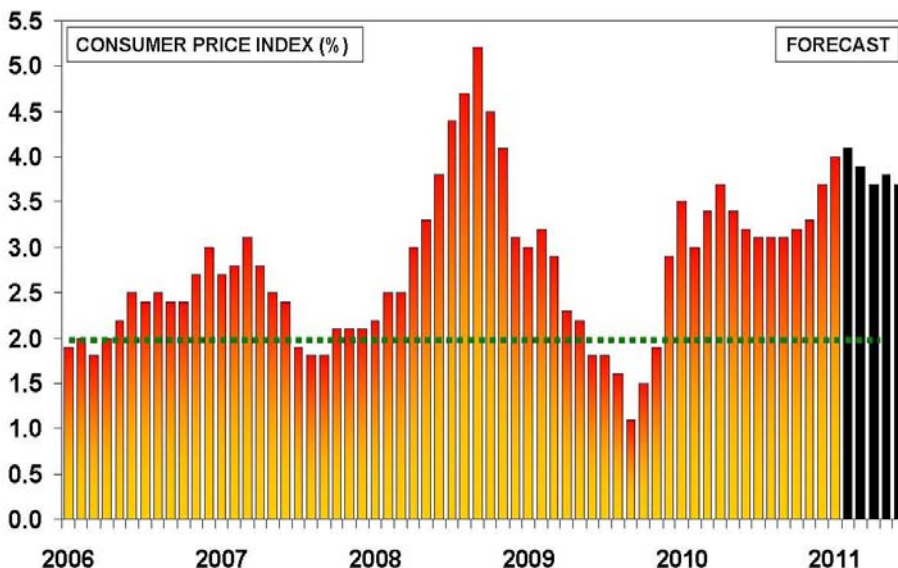
Neil Lakeland  
Branch Chair

**Are you interested in being a mentor, or mentee?**

A number of branches in the South East have recently launched mentoring programmes to help current CIM members make the next step in their career and professional life. As a branch, this is something we are thinking of launching from September. If you feel this would be of benefit to you, or to someone you know, please e-mail [neil@cimkent.co.uk](mailto:neil@cimkent.co.uk). This will allow us to gauge initial interest and tailor the programme to your needs.

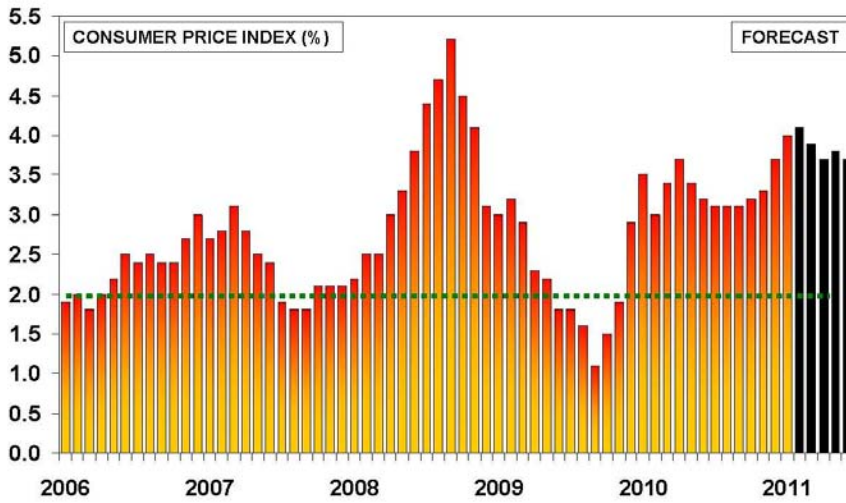


**HSBC Forecast - find out what's happening on page 2**



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## The great inflation debate

There are various things in life that can get us a little hot under the collar. Whether it is just missing that last train, trying to figure out why your laptop has frozen or dealing with the transfer of your club's world-class striker to a rival team. The one thing the financial markets particularly dislike is surprises. This month, there have been two notably big shocks in the economic data releases that have intensified the debate on the outlook for the UK.

After a surprisingly robust economic growth performance in the middle of last year, a sharp 0.5% decline in GDP during the final three months of 2010 was an unexpected reversal. Although the level of activity was undoubtedly curtailed during the heavy snow of December and history argues against reading too much into the preliminary estimate of a quarter's GDP, this figure has certainly rekindled fears over the resilience of the recovery.

This has left market analysts more uncertain about the underlying strength of domestic demand, and the likely contribution from net exports, as looming public spending cuts and a rising tax burden become more prominent in the early months of 2011.

## Elephant in the room

At the same time, the news on inflation went from bad to even worse. The Bank of England's target measure of Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) rose from 3.7% year on year to 4.0% in January. Indeed, with CPI already double the target rate of 2.0%, the detail of the figures suggests that inflation will rise even further in the coming months as this year's VAT hike is passed through.

A sustained boom in the emerging markets has prompted a sharp rise in prices across a wide range of food, energy and commodity markets. For instance, the price of Brent crude oil has hit a two-year high of \$100 a barrel while the price of copper has exceeded \$10,000 a tonne for the first time. Once regarded by many as only a temporary factor, higher commodity prices do not look quite so temporary anymore.

It is easy, therefore, to see why nervousness about inflation has steadily crept into the financial markets despite the fragility of the recent GDP figures. One measure of future expectations of interest rates, five-year UK swap (fixed) rates, have risen by more than 100 basis points (+1.0%) since last November. Similarly, the pound has gained five cents against the US dollar in the first

six weeks of this year partly from the belief that UK interest rates are set to rise.

On the other hand, there are several reasons to consider why these inflationary worries may be overdone and that pricing pressures will gradually abate. The economy is growing below trend so there is plenty of spare capacity available, suggesting it will be difficult for firms to pass on higher prices to a high street where demand remains fragile. Besides, most of the inflation is being generated by factors outside of the UK and there is no evidence of a pick-up in wage settlements that would spark the risk of a traditional wage price spiral.

## No easy decisions

There is no doubt, however, that on the eve of the two-year birthday of UK bank rate at 0.5%, there is growing speculation that the Bank of England may be forced to hike interest rates at some point in the next 12 months, and this may be sooner rather than later. According to Reuters, almost 70% of City analysts polled in February are forecasting that interest rates will rise this year.

Certainly, the challenge facing the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) suddenly appears a lot more daunting. There is now a three-way split of opinion on the MPC with one member favouring additional quantitative easing, two members voting for an immediate rate increase and six members currently opting for the status quo.

It is interesting to note that in the press conference following February's Q1 inflation report Mervyn King stressed that while no pre-commitment to rate rises this year exists, the merits of any change in policy will be judged from fresh at each meeting. In other words, the MPC reserves

the right (as always) to consider the balance of economic evidence every four weeks.

This suggests that with a plethora of economic data pulling the prospects of growth and inflation in so many different directions, UK businesses with borrowings on variable rate terms or significant currency requirements should take notice of Mr King's desire to keep an open mind on what the future may bring. Most importantly, with a suitable risk management strategy in place, there's no need to get as hot under the collar as most City economists undoubtedly will in the coming months.

*Reproduced with kind permission from HSBC Global Markets (February 2011)*

## How to enter business awards

Featuring presentations from Charmaine Kemp, winner of the 'Young Entrepreneur of the Year' award in last year's Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEiBA), as well as Linda Sinclair from ADM Computing, this event gave attendees numerous insights into how to enter, and hopefully win, business awards.

We learnt that they are a great way to motivate staff and generate positive publicity about your company as well as produce new business. ADM Computing estimated that as a direct result of the awards they had won they've generated approximately £80,000 of revenue. One contract of £25,000 came just because they were shortlisted as a finalist.

Awards are also crucial to gain credibility and trust with customers. Charmaine's company – Wheelie Good Mobility – sells mobility aids to the elderly and

she is confident that it is only through the credibility which the KEiBA gave her that she is still in business. She likened the KEiBA alumni to a 'club' where everyone knows each other and you gain recommendations through it. Plus, it helps when you attend networking events since other people have already heard about you!

### The top tips for completing your application were summarised as follows:

- Read the criteria.
- Write as though you do not know about your business – the judges are not experts in your field.
- Be honest - embellishments will be found out and never forgotten.
- Use someone outside of your organisation to check the entry prior to submission.
- Take time on your entry, do not rush it. However, do not put it off just because you do not think you have enough time.
- Know your figures and be passionate about the business - this shows and is recognised.



**Above:** Award winner Caterina Malandri (Coca-Cola) receiving the 'Marketer of the Year' Award from Dominic Holland and Sir Paul Judge (President of The Chartered Institute of Marketing). **Top right:** The Kent Student Chapter



## Kent Student Chapter Update

The Kent Student Chapter, based at Canterbury Christ Church University, is currently working on two different projects, both of which are aimed at increasing their visibility internally as well as putting the marketing theory they've gained into practice.

One such project is helping the University's Student Union to promote a website – Change One Thing – which has been developed to encourage the CCCU students to air ideas, as well as their comments and complaints about the university so that the institution can be improved. However, visitor numbers to the site has historically been low. To address this the Chapter will be running an event at the University in March to promote the service and showcase what the website is all about.

Other initiatives include working with the CCCU Marketing Department to run focus groups on the current University marketing and promotional materials, such as the prospectus, providing valuable feedback as to their usability and perception amongst the student population, as well as developing a newsletter for the Business department which will be used internally by both staff and students.

## CIM Kent blog

Interesting new blogs  
are posted monthly to:  
[www.cimkent.co.uk/blog/](http://www.cimkent.co.uk/blog/)

See some of the most recent blog  
topics below. Click on the links to  
visit the Kent website and read the  
full posts.

### Be True to Your Brand

By Neil Lakeland  
6 February 2011

For a company to really succeed  
and prosper it needs to have an  
understanding of what its brand  
stands for. Only then can it  
develop new products.

[Read full post](#)

### Don't Recycle, Be Creative

By Neil Lakeland  
9 January 2011

When times are difficult,  
it's critical that you're creative.  
Don't just recycle last year's ideas;  
instead evaluate what you can  
do differently.

[Read full post](#)

### 2010 Round-Up

By Neil Lakeland  
Wednesday,  
22 December 2010

A brief round-up of some of the  
achievements of the Kent Branch  
in 2010.

[Read full post](#)



### Find us at Kent 2020 Vision

Once again the branch will be  
representing CIM at the Kent 2020  
Vision event on 7 April at the Kent  
Showground, Detling. This is the  
largest business exhibition in the  
South-East and totally free  
to attend.

With speakers including Lee  
McQueen, Max Clifford and  
Karren Brady as well as  
workshops covering topics such  
as apprenticeships, it is an event  
not to be missed. It presents  
an ideal opportunity to network,  
catch up with clients and meet  
potential customers.

Building on the popularity of  
our 30 minute advice sessions  
last year, the Institute's stand will  
again be host to a business clinic  
where members and non-  
members can drop by and discuss  
potential marketing challenges or  
ideas. Staffed by qualified  
members and Chartered  
Marketers, visitors will benefit from  
a fresh perspective from people  
with a breadth of industry  
experience.

For more information and to book  
your free delegate place, visit  
[www.kent2020.co.uk](http://www.kent2020.co.uk)

## Dates for your diary

18 March 2011

**Final deadline for KEiBA  
entries**

7 April 2011

**Kent 2020 Vision**

Location: Detling Showground

13 April 2011

**Understanding Google  
Analytics**

Location: Ashford  
Time: 08.30 - 12.30

11 May 2011

**'Marketing over a Pint'**

Free networking event,  
Location: Maidstone  
Time: 18.00 - 21.00

18 May 2011

**'Simply Better Marketing'**

Location: Maidstone  
Time 09.30 - 12.30

30 June 2011

**KEiBA Gala Dinner**

Location: Leas Cliff Hall



Images top middle:  
Photos from last year's Kent 2020 Vision

All CIM events can be  
booked by visiting  
[www.cim.co.uk/kent](http://www.cim.co.uk/kent)

## Kent marketing students shine in March results

CIM Kent students who studied with Goldcrest Academy have reason to be pleased with the March qualification results; achieving pass rates as high as 89% for the Institute's Chartered Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing, which is 26% than CIM national benchmarks. Students on the Certificate and Diploma did equally well with results which were 16% and 17% respectively higher than the national benchmark.

The students were assessed by exam and assignment, challenging them to leverage theory and commercial results for business focussed and creative solutions. Congratulations must go to the students and their tutors for these excellent results.

CAM Diploma results in Digital Marketing were also high with 100% pass rates for Digital Marketing Essentials. These new qualifications give students the opportunity to have additional letters after their names and earn CPD hours. Current CIM members may also benefit from exemptions which mean they only have to complete two modules.

### CIM membership offers

- Recognised professional status.
- Regular marketing events in your local area.
- Cutting Edge – weekly e-mail marketing bulletin.
- *The Marketer* – our award-winning member magazine.
- Learning Zone – online portal for studying members.
- Job vacancy service.
- Marketing Resources – access thousands of market and company reports and top business journals online.
- Legal Helpline – save yourself some stress and use our free legal helpline for business and personal matters.

## Your CIM Kent Branch Committee:

Name and position	E-mail
<b>Paul Fifield</b> President	<a href="mailto:paulfifield@fifield.co.uk">paulfifield@fifield.co.uk</a>
<b>Neil Lakeland</b> Branch Chairman	<a href="mailto:nlakeland.cim@tesco.net">nlakeland.cim@tesco.net</a>
<b>Neil Lakeland</b> Treasurer	<a href="mailto:nlakeland.cim@tesco.net">nlakeland.cim@tesco.net</a>
<b>George Gault</b> Secretary	<a href="mailto:ggault@thekmgroupp.co.uk">ggault@thekmgroupp.co.uk</a>
<b>Melanie Scott</b> Newsletter Co-ordinator	<a href="mailto:melanie@fwdp.co.uk">melanie@fwdp.co.uk</a>
<b>Sara Royle</b> Professional Liaison Officer	<a href="mailto:sara.royle@goldcrestacademy.co.uk">sara.royle@goldcrestacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Simon Wakeman</b> Webmaster	<a href="mailto:simon@simonwakeman.com">simon@simonwakeman.com</a>
<b>Hayley Eversfield</b> PR Officer	<a href="mailto:hayleyeversfield@yahoo.co.uk">hayleyeversfield@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<b>Sharon Wilding</b> Small Business Programme	<a href="mailto:sharon.wilding@thepurpleedge.co.uk">sharon.wilding@thepurpleedge.co.uk</a>
<b>Peter Eales</b> Regional Chairman	<a href="mailto:peter@oisolutions.co.uk">peter@oisolutions.co.uk</a>
<b>Roger Foster</b> Regional Director	<a href="mailto:rogerfoster@cim.co.uk">rogerfoster@cim.co.uk</a>
<b>Bruce Bell</b> Sponsorship Officer	<a href="mailto:bruce@marketingandbusinessdevelopment.co.uk">bruce@marketingandbusinessdevelopment.co.uk</a>
<b>Mary White</b> Educational Officer	<a href="mailto:marywhite@talktalk.net">marywhite@talktalk.net</a>
<b>Jennifer Cook</b> Chair Kent Student Chapter	<a href="mailto:jencook16@gmail.com">jencook16@gmail.com</a>
<b>Faith Chan</b> Events Co-ordinator and Vice Chair	<a href="mailto:faithchan@hsbc.com">faithchan@hsbc.com</a>

### Want to find out more about what's happening in Kent?

If you're reading this and are also a member of LinkedIn, why not join the CIM Kent Branch LinkedIn Group? Find it by searching for CIM Kent on LinkedIn.