

Guildford: A History Of Creativity And Entrepreneurism

A strong spirit of creativity and invention underpins Guildford's development, both past and present.

In the early 1900s, the great Victorian painter George Frederic Watts ("England's Michelangelo") and his wife, Scottish potter and designer Mary Seton Fraser, established a gallery and community-focused pottery in the borough at Compton, an 'artists' village. This is now being reborn thanks to the vision and inspirational drive of the [Watts Gallery](#).

One of the seminal works of children's imaginative literature – Alice Through the Looking Glass – was penned by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known as author Lewis Carroll, while he lived in Guildford.

And in 1901, the Dennis brothers, described in one publication at the time as '... the principal pioneers of the motor industry in this country', established the first purpose-built car factory in the UK in the Rodboro Buildings on Bridge Street in the heart of town.

In more recent times, Guildford has become home to the University of Surrey, one of the UK's leading universities and set to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary of being in the borough in 2016/17.

The University of Surrey is home to the global 5G Innovation Centre, an exciting hub for the development of the next generation of mobile technologies.

The university also owns the Surrey Research Park, whose 110+ companies employ 2,750 staff working in high-tech R&D-rich sectors such as gaming, healthcare and the space industry - it is widely regarded as one of the most successful research parks and innovation hubs in the UK.

It is also home to Surrey Satellite Technology Limited (SSTL), the world leader in the manufacture of small satellite technologies.

And in September 2017, the new Guildford University Technical College will open its doors to young people aspiring to become the computing and engineering professionals of the future.

Building on the borough's existing digital technology credentials and strength, Guildford Makerspace presents the opportunity to connect

and collaborate with this local community – enthusiasts, innovators, craftspeople, consultants, businesses and educational establishments with the aim to:

- Foster and develop the skills, entrepreneurial outlook and enthusiasm for further local innovation and incubation hub activities
- Bridge the digital divide through the sharing of knowledge and tools and, in the process, build greater community and economic resilience
- Focus on creation rather than consumption – giving people a better chance to appreciate the value of things and have a greater regard for conserving and utilising raw materials