

The role of the
Local Enterprise Partnership
in driving the economy of
Swindon & Wiltshire



Swindon & Wiltshire
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



What are Local Enterprise Partnerships?

Over many years, governments of various political persuasions have established organisations to operate at a local level to grow the economy of UK plc. The Labour government prior to 2010 worked through Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The Coalition and later Conservative governments from 2010 to the present day, have sought to achieve regional and local economic success in England through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). A key difference between RDAs and LEPs is the prime leadership role of the business community in the latter organisation.

England's 38 LEPs are a unique alliance between business and the public sector, led by a senior business Chair. They set the strategic economic thinking that shapes their region, pitch for government funds, generate private sector investment, and help local businesses to start, grow, scale-up, export and access skilled talent.

The impact and influence of LEPs is making the difference where it really matters, in the villages, towns and cities across England. Over £9bn of Local Growth Fund has been invested in LEP activity by Government, against which LEPs have generated a further £7bn of private sector investment, with some LEPs reporting this investment has led to a 10:1 uplift in the economic measure of gross value added (GVA). To date, that LEP difference has collectively:

- supported 130,000 businesses
- created over 145,000 jobs, and
- helped to build 25,000 homes.

By 2021, their vision is to deliver £16bn of private sector investment, train 500,000 learners, help create 750,000 new skilled jobs, and support 250,000 businesses. It's all mapped out in each LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

LEPs bring four unique values to the table, forging cross sector alliances that get projects delivered at pace and on time:

1. they are the only effective local partnership between the private and public sector;
2. they are the only organisation that ensures the views of local business on strategic economic planning are heard and acted on;
3. they are the only local organisation which negotiates and brokers solutions to deliver projects on time and at pace, a vital element of their success; and
4. they're driven by local needs and local people, and exploit that knowledge and understanding to drive economic growth.

The demands of a post-Brexit landscape



play to the core strengths of exactly what LEPs are there to do. Their role has never been more critical in forging economic growth and identifying and exploiting new business opportunities for the benefit of all.

“LEPs have given businesses a direct role and a strong voice in directing local economic development and shaping the future of their local communities. Now, as we are developing a modern industrial strategy, there is a huge opportunity to ensure that local leadership is foundational to our future economic success.”

The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

“LEPs play a vital role in driving forward economic growth across the country. They help make sure that the right skills and infrastructure are available to support businesses to reach their full potential, creating jobs and building strong local communities.”

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

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The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership

The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) was established in 2011. It is a voluntary partnership between local businesses, Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council, the military and the education sector. It is led by a Board, which has a membership of 4 public sector leaders and 10 business leaders.

The SWLEP's Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2026 identifies five strategic objectives to prioritise future investment:

- skills and talent
- transport
- digital capability
- place-shaping, and
- business development.

It is by implementing its plan to achieve these priorities that the SWLEP is seeking

to fulfil its role to drive forward the economy of Swindon and Wiltshire.

The SWLEP's work to improve the economy is done for a reason. A resourceful and resilient local economy gives strength to our communities and makes our area a good place to do business. We seek to retain and support the expansion plans of existing businesses and draw in new businesses from elsewhere in the United Kingdom and from the world at large. The SWLEP's vision is for Swindon and Wiltshire to be renowned for innovation, entrepreneurialism and a great quality of life by 2026. What could be more important in our pre-Brexit days of political and economic uncertainty?

The SWLEP is not an ineffectual talking shop as we have acquired resources and set up planned programmes to deliver on our vision.



Local Growth Deal

Working with its partners, the SWLEP sets the economic priorities for Swindon and Wiltshire and facilitates projects that help accelerate economic growth and job creation in the area. Between 2014 and 2021 the SWLEP is making investments in capital projects worth £518m to grow the local economy, including funding worth £169m secured in three local growth deal bids to the government.

The amount secured from government is twice what would be expected based on the population of the area, which is just over 700,000. When other private and public sector leverage is added to make a total of £518m, this is three times what might be expected based on the population size. The SWLEP is very successful in attracting investment to the area.

All the SWLEP priorities are benefitting from this investment. We have focussed investment in three growth zones:

- Swindon and the M4
- the A350 (west Wiltshire)
- Salisbury and the A303

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“The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory are pleased to be associated with the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, its investment in science and technology and promoting prosperity in the region. The SWLEP currently has infrastructure and transport projects worth £518m in the pipeline that supports the investment in the science and technology skills capability in the region.

We value the SWLEP’s efforts to support the science and technology capability and will continue to support the SWLEP to support prosperity in Swindon and Wiltshire.”

Andrew Seedhouse
Innovation Lead
DSTL

Skills and Talent

Skills and talent is the SWLEP’s current number one priority. The last round of the local growth deal with Government, finalised in 2016, enabled the SWLEP to go some way achieving a key ambition which is to invest in projects to improve the quality of the learning environment in the further education (FE) colleges in the area.

Our Growth Deal bid in 2016 highlighted the need for investment in Wiltshire College’s campuses at Salisbury and Lackham. As a result the SWLEP has allocated £22.03m of investment to improve facilities at both sites from 2017/18. These schemes are expected to support 1,382 new learners every year, create 160 new jobs and create a further 320 jobs indirectly.

Both the Salisbury and Lackham campus improvements will lead to much enhanced provision for higher education, in addition to the usual FE-level courses. Lackham campus will see the development of cutting-edge facilities to support new technologies in agriculture and the wider rural economy. Salisbury’s development will enable an expansion of provision in the fields of engineering and life science and is well-placed to support the growth of aerospace and health industries in the nearby defence-related sites at Boscombe and Porton.



“The investment provided as part of the first round of Growth Deal Funding delivered road infrastructure improvements which supported the expansion of Dyson’s research and development campus in Malmesbury. We look forward to working with Wiltshire Council and SWLEP on future road improvements works to support our continuing expansion.”

Rob Hill
Director of Estates
Dyson

Transport

We have allocated £30.19m of local growth funding to seven schemes which will improve the Swindon and Wiltshire transport infrastructure and this investment will leverage a further £10.44m in match funding. Combined these schemes will have a significant impact on the local economy including improving journey time reliability and safety as well as supporting the creation of new jobs and homes. They are essential elements in the expansion plans of our key businesses.

Swindon and Wiltshire and, in particular the northern growth zone centred around Swindon and the M4 will benefit greatly from the arrival of electrification in 2018.

This will reduce train travel to London Paddington from Swindon to under an hour and with a consequently speedier connection to Heathrow when other rail improvements are in place. Fast and reliable connections to London are especially good for the economy of UK plc. However, to boost our local economy and draw in new investments, we need to make improvements to road, rail and other sustainable means of transport in our area.

The total investment of £40.63m will bring 24 hectares of employment land to the market; support the building of 5,500 new homes and create 3,100 jobs directly and a further 1,550 indirectly.

“IXYS UK supports SWLEP in its focus to grow the local economy by making Swindon and Wiltshire the very best location from which to do business. They have a clear plan to create the right environment for innovation and therefore to create wealth, jobs and business opportunities by focusing on skills and talent, transport infrastructure, digital capability, place shaping and business development.”

Phil Townsend
R&D Engineer/Company Secretary
IXYS UK Westcode Ltd



Place-shaping

The SWLEP’s place-shaping activity looks to reinvigorate our key settlements and support the appropriate development of our city, towns and villages as attractive and comfortable places to live and work in. To this end, we have allocated £104.86m of our local growth deal funding to eight place-shaping schemes across our area which in turn have drawn in a further £297.76m of match funding.

The funding is supporting housing and commercial developments mainly in our two largest urban settlements of Swindon and Salisbury. In Swindon, there is significant housing development planned, with two strategic sites alone accounting for 11,000 new homes. The Greenbridge roundabout in east Swindon has received a £5.3m upgrade to improve traffic flow in

the area and will also ensure that traffic continues to flow freely when the 8,000 new homes are constructed as part of the New Eastern Village development. This is both a transport improvement and a key part of the plan to create a vibrant new community. It is enhanced by a wonderful public art installation using coloured lights. At times of national and international memorials and key events, the lighting at the roundabout will use colour sequences to reflect the sentiments of the moment. A great addition to a roundabout!

The total investment of £402.62m will bring 83.3 hectares of employment land to the market; support the building of 13,350 new homes and create 1,645 jobs directly and a further 15,000 indirectly.



“Wavin would like to complement SWLEP’s ability to align the needs of the local businesses and the ongoing work they undertake to promote the local economy. Wavin values SWLEP’s efforts in addressing skills gaps, transport issues and other business development activities. We therefore, support SWLEP to ensure continued development of the area including improved broadband provision.”

Ash Nandurkar
Interim HR Business Partner
Wavin Limited

Digital Capability

The SWLEP recognises that the digital infrastructure is a key element for businesses to operate successfully. As a result we are investing £3.5m of our local growth fund in two schemes to support the development of the Swindon and Wiltshire digital infrastructure which will draw in a further £3.4m of investment as match funding.

The provision of broadband at a satisfactory speed is a key element of this, especially in rural areas. We are therefore investing £1m towards the delivery of ultrafast (100+ mega-bits per second) and next generation access (NGA) broadband (30+ mega-bits per second). The M4 corridor is the backbone for Britain’s tech industry and its development was powered by the telecommunications and IT industries. It runs from London through Swindon and Wiltshire to Bristol and South Wales.

Our investment in the redevelopment of the Corsham Mansion House, which is in the Swindon and M4 Growth Zone forms part of our vision to further develop digital and cyber security expertise in our area. The Mansion House will offer incubation space to businesses working in the digital and innovation sectors and will be opened up to academic and community use. In turn we hope to attract new businesses to locate in the wider area and enhance the local skills base.

The total investment of £6.9m will bring ultrafast and next generation broadband access to 1,875 businesses and create 300 jobs directly and a further 2,180 indirectly.



“Business support is an important element in achieving our growth aspirations and the SWLEP understands that starting, running and growing a business can be a challenging process. This support can be in terms of access to advice and guidance or access to suitable premises and the SWLEP has invested in the provision of both.”

Business Development

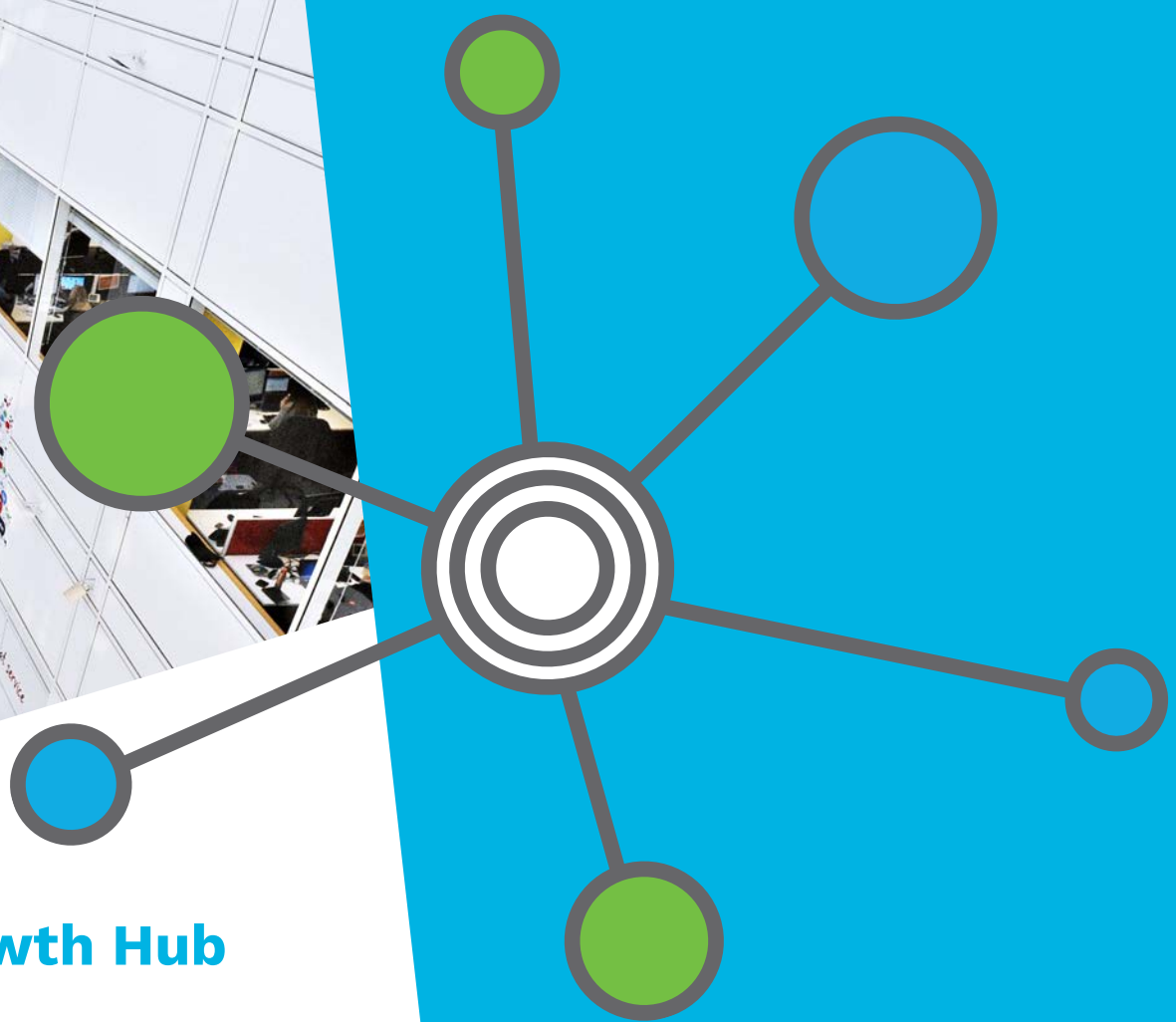
There are three main elements to our work in this field:

- managing our Growth Hub to provide a single gateway to business support;
- creating an environment conducive to good business development by co-ordinating the work of local authority regulatory services; and
- investing in science and digital incubation centres and businesses to support innovation and high-value jobs growth.

Business development goes to the core of our purpose as a LEP. During our lifetime as an organisation charged with forging economic growth, we will measure our

success by the growth in businesses and wealth in the economy due to our strategies and interventions.

Business support is an important element in achieving our growth aspirations and the SWLEP understands that starting, running and growing a business can be a challenging process. This support can be in terms of access to advice and guidance or access to suitable premises and the SWLEP has invested in the provision of both. We provide business support and advice to start-ups and growing businesses in the area through the Swindon and Wiltshire Growth Hub. The aim of our Growth Hub is to support enterprise by providing a single gateway for business support.



The Growth Hub

The Growth Hub delivery model has been changing and evolving over the last 18 months. Previously, all support was provided through a contracted out service. In April 2017, the SWLEP took on the development of the Growth Hub as an in-house service. Our aim is to reach the 28,000 businesses in the area through a significantly enhanced on-line portal, positioning it as a comprehensive and interactive gateway to business support. Through our model, businesses in the Swindon and Wiltshire area are able to access relevant business support through a variety of channels. The on-line portal and telephone service (staffed by business support 'Navigators') provide a gateway to business support, both from publically funded programmes and from the general private sector. In addition, we have aligned EU funded programmes under the umbrella of the Growth Hub to provide face to face services in specific specialist areas. The Growth Hub provides currently, access to 33 business support programmes, including the highly successful Scale-Up programme for small

and medium sized enterprises which are developing a track record of growth.

Within 3 months of launching in October 2017 and purely through word of mouth, 140 businesses have registered, the website has welcomed 1,600 new unique visitors and we have uploaded 400 pieces of informative content.



Better Business for All

Better Business for All (BBfA) is a government initiative that brings together businesses and regulators in partnership to improve how local regulation is delivered, easing the burden on business and reducing both real and perceived regulatory barriers to growth. The SWLEP is implementing the programme with the support of the business community. It is part of the Growth Hub offer.

Regulatory delivery provides essential protection for citizens from risks posed by day-to-day business operation, such as unsafe food and products, public and occupational health risks, fraud and financial detriment.

There are over 28,000 businesses in Swindon and Wiltshire; over 90 per cent of them employ less than 10 people. One of the most common complaints they cite is about how difficult it is for them to get consistent and assured advice on what they need to make their business compliant with regulations.

BBfA aims to provide advice and support to business whilst simplifying the local regulatory system and processes.

It also aims to strengthen the relationship that regulatory services have with local businesses and with other local authority services such as building control, economic development and planning.

Removing regulatory barriers to growth makes Swindon and Wiltshire a good

place to do business, and helps to create a more prosperous and competitive local economy. As increasing numbers of businesses become compliant, regulatory services have more resources to target non-compliant and rogue businesses.

The benefits to business include:

- a single point of contact where they receive support and consistent, assured advice on regulatory compliance, from food hygiene and licensing to planning and fire safety;
- regulatory compliance is made easier, cheaper and faster, saving time and money;
- improves relationships between regulatory services and local businesses;
- provides a proactive approach, 'get it right first time' rather than enforcement;
- businesses can be involved in shaping the regulatory services they receive so that they are delivered in a more supportive way;
- encourages fair competition, level playing field for business; and
- increases consumer confidence.



Investing to support innovation and jobs growth

In the Digital Capability section, I mentioned the investment in the development of Corsham Mansion House as a hub of digital innovation. Similarly, we are supporting the Porton Science Park development, in the Salisbury and A303 Growth Zone, which will provide innovation and grow-on space for the health and life sciences sector; one of our priority sectors.

The SWLEP has invested £4m from our local growth deal, aligned £3m from EU funding to support business incubation and with other public sector match, the total investment is £10.1m. These resources will create directly 302 new high value jobs and 1,800 indirectly.

“Excalibur recognises the continued efforts made by the SWLEP to grow our local economy. Investment in skills, transport infrastructure, town centre regeneration and business development is essential in making our area even more competitive. The goals of our business are aligned to the priorities in the SWLEP economic plan. We therefore, support the SWLEP in leading economic development in the Swindon and Wiltshire area creating an environment where businesses can thrive & providing better opportunities for all.”

Emma Carter
Sales and Marketing Director
Excalibur

Getting Involved

There are many ways to engage with and be a part of the work of the Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP):

- joining the SWLEP Board or attending our meetings and participating in the Question Time;
- become a business mentor to support start-ups or smaller businesses;
- join the Enterprise Advisor Network to educate students on the various career choices available to them as they move ahead and decide on a direction for their professional life;
- provide feedback or an opinion on a SWLEP programme or a new government strategy, green paper or initiative;
- register on the Swindon & Wiltshire Growth Hub to be a part of the 24/7 Business Community and access impartial advice on all aspects of business development;
- showcase your business by developing a case study to be an inspiration to other businesses in Swindon & Wiltshire;
- subscribe to our newsletters by emailing us at info@SWLEP.co.uk



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