



SOUTH EAST
LOCAL ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

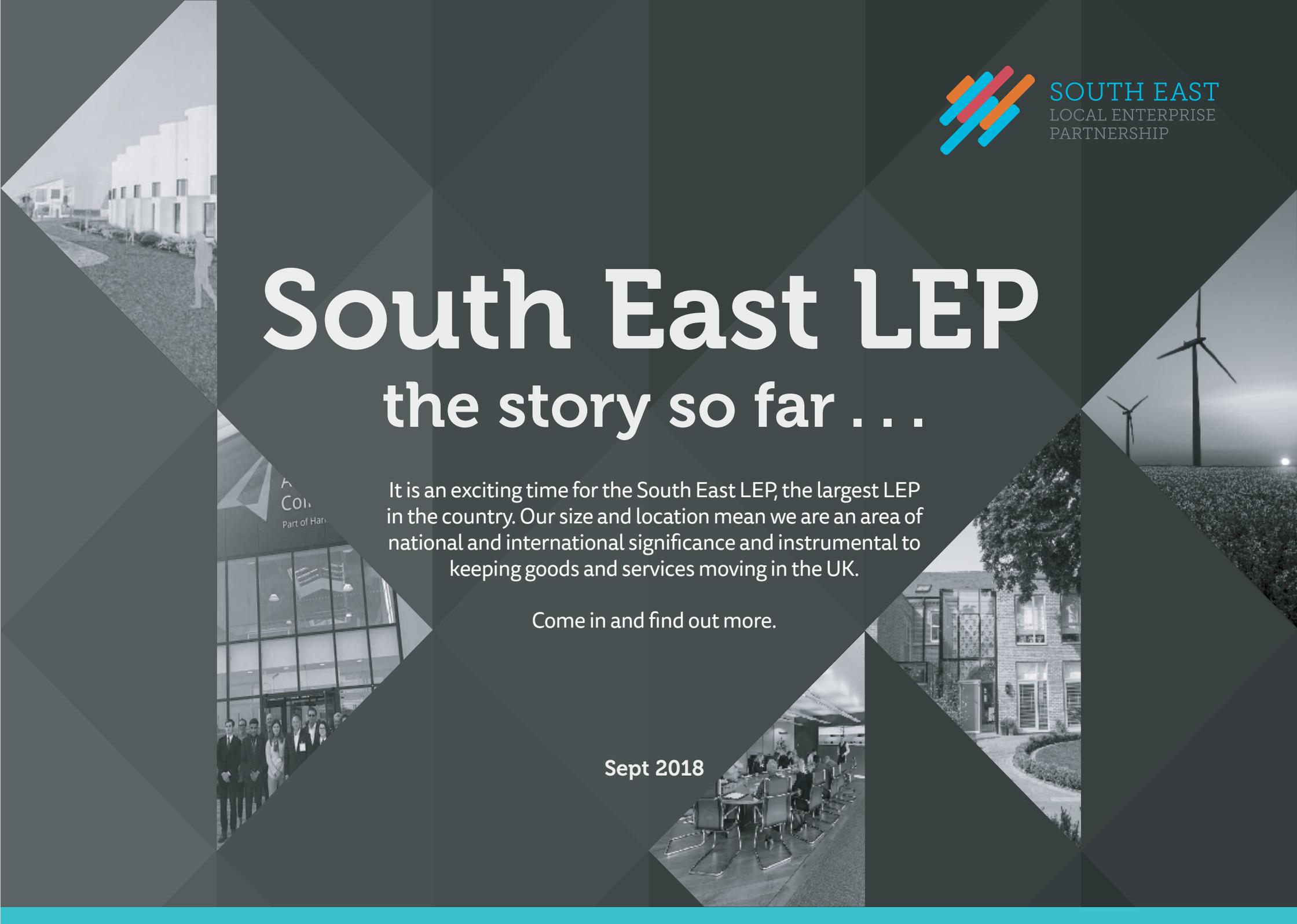
South East LEP

the story so far . . .

It is an exciting time for the South East LEP, the largest LEP in the country. Our size and location mean we are an area of national and international significance and instrumental to keeping goods and services moving in the UK.

Come in and find out more.

Sept 2018



1. Executive summary

SELEP works strongest when it works together on those things that really matter to everyone in the area. Some examples where SELEP has achieved greater than the sum of its parts include the following:

Lower Thames Crossing (LTC)

The development of an additional route across the Thames is constantly raised as the most important issue for our businesses and will fundamentally change how our communities interact. Whilst we don't all agree as to where the crossing should be, we do agree that a new crossing is needed and that the current situation is not only untenable, but is impacting on the day-to-day life and business of the SELEP area.

We also all agree that the communities and businesses that are most effected by the Dartford crossing are those who should be heard loud and clear by Government.

This is why SELEP led a major piece of work to engage with businesses and help them make strong responses on the recent LTC consultation positioning ourselves as principal conduit for business perspectives on the challenges and opportunities and feeding into Highways England and the Department for Transport.

Local Growth Fund Round 3

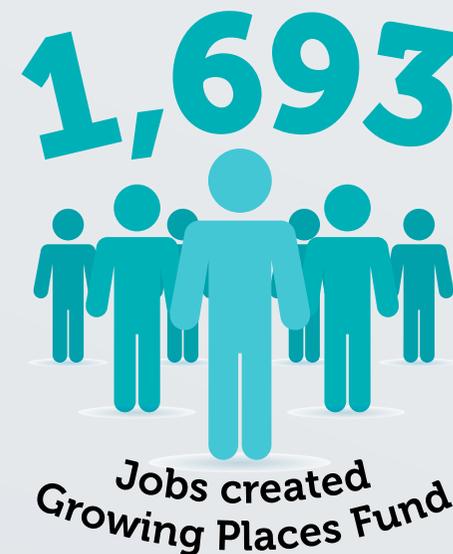
The voice of SELEP was heard by Government when the indicative allocations for the third round of LGF were made. The offer to our area was far below what it should have been given the size and scale and for the outputs and outcomes the pipeline list would have produced.

SELEP co-ordinated and rallied supporters from across the SELEP geography presenting a united community and strong message, government couldn't ignore. We successfully negotiated an improved deal with funding for key projects across the area.

Skills

There are many challenges and opportunities that we all agree are priorities, crucially we need our people to be skilled and in the right way. The skills agenda that is being led by SELEP is at the forefront of national thinking and is influencing and shaping policy.

By working across boundaries geographically and with businesses, educators and Local Authorities we have helped develop a strong and clear evidence base which has directly influenced strategy and provision. Working on this scale, with industry and supporting government initiatives has meant we have been able to pilot new solutions and can work to develop solutions which respond to our growth opportunities.



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2. Introduction

At a moment in time when Government are acknowledging the vital role that Local Enterprise Partnerships play in supporting local economic growth, it is important to catalogue some of the interventions that the South East LEP and partners have made over the course of the last few years.

I am proud to be the Chairman of a partnership which continues to deliver and grow from strength to strength in terms of its reputation. Whilst acknowledging the turbulent start that one would expect any brand new partnership to endure, we should take enormous pride in the role that everyone has played – business leaders, educationalists, Local Authority members and officers within SELEP and elsewhere who are all integral to making this work.

This document provides a snapshot of our impact, whether in terms of supporting important capital projects through the Local Growth Fund, supporting projects spawned of our ESIF programme, influencing the national debate on skills, or providing a unique forum for the growth of the creative sector and the creation of new work programmes and partnerships aligned to the shared issues of our coastal settlements. We are also providing an audible voice into major infrastructure decisions, and occupy a unique space in talking to Government and its agencies with some coherence about the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing at its northern and southern extremities.

We are keen to retain our momentum and to focus on getting things done. The LEP Review does give us a brief opportunity to have a clean look at how we operate. We are keen to iterate but we must respect what's gone before us and only change where change and innovation is directly linked to better decision making and the enabling of more growth. It has to be about improved impact on the ground.

We retain a small team and even after a recent round of recruitment, the SELEP team is one of the smallest nationally. However, we have big plans – our recent call for LGF projects was vastly oversubscribed and support for over 100 projects was sought. A big sign of big ambition.

This sends a clear message to Government, to business, to investors and to everyone else: We know how to operate efficiently. We know how to engage broadly. We have every appetite for growth. We have the projects. We want to do more and we have proved what can be done when we work smartly, quickly and together.

Christian Brodie
Chairman
South East LEP



3. SELEP functional economic geography

The South East LEP has developed strong peer networks and shared working across colleges, Universities, across local authorities and business networks as a direct result of the difference made by the LEP.

London

There are common issues, concerns and dynamics shared across the SELEP area. The SELEP economy is a series of inter-connected economic corridors and towns. These economic geographies can be loosely based on a series of longitudinal and radial routes outside London. All areas in the LEP form part of the wider London economic region, to a greater or lesser extent.

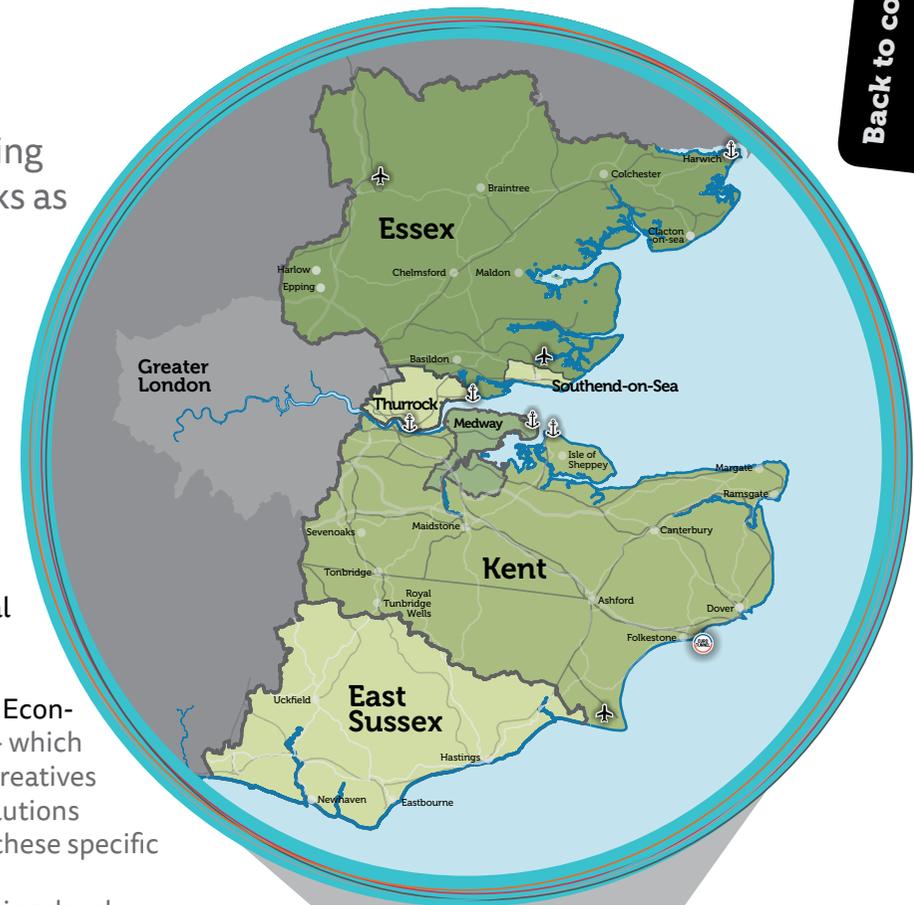
This proximity to London has an effect on the labour market, labour and land costs, supply chains, infrastructure and transport requirements and housing demand.

Infrastructure

Areas in the LEP face similar challenges in attracting infrastructure investment. The challenge being that it is more difficult to justify investment to link with a select few corridors and international gateways. Other areas have links from London to other places – it is easier to make the case for investment to the north or west and connect London to other key cities.

Common themes

- **Coastal regeneration** and shared challenges – unique to the South East due to our key seaside towns, heritage, small, creative SME community and coastline and economic links to London markets
- supporting connectivity across **Rural economies** and shared agricultural challenge and the food economy
- the work of the **South East Creative Economy Network** – spawned of SELEP – which brings together 30+ private sector creatives on a regular basis and is building solutions unique to these SME's operating in these specific supply chains
- **Ports & logistics sector support**, linking development with investment in key infrastructure, understanding what the sector needs to be successful and championing that, developing a strong voice in the context of Brexit.



Thames Estuary and Lower Thames Crossing

The Thames Estuary remains a focus of the LEP and has been since its inception. SELEP is a major player in terms of its contribution to growth and its support for projects integral to its progress (e.g. Medway regeneration, Southend Airport, A13 widening). Over 50% of LGF projects have been allocated to sites within the Thames Estuary geography.

The Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) presents the largest economic opportunity in the whole of the SELEP area and its benefits would be far reaching in opening up new routes and key sites for development, beyond just the local sites of the tunnel itself. Highways England prioritise SELEP above most other engagements given our supportive work about proving the impact of the LTC on TTWA (Travel to Work Areas) and TTLA (Travel to Learn Areas) across Essex and Kent. We have hosted shared events indicating the creation of a 'new economy' between the two counties and provided opportunities to bring the voice of the business community to the fore. This is a unique role the LEP is able to undertake with strong public affairs work to back it up.

Housing

There are some advantages with regards to London, SELEP land and labour prices are less than in London but also less than other areas surrounding London. This creates an opportunity for developers and positions the LEP well to support the delivery of homes and the increasing demand for housing in the South East. Within the LEP we have developed a shared approach bringing industry and Local Authorities together, developing principles and peer support and we are seeing a positive impact on housing starts and completions as a result.

Skills

As exemplified through the shared approach agreed in the recently developed skills strategy. Shared challenges and opportunities in key sectors especially construction, which is unique to South East due to London economy and South East businesses and supporting London to develop. The skills strategy has been led by a detailed evidence base and comprehensive consultation with employers and businesses and sets out SELEPs vision, priorities and ambition for the next five years. We are at the forefront of national policy shaping and influence as a result.

Universities

We are encouraging our Universities to be involved in all areas of LEP activity, cross cutting into the skills agenda, innovation, business support, energy and others. Partnerships, projects and bids have been launched between universities – again as a result of their alliances made through LEP work.

As the business-led organisation tasked with driving forward the economy of your constituency, and the wider area of East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock, we are proud of what has been achieved in the past seven years. The partnership has developed from a standing start, overcome challenges and is now in its best ever position, delivering our £570m Growth fund, investing in projects to support jobs and homes but most importantly working together as a strong partnership with a strong voice and on issues of pan LEP concern.

It is important to note that for most areas there is no perfect administrative structure that will mirror all aspects of the real economy.

SELEP is bringing together businesses and partners in creating functional economies, some having geographical links and some are virtual connections and networks. There is real value in bringing organisations together to tackle shared challenges and opportunities and this is where SELEP is making a difference.

Image: University of Essex



4. Governance

Good governance is the foundation upon which everything that SELEP does is built. Transparency, accountability and openness are woven through all our processes and decisions.

Assurance Framework

Our governance is structured around the Assurance Framework which sets out systems and processes necessary to manage delegated funding from central government budgets effectively. It provides government and partners with the assurance that funding decisions are taken in an appropriate manner; transparent, strongly managed and delivering value for money.

Supporting policies

The Assurance Framework is complemented by a range of policies which further drive good governance and transparency into all areas of SELEP and its boards. These are reviewed annually.

Public meetings (& public question policy)

SELEP welcomes public interest in its business and the projects it supports and funds. As a result, the meetings of both the Accountability Board and the Strategic Board are open to members of the public and press. Papers are published on the SELEP website and the accountable body's website (Essex County Council).

SELEP also ensures that there are mechanisms through which there can be robust challenge to its business. This is achieved by providing a call in period to decisions taken by the Accountability Board.

This provides a process through which a challenge can be brought by its member authorities and enables an additional level of scrutiny to projects and decision making.

The public question policy sets out a clear process through which members of the public can engage with the South East LEP, by raising questions before Accountability Board on any aspect of SELEP business.

Code of conduct & declarations

The code of conduct and declaration of interest policies set out expectations for members of the Board and ensures there is a process by which these expectations are met.

Raising concerns

Furthermore SELEP also have a process through which individuals are able to raise concerns about the SELEP or conduct of its members.



Transparency

The Assurance Framework and supporting policies and terms of reference underpin the work carried out by SELEP. They are published on the SELEP website together with copies of board agendas, reports, business cases, minutes and key documents. This enables members of the public to see the work of the LEP, its decision making process, and enables members of the public to hold SELEP to account.

This openness and transparency is fully supported by the Board.

Accountable Body & Section 151 Officer

SELEP and its secretariat are supported by accountable body, Essex County Council, who provide financial and legal support providing an early opportunity for scrutiny, explanation and risk management around decision making.

SELEP is supported by the accountable body's Section 151 officer, whose responsibility is to oversee the administration of financial affairs of the LEP. .

Federated Boards

Our federated structure allows businesses to have a voice and play an active role in the economic growth of the area.

The accountable body and the secretariat work with the federated boards to ensure that good governance is embedded throughout the SELEP culture.

The support of the secretariat and the accountable body mean that those representing business can play that role within a properly defined framework.

5. Capital investments to improve our infrastructure

Through three Local Growth Fund (LGF) awards, SELEP has secured a total of **£570million**. This funding has already had a profound impact in bringing forward new housing delivery and private sector investment across the South East.

Works have now been completed on **23 LGF projects**, including projects such as:

Commercial space - Swallows Business Park, unlocking commercial space for growing businesses in East Sussex.

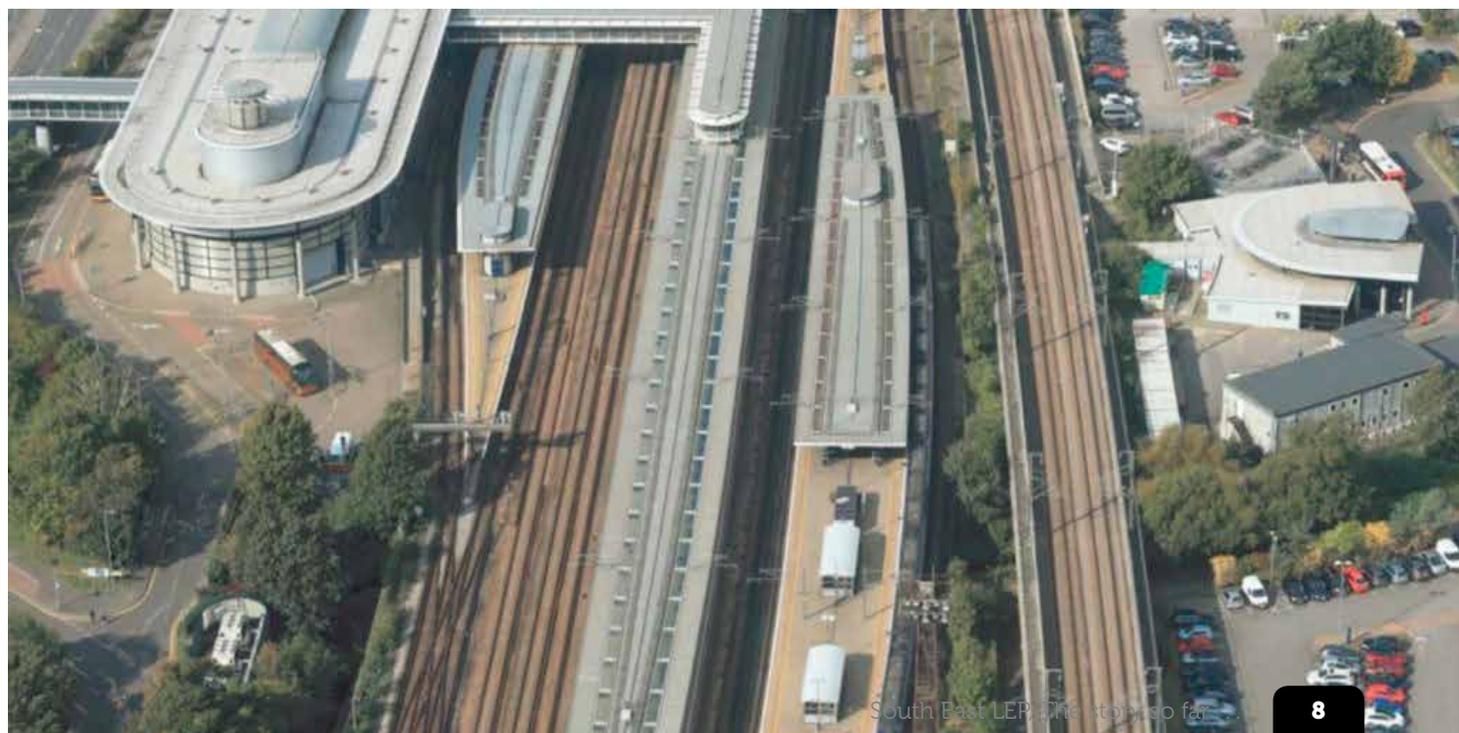
Transport and unlocking housing - completion of M20 Junction 4 junction improvements in Kent has enabled residential sites to come forward, delivering 231 new homes to date, with a further 1,464 homes planned at residential sites dependant on the junction capacity created through this scheme.

Whilst in Kent, works have started on a new **£104million motorway junction, M20 Junction 10a**, which has been backed by SELEP through £19.7m LGF investment following strong support from the business community to improve resilience and to unlock the 31,000 houses planned in Ashford to 2031.

The city of Chelmsford has benefitted from a newly **improved railway station** with works now continuing to enhance the connections between the railway station and the town centre.

Image: Ashford Spurs, £9.8m LFG funding

Our investment in transport infrastructure has helped to improve the reliance of our networks and support the growing population of our area. With investment in a range of transport infrastructure; road, rail, bus, cycle and pedestrian access, we have started work to deliver a transport network for sustainable economic growth.



Unlocking economic growth - Our LGF investment has not just been limited to investment in transport infrastructure. SELEP's portfolio of 97 LGF projects covers infrastructure investment across an expansive range of interventions to unlock the economic growth potential of our geography.

Skills, coastal communities & flood defences - Of the 83 projects which have been approved through our robust Accountability Board arrangements to date, the importance of skills, coastal communities, regeneration and flood defences, has been recognised.

Projects such as the £12m Stansted Airport College, has brought together a range of partners to tackle a skills shortage through the investment in the on-site technical college, targeted at STEM subjects such as aircraft and airport engineering, business studies, logistics and supply chain management.

Governance of funds

To oversee effective delivery of our capital programme and to ensure maximum impact, SELEP implements strong governance arrangements. From the initial point of a project's inclusion in SELEP's investment programme, the delivery of the project is overseen by SELEP's Accountability Board and Strategic Board, both public meetings, thereby enabling business input and the sharing of experience across our area.

These arrangements are further strengthened by the range of officer working groups galvanising senior officer and wider partnership support from across SELEP helping inform recommendations to the board.

Image: Technical and Professional Skills Centre at Stansted Airport, £3.35m LGF funding contribution

Calls for projects

To ensure that SELEP continues to invest funding in projects with the most pressing need for public sector intervention SELEP is recently undertaken an open call for projects to the end of the Growth Deal - www.southeastlep.com/opportunities/open-call-for-lgf-3b-projects/

Private sector led investment panel

A private sector led Investment Panel has been established to lead on the scrutiny of project proposals and to prioritise investment based on an agreed approach; a focus on value for money and deliverability.

Single pipeline of projects across SELEP geography

This process will result in a refreshed single pipeline of projects reflecting the most pressing investment priorities for our growing businesses and economy.

Image: Isle of Sheppey A2500 Lower Road improvements project, LGF contribution £1.26m



Growing Places - Recyclable funds

In addition to our LGF grant SELEP also offers loan investments in the form of Growing Places Fund (GPF) capital infrastructure loans.

Through earlier rounds of GPF investment, SELEP awarded a total of £49million to 13 infrastructure projects. This investment has unlocked commercial development and supported business growth, creating over 1,693 jobs to date.

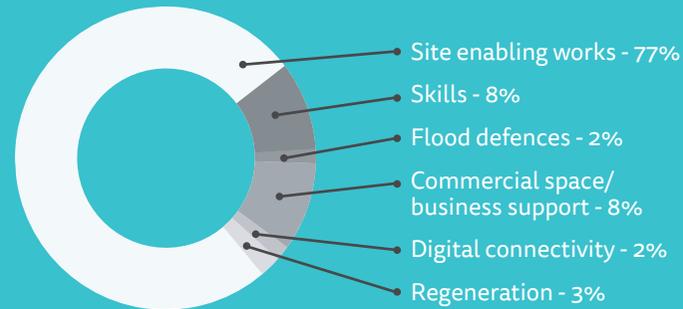
Example project - £1.4m loan investment for the conversion of the former Grays Magistrates Court into new commercial space for business start-ups, creating 89 jobs.

Not only have the benefits of these initial GPF investments started to come to fruition, but loan repayments have also started to be made. To date, £7.4m GPF has been repaid which enabled a new pipeline of GPF investment to be developed, including eight new projects.

Image: Grays Magistrates Court, £1.4m GPF loan

Example project - This includes projects such as the investment of £2m LGF in the South Essex College Centre for Advance Automotive and Process Engineering. This joint venture between Homes England, Redrow Homes, Basildon Council and South Essex College will bring forward a new £12m state of the art advanced automotive, electronic, process engineering and technical construction facility, whilst also unlocking land for the a new 725 dwelling residential development.

LGF projects by type



Local Growth Fund

£228.5m
Spend to date

97
Projects

83 Approved
Completed **23**

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6. Maximising value from European Funding streams

European Regional Development Funding (ERDF)

SELEP has an ERDF funding pot of £74.1m for the period 2014-2020. This funding is critical for the provision of business support programmes for SMEs across the SELEP region.

To date, progress is ahead of the national curve, with an overall funding commitment of 95%. **£43.7M ERDF has now been contracted to deliver seventeen complementary business support, innovation and research, and low carbon initiatives, and £26.4M is potentially committed to a further ten bespoke projects (including capital incubation and innovation centres).**

This is a huge success. Each new project applying for funding is required to demonstrate good value for money, and additionality to those already contracted. Notably, our project list contains projects with a capital component representing approximately 20% of our overall commitment, which requires significant resource and commitment from applicants, partners and our ERDF technical specialist.

Overall, projects are leveraging in an additional 50% of public and private investment, bringing current actual investment close to £84M.

Our Partners

SELEP has a large and proactive ERDF community of practitioners and project leads, which includes:

- academia
- local authorities
- growth hub leads
- businesses

Our specialist maintains this network alongside strong and constructive working relations with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Growth (MHCLG), the managing authority for this funding stream.

Despite a sustained period of uncertainty and risk to the ERDF programme following the EU referendum in 2016, we have worked positively and constructively with MHCLG and our stakeholders to ensure that the drawdown of funds did not waver, with clear returns.



Our Project Pipeline

A summary of our significant project pipeline demonstrating direct alignment with SELEPs strategic objectives for economic growth in our business communities:

Contracted projects	ERDF value (£M)	Beneficiaries
Better off in Business	0.37	Entrepreneurs aged 18-30
Betteshanger Sustainable Parks	2.00	SMEs and entrepreneurs
Essex Growth Programme	1.58	Pre-starts and SMEs <36 months old
Community Led Local Development in Hastings, Thurrock and Folkestone	5.00	Hardest to reach communities
Get Exporting 2	2.05	SMEs looking to develop internationally
Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (KEEP+)	3.30	SMEs looking to connect with research entities for product and service commercialisation
Foreign Inward Investment Kent	1.75	SMEs looking to relocate into Kent and Medway
Low Carbon in the South East	8.86	Low carbon environmental goods and services supply chain, and SMEs looking to implement energy efficiency measures
Manufacturing Growth Programme	1.40	Manufacturing SMEs looking to grow
Mercury Rising	1.26	SMEs associated with the performing arts
South East Business Boost	6.12	SMEs, including pre and small start-ups, looking to grow and increase employment
South East Creative, Cultural and Digital Project	2.58	SMEs and entrepreneurs in the creative, cultural and digital sectors
South East Invest	1.80	SMEs looking to relocate into greater Essex and East Sussex
Supply Chain innovation for Offshore Renewable Energy	2.60	SMEs looking to develop new and innovative technologies in offshore renewable energy
Transportation and Logistical Efficiencies	3.00	Logistics sector and its supply chains
Total	43.70	



European Social Fund (ESF)

SELEP secured an ESF allocation of **£71.6 million**. The funding is vital in supporting our “Escalator of Opportunity” model, assisting people including those furthest from the labour market to gain valuable skills, to those in work to improve their skills and also higher level apprenticeships.

Escalator of opportunity



We work closely with the SELEP Skills Advisory Group (SAG) to identify the skills that employers need to fine tune the training provision and our ESF contracts with colleges and training providers. We are also keenly aware of the need to include everyone in our economic growth agenda and fund over **£8 million** of social inclusion projects with the Big Lottery, which is match funded to more than **£16 million** to help those furthest from the labour market towards becoming economically active.

Our ESF strategy is fully aligned with our newly launched skills strategy and is now well on the way to full commitment with **£50 million** of contracts already awarded and a further **£14m** contracts about to be launched with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) supporting:

- young people and adults into work
- supporting people in work to upskill
- a community grants programme.

We have recently launched direct calls with the DWP covering areas such as online learning and tutor recruitment challenges. [Find out more here.](#)

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

SELEP's indicative allocation of **£14.5 million** to spend on economic growth in rural areas has attracted a lot of interest. 130 Expressions of Interest (EOIs) have been received worth a total of **£30,114 million**.

The following forms the focus of project delivery, agreed in the ESIF strategy:

- Provide support for rural businesses
- Optimise the growth and development of the Agri-food sector
- Support the development of sustainable rural tourism
- Support development and provision of enhanced levels of connectivity (not including Broadband)
- Support development of a more efficient low carbon and sustainable rural economy

17 projects, worth **£6million**, are now contracted. These are supported, to ensure strategic fit, by the Rural working group of the SELEP ESIF Sub-Committee. This will be followed by a further pipeline of projects currently being assessed by the Rural Payments Agency.



Image: ESF funded project assisting people in getting closer to the labour market

Table: Contracted European Social Fund (ESF) £50m projects currently delivering

ESF Priority / Match funder	Project name	Geography	Targets (subject to re-profiling)
Close to or in labour market Basic and Higher Level Skills – Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)	Enhancing Apprenticeships (STUK and SEETEC)	ALL LEP	6,027 learner assessments, 4,902 progression to apprenticeship, training or work
	Higher level skills in workforce (Ixon)	ALL LEP	3002 learner assessments, 1800 progression in work
	Basic level Skills in the workforce (STUK)	ALL LEP	1200 learner assessments, 1,101 training progression
	Numeracy skills support in the workforce (STUK)	ALL LEP	2,620 learner assessments
	Digital Skills in the workforce (East Kent College)	ALL LEP	801 learner assessments, 653 progression in work
Near work- DWP	Work Routes (Reed)	ALL LEP	4,500 into work by 2020
Youth empl initiative	Thurrock on Track	Thurrock	Tbc
Further from work Social Inclusion – Big Lottery	Ginger Bread 'Working Forward'	ALL LEP (2 contracts)	195 (north), 195 (South) engaged & closer to work
	4SX The way to Work	Greater Essex	117 people engaged & work readiness improved
	Ixon 'Connecting Choices'	Greater Essex	195 people engaged & work readiness improved
	Enable East 'Heads up'	Greater Essex	469 people engaged & work readiness improved
	Rural community Council of Essex Skills Project	Greater Essex	117 people engaged & work readiness improved
Social Inclusion – Big Lottery	Papworth Trust 'Community Connections'	Greater Essex	664 people engaged & work readiness improved
	Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) 'Better Opportunities'	Kent & East Sussex	235 people engaged & work readiness improved
	Porchlight 'Aspirations for Life'	Kent & East Sussex	586 people engaged & work readiness improved
	Social Enterprise Kent 'Lots More to Offer'	Kent & East Sussex	150 people engaged & work readiness improved
	Sussex Community Development Association 'Let's Get Working'	Kent & East Sussex	898 people engaged & work readiness improved

£71.6m
 ESF - Skills,
 Employability
 & Social Inclusion

7. Leading the Skills agenda

The SELEP Skills Strategy 2018-2023 sets out some of the key challenges for the SELEP area including below average skills levels, significant numbers on benefits and in workless households (nearly 180,000), workplace earnings below the national average, fluctuating apprenticeship numbers and a population set to grow to 5 million by 2039.

This has clear implications for the current and future skills pipeline and growth and productivity with many of our key sectors, such as health, care, construction, logistics, engineering, already experiencing shortages in a context where they are set to grow.

The skills strategy has been led by a detailed evidence base and consultation with employers, educators and partners and sets out SELEPs vision, priorities and ambition for the next five years. The strategy, launched at East Kent College Group's Folkestone construction facility, which received local growth funding.

The skills strategy articulates that the SELEP area is one that has proven track record but also great ambition and appetite to work with government to achieve even more.

Our skills delivery:

- A Careers Enterprise Network linking education and industry with 160 secondary schools and employers already engaged
- A £37m skills capital programme delivering industry relevant training facilities through over 30 projects delivering 7,300 additional appren-

ticeships, 15,000 qualifications and 22,000 sqm of new learning space

- £51m European Social Fund projects supporting people into and in work through 17 projects which we oversee in partnership with government
- Piloting new solutions (online pilot, virtual reality, tutor CPD)
- Raising awareness and understanding of apprenticeships through events and workshops
- Working with industry bodies to respond to growth (i.e. Construction & Industry Training Board report on skills needs of sector)
- Supporting government initiatives and engaging in pilots (inclusive employment, digital skills partnerships, National Careers Strategy, Fuller Working lives)
- Being central to national thinking (SELEP's Chair will work with national Director of apprenticeships Keith Smith to provide a joined up briefing for new ESFA Chief Executive).

How we are proposing to deliver our future ambition for skills:

- £14m European Social Fund calls were launched in August 2018 with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and £6m direct calls will be launched later this year

- A proposal for SELEP Sector Support Funding to address shortages in tutors aligned to key sectors
- Extending coverage of our Careers Enterprise Network to ensure all schools across SELEP can access this, aligned to the national Careers Strategy
- Working with the DWP to become one of the first pilot LEP areas for inclusive growth commencing with an event with Public Health England in September
- Delivering against the Industrial Strategy by supporting local bids to the Institute for Technology, Construction Skills fund and sector deals
- Making a clear case for locally determined local prosperity fund and skills funding and ensuring all in our communities can benefit from growth

All skills work is overseen by the Skills Advisory Group, made up of colleges, universities, local authorities, training providers and voluntary sector representatives, as well as a newly formed Skills Advisory Board made up of the three local Employment and Skills Board (employer) Chairs and SELEP representatives, this is evidence of a true pan LEP approach to a shared issue. Both groups have already proved effective sounding boards to the ESFA in their thinking around T-levels and apprenticeships and represent one of the largest groupings of their kind nationally. The skills strategy articulates that the SELEP area is one that has proven track record but also great ambition and appetite to work with government to achieve even more.

8. Facilitating more homes

Accelerating housing delivery has been a priority for SELEP since its inception and we benefit from a vibrant development industry and strong District, Unitary and County Councils in the SE LEP area, we work collaboratively to add value to the excellent work in the area to deliver new housing.

With challenging government housing targets to meet, strategic thinking and a collaborative approach is essential. The cross-LEP working groups have protocols agreed by developers and local authorities, and provide support to meet the challenge to accelerate housing delivery. These are all fundamental to progress being made in ensuring new homes are completed and delivered.

Accelerating Housing Delivery

We are proud to be the first and only LEP nationally to be awarded Housing Business Ready status by the Housing and Finance Institute (HFi).

HFi commented that: *“SELEP very much deserve to be the first of their kind to be awarded Housing Business Ready status. Their excellent contributions to the Housing Business Ready programme has demonstrated their appetite for working closely with businesses and councils to ensure economic growth and housing stability for their region.”*

Government have praised the work of SELEP highlighting the success in thinking beyond the boundaries of its Growth Deal. Ministers have praised our work with councils, planners, developers and regulators to make sure utilities and infrastructure

are provided where they're needed right across the region. It has been recognised that the unique nature of SELEP means it can do this across traditional local authority boundaries and across both the public and private sector.

It is this track record of delivery, positive engagement and innovation that continues to attract the interest of policy maker SELEP uses this to make the case to Government on behalf of both our public and private sector stakeholders to, remove the barriers to accelerating delivery and make the case for a better deal for our area from Government to create the conditions for growth.

An example of this is our project work with the HFi, Kent Developers Group, Kent County Council, Development East Sussex, Essex Developers Group and other interested parties gathering performance evidence and taking action in liaison with government and regulators to ensure utility companies help - not hinder - local growth. Working with the HFi to carry out an Infrastructure Pilot Scheme to examine ways in which different parties and public bodies, local and national, can help to identify, plan, assess and unblock factors to facilitate accelerated growth and housing delivery.

Facilitation role

SELEP has worked with colleagues to establish and align Developers', Housing Officer and Planning Officer Forums across our area. We have also worked alongside a number of partners to help create an environment in which developers can get on with the important business of getting spades in the ground, delivering the new homes that are essential to the region's growth and economic prospects.

We have facilitated the implementation of County-wide planning protocols to promote collaborative working and dialogue between developers and the planning community and continue to build on best practice models across our region.

We continue to have strong dialogue with government and Local Authorities and other partners to assist and support key strategic developments including Garden Settlements and maximise access to key funding, evidenced by recent successful allocations through the Governments Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF).

Garden communities

The SELEP area is at the forefront of the government's Garden Communities Programme, with five sites in our area. The SELEP area has 96,500 homes (nearly half) of the 200,000 homes identified by government as new garden settlements:

- Ebbsfleet Garden City = 15,000 homes
- North Essex Garden Communities = 43,000 homes
- Otterpool Park = 12,000 homes
- Dunton Garden Suburb = 3,500 homes
- Harlow & Gilston Garden Town = 23,000 homes.

Under the Garden Communities Programme SELEP have the largest number of planned homes officially recognised by Government and a proven ambition to plan holistically and support new communities with the necessary infrastructure.

These projects are about placemaking, creating employment, skills and a quality of environment to serve a growing population.

SELEP has seen:

Housing completions rise from 7,990 in 2012/13 to 12,330 in 2017/18, an increase of 54% in the rate of delivery, more than any other LEP area outside of London.

The collective work of both private and public sector developers is making a demonstrable difference, with Housing Starts growing from 6,620 in 2012/13 to 10,720 in 2017/18, an increase of 62%.

Housing & Development Working Group

Building on our successes to date, SELEP has formalised its working group arrangements establishing a new extended Housing & Development Working Group. This business led forum is uniquely placed to promote opportunities to boost housing and commercial development.

SELEP supported existing developer groups and pioneered the introduction of new ones, this has helped in widening opportunity for joint working with business through new developers forums in East Sussex and Essex based on the successful Kent Developers Group. The chairs now meet each other regularly, facilitated by SELEP, to exchange ideas and information and share best practice, through the Housing & Development Working Group. Providing peer support and a successful pan LEP working approach.

I-Construct

The LEP is also working with partners including Haven Gateway on I-Construct, a business-led project expected to launch in January 2019, which will aim to drive change in the construction industry to bring innovative new approaches to the sector, tackle the skills shortage it is experiencing, promote the benefits of new offsite methods of construction and encourage smaller builders to grow their housing output.

The Housing & Development Working Group has accepted an invitation from I-Construct to act as its stakeholder consultative forum.



9. The future of energy

In the last twelve months, SELEP has gone from a standing start on the clean growth agenda, to having a large community of stakeholders proactive in the production of a Local Energy Strategy and action plan, with associated evidence and intelligence base.

Clean growth - towards a low carbon economy

We know from our engagement work, driven by the Industrial Strategy Clean Growth Grand Challenge, that the UK is entering into an essential transition period to ensure the provision of affordable and sustainable future energy supplies that will deliver carbon reduction for a healthier and safer environment.

This holistic trajectory will underpin many aspects of successful economic growth. We rely on energy for our power supply, heat provision and transport, and the low carbon sector is predicted to grow at four times the rate of the rest of the economy. Supply chains will be created and extended, skills will be developed and jobs created, new technologies will be advanced and implemented, and our industries, businesses and communities will benefit financially from reliable and affordable energy supplies.

South2east local energy strategy

In recognition of this, SELEP successfully applied for a small amount of grant funding from BEIS (£40k) to produce an energy strategy on a pan LEP basis. We quickly joined forces with Coast to Capital and Enterprise M3 LEPs to pool resources and equivalent funding, with SELEP at the helm. We initiated and

lead on a tri-LEP project that has worked at pace, undertaking a number of workshops and engagement events to raise awareness and garner evidence and information from stakeholders across the extensive tri-LEP geography.

Not only are we close to having a draft South2East local energy strategy ready for consultation with our energy practitioners and board members, we are complementing this with an ambitious action plan for the future, built upon local achievements and ambitions to achieve significant investment, job creation and low carbon reductions at a scale not seen before.

Our Strategic Economic Plan is set to recognise this agenda and will look to the emerging South2East Local Energy Strategy and Action plan to act as a delivery mechanism to access domestic funding and private investment for LEP and multi-LEP wide collaborative projects.

Key themes

SELEP has identified **five key themes** that we need to focus on to best address the needs of our local communities:

- District heat and a move away from oil as a fuel for heating homes
- Renewables, through investments in biofuels, 'clean

- gas' and a push towards community ownership
- Energy efficiency in both the industrial and domestic sectors
- Investment in smart technology systems
- Enabling the transport revolution through integrated transport systems and support for new ultra-low emitting vehicles

Project pipeline

We will drive forward a pipeline of projects against these priority themes and leveraging in private investment at scale, utilising public funding including opportunities presented by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and shaping Government policy and direction of travel through the provision of a robust evidence base.

Energy Hub - Delivering Our Goals

We have already been instrumental in the development of the Greater South East Local Energy Hub, a collaboration of eleven LEPs tasked with establishing a local energy hub model and receiving £1.26M from BEIS to implement this. Our ability to collaborate on and influence this initiative will serve to provide further upscaling of projects of potentially national significance, to ensure we play our part in addressing the grand challenge of clean growth.

10. Growing our Creative Industries

The South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN) works to accelerate growth in the digital, creative and cultural sector. It is a working partnership between local authorities, creative businesses and education bodies across the South East LEP area.

This network has been created across the South East geography for the benefit of the creative sector, building practical, scalable initiatives and working to build strong interconnections across the South East and beyond.

The network aims to reach out to creative businesses in their wider local areas, building peer-to-peer support, hosting training and business development activities, collaborating on network programmes and where appropriate encouraging investment bids that foster innovation to accelerate growth.

The creative industries are one of the five key sectors recognised in the Government's Industrial Strategy.

The South East creative sector

The creative sector is strong in the South East with significant potential for growth.

- In the SELEP area, the Creative Industries (CI) employ 30,000 people generating £2.5 billion in GVA – the largest GVA contribution of any LEP outside of London
- Between 2010 and 2015 local entrepreneurs added 3,500 creative businesses to the business base, growing the sector by 30.5% to reach 15,000 businesses (recent figures indicate that in some areas this growth is closer to 150%);

- Between 2009 and 2014 25% employment growth – adding just under 9,850 business to the employment base; and
- The proportion of creative industries in the total SELEP business base is growing as well, accounting for 9.6% of total businesses in 2015, compared to 8.5% in 2010. When comparing the region with other LEPs, SELEP is above average regarding its share of creative enterprises, ranking 13th of all 38 LEPs.

Whilst the sector remains strong in the South East, growth is below the national average suggesting that the SELEP region has more to do to maximise its obvious potential given its proximity and connectivity to London and international markets.

Overcoming barriers to growth

SECEN understands the unique requirements of this sector. The group works together to identify barriers to growth and implements practical and scalable initiatives to overcome these by aligning the efforts of businesses, education providers, strategic organisations and local authorities to ensure that SECEN will lead one of Europe's most diverse, integrated and productive creative regions.

Image: Credit - James Fletcher



Creative vision and strategy

SECEN has developed a vision and strategy for its work which was funded by the South East LEP: **Towards A National Prospectus For The Creative Economy In the South East.**

Areas of focus for activity flowing from this strategy include:

Workspace development - Developing a work space strategy to ensure that fit for purpose workspace is available SELEP-wide to enable scaling up and fostering of creative enterprise zones based on existing creative hubs.

Business Support and Development - To encourage take-up by a sector typified by innovative practice and collaboration, a bespoke package of business support will be delivered locally within creative industry clusters, but will link into the SELEP Growth Hub network. SECCADS (South East Creative, Cultural and Digital Sector Project) will work with SMEs in the Creative and Cultural and Digital sector (CC&D) to:

- Encourage new business start-ups
- Increase the sustainability of micro businesses
- Promote business growth
- This is funded via ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) and with further investment from the local authorities.

Talent Accelerator - SECEN is working with Creative and Cultural Skills (the National Academy for Skills and Training for the UK's Creative and Cultural industries) to develop a work programme to support the

talent pipeline for creative industries, addressing the need for a STEAM education (ie the need for Arts and other creative subjects to be encouraged in schools), matching training to skills gaps in the industry, developing clearer training pathways and highlighting good practice.

Thames Gateway Production Corridor - SECEN has worked with the GLA (Greater London Authority) to develop the Thames Estuary Production Corridor concept, facilitating complementary creative business clusters and facilities to ensure the opportunities for the creative sector are fully developed and contribute to on-going creative business growth from London, recognising the talent pool in London, the world's leading centre for creative industries, continues to move eastward into the Thames Gateway and towards the coast.

A vision for this has been developed and can be read here: **Thames Estuary Production Corridor. An Industrial Vision To Create A World-Class Location For The Creative Industries.**

Cultural Tourism and the Culture Coasting project (led by Culture Kent and ESCC) - Recognising the volume and value of Cultural Tourism in the SELEP region, the potential for growth and acknowledging the co-dependencies across the tourism and cultural sectors, SECEN supports the development of Cultural Tourism initiatives.

Culture Coasting aims to grow the visitor economy by 3% in East Sussex, Kent and the Thames Estuary, generating 4,700 new jobs over a three year period.

Image: Credit - Royal Opera House



11. Enterprise Zones for enterprising places and people

The SELEP area is home to four officially designated Enterprise Zones (EZ).

Each EZ has a particular sector focus and SELEP works with each EZ, sitting on boards and providing links to working group activity to ensure that we make the most of the touch points that exist across sectors. At SELEP we work with the EZs to facilitate and help where we can ensuring links to our working groups are exploited and all available support is given to drive the success of the zones.

For example, SELEP suggested that the Harlow Enterprise Zone presented to the North Kent Enterprise Zone on the benefits of Local Development Orders; SELEP is supporting Maidstone Borough Council in bring forward a potential ERDF project for an NKEZ site; SELEP is working closely with other organisations such as Coast to Capital LEP and the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium to further the delivery and success of the Enterprise Zones that will serve their businesses.

Image: Discovery Park, Kent



North Kent Enterprise Zone, Kent and Medway

The North Kent Enterprise Zone is a multi-site zone with five sites. Its sector focus is healthcare and medical technologies, teaching and practice; advanced manufacturing; engineering and digital and creative industries. The Innovation Park Medway at Rochester Airport will launch next month, the Kent medical campus at Maidstone has permission to develop 98,000m² of flexible and innovative space with ambitions to be become an Academic, Health and Science Centre.

Discovery Park, Kent

The park, with a sector focus on science, technology, professional services, Digital and PR is on the former Pfizer site in Sandwich, Kent.

It The hosts over 150 companies and 3,000 employees and plans to create a further 2,000 jobs and 500 homes.

Harlow Enterprise Zone, Essex

The Harlow Enterprise Zone has a focus on Advanced Manufacturing/Engineering, life sciences and information and communications technology. There are three sites in Harlow that support a mixture of enterprises.

This includes four data centre buildings that are the largest data centre development currently underway in the South East.

Newhaven Enterprise Zone, East Sussex

The Newhaven Enterprise Zone occupies a key south coast location with a sector focus on advanced engineering and manufacturing; clean, green and marine; environmental technology and services; and creative and digital.

12. Coastal, Rural and Social Enterprise

Pan LEP challenges and opportunities

Social Enterprise

SELEP recognises the significant impact of this sector

- National contribution of £24 billion to the economy
- Employing nearly 1m people
- The South East is one of the fastest growing areas with 36% of social enterprises in the area less than 3 years old (SE UK 2016)

We are building on our commitments to realise our goal in making the South East the Capital of Social Enterprise and have:

- Ensured that this sector is represented within our wide SEP consultation, to reflect the importance of inclusive growth
- Secured a Social Enterprise champion role on SE-LEP Strategic Board, to ensure the sector is represented effectively
- Established a formal Social Enterprise Working Group with a defined focus which will provide a regional voice and network for the sector. The group is currently drawing together its evidence base to define the real scope for this sector across our region and will oversee a programme of activity to provide added value and support.

Coastal Communities

Given the length of coastline in the SELEP area, stretching from Harwich in the north through Thanet and Folkestone to Newhaven in the South, the SELEP area is faced with huge opportunities and challenges and with strong interest and representation at local level.

The LEP Coastal Communities Working Group is working hard with partners to close the gap between the coastal and regional economy.

We are building on our commitments to support the coastal economy by:

- **Bringing together all parties** to drive Coastal Economic Development
- **Working collaboratively** to understand coastal objectives; promote coastal growth priorities and, assemble evidence, identify obstacles and find solutions
- **Supporting Coastal Growth Ambitions** and advocacy to areas with growth plans and areas of regeneration, particularly with the tourism and visitor economy; helping to link coastal areas to the regional economy and to support the work to help improve the quality of Coastal Communities.
- **Actively lobbying coastal issues and act as ambassadors** for the coastal area we represent

Through working collectively the working group has:

- Secured £2M LGF (Local Growth Fund) to pilot new approaches to housing based regeneration in Hastings, Thanet and Tendring. This has enabled each area to undertake intervention plans to address areas of intense deprivation associated with particular neighbourhoods dominated by poor quality private rented housing, high levels of benefit dependency, and deprivation. A common theme is a need to improve housing and neighbourhood management and to encourage new patterns of employment and private sector investment into central locations within coastal town centres.
- Worked alongside the Housing & Finance Institute (HFi), to roll out the Housing Business Ready programme to a cohort of coastal local authorities to address the unique challenges faced by these communities

Image: Deal beach



Rural working group

The South East of England has the most buoyant economy in the UK and a vibrant rural sector underpins this success.

The rural areas provide a huge variety of enterprise and opportunity based on:

- thriving agriculture and horticulture
- thousands of small businesses from food production to high technology from forestry to pharmaceuticals
- world leading scientific research, colleges and skills, renewable energy and much, much more.

SELEP's Rural Working Group has provided a cohesive network across the region for all rural partners providing strategic direction for the rural agenda by working in partnership with a cross section of rural organisations to deliver a rural strategy.

SELEP is one of the few LEPs across the country with a rural strategy which it originally developed to support the work of the European and Investment Fund Strategy (ESIF)



£14.5m European funding

SELEP was allocated £14.5m European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) which offers the opportunity for micro and small businesses across the South East to access grants and support (see ESIF funding section 6).

The Rural Working Group will work with Defra to continue to champion resilience for the rural economy in the post Brexit economy and will continue to connect with other SELEP working groups and funding sources relating to skills, energy and infrastructure.



13. Communicating with our stakeholders

SELEP leverages the power of its networks to communicate with partners, stakeholders and key audiences. The partnership's federated structure provides a route to direct business engagement. These structures have strengthened links with key business-led organisations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and FSB, allowing the LEP to enhance its reach by using communications channels that reach these networks.

In addition to this, regular engagement with local media and sector specific publications, briefings for MPs, newsletters and active management of digital and social channels ensure key messages reach key audiences at the right time and in the right way.

Our Brand

Over the past two years, SELEP has undertaken a full rebrand – including a new logo, identity, branding guidelines. It has moved email domain, from essex.gov.uk to southeastlep.com – a move that is emblematic of the partnership's focus on business engagement and the emphasis it places on private sector leadership.



Image: Competition winner and designer of SELEP brand



Our Website

Most recently, in the last quarter of 2017 the LEP, undertook a review of its online content and website functionality. Building on the findings of this review, we have delivered a refreshed web presence enabling the LEP to better communicate progress on the 118 projects in its enhanced investment programme and meet the requirements of the national assurance framework - demonstrating transparency and openness in decision making and operating principles.

The new SELEP website was launched in July 2018 and delivers a more engaging on-page experience, enhanced mobile readability and a major restructure of the presentation of content to ensure clear presentation of our messages and easy navigation for users.

Features of note:

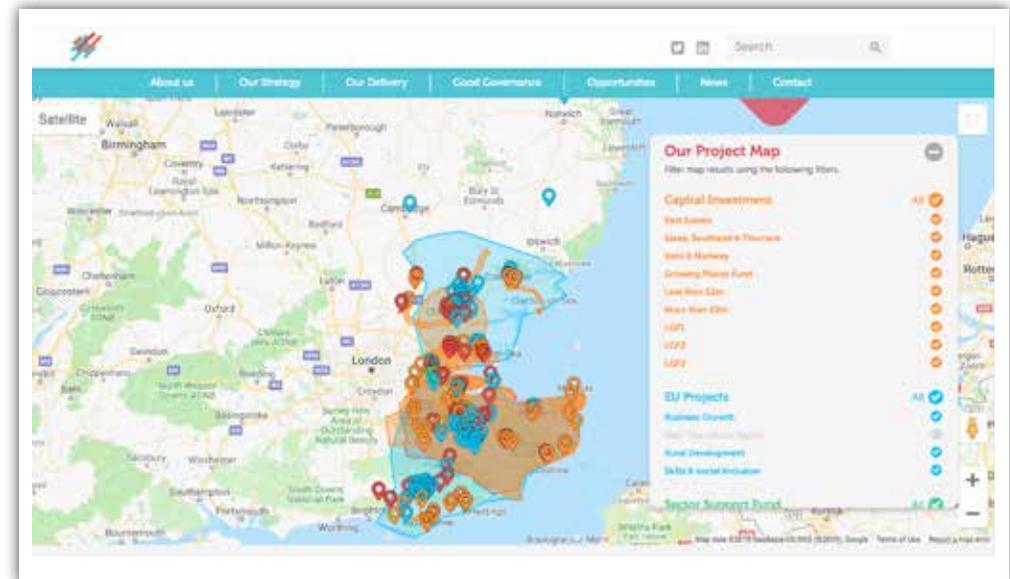
1. **Our delivery (project map and listings)** - a list of our projects pinned across a map of the South East, and a searchable project listings page, demonstrating the scale and breadth of our delivery. Readers can filter results by geography, delivery theme, value banding, project type. The map features on our home page and is available via a 'Projects Map' label on all pages.
2. **Find out what's on** - a searchable meetings function to signpost readers to our various meetings, future and past, and demonstrate our transparency around decision making and representation in an easy to use way online.
3. **Content orientated around reader interest** emphasising our strategy, delivery and good governance.
4. **Mobile first** - A technical build in harmony with the increasing trend for websites to be viewed on mobile, that plays into Google's preference for mobile friendly websites and that doesn't carry licence costs.

[Visit - southeastlep.com](http://southeastlep.com)

Southeastlep.com - homepage



Our delivery - Project map



14. Conclusion

The South East LEP continues to make great progress delivering economically significant projects focusing the benefits on our businesses and communities.

A strong pipeline of projects, a strong lobby and a strong reputation for delivery is a true recognition of the economic vitality of the area and the aggregate power of our businesses, educators and local authorities.

Looking immediately forward we will shortly release our updated Strategic Economic Plan. This document will be specifically designed to support the manifestation of Local Industrial Strategies, dispel the myth of universal wealth in the South East, provide a blue print for tangible action, maximise the deployment of the funding available to us and provide the basis of our negotiations with Government and other partners with a real stake in the future of our economy.

We look forward to the future with optimism.

Christian Brodie
Chairman
South East LEP



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