

SOUTH EAST LEP NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023

SELEP CEO cuts ribbon at official opening of GBF-backed Medway Learning and Skills Hub

SELEP Chief Executive Adam Bryan spoke about the positive changes that the Medway Learning and Skills Hub will bring to residents at the official opening of the project, which is part of the Britton Farm redevelopment backed by the LEP's Getting Building Fund.

The project has created a new adult learning, skills and employment hub to retrain, upskill and support adults to access employment. It has utilised an underused Medway Council-owned building, Britton Farm Mall, to bring new life to Gillingham High Street.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT

Support programme Create South East is now accepting applications from local creative businesses



Are you a creative business in Essex, Kent or Sussex with an ambition to grow? Creative businesses in the South East can now apply for a free programme of support to accelerate, create jobs, and prepare for investment.

The Create South East website is now live and accepting applications from local organisations operating in the following sectors: Advertising and Marketing, Architecture, Crafts, Design/Design Fashion, Film and TV, Games, IT and Software, Publishing, Music and Audio, and Performing Arts. The programme starts this Spring and runs to 2025.

FIND OUT MORE

SELEP attends Parliamentary Reception for Freeport East following news of final Government approval

SELEP Chief Executive Adam Bryan recently attended the Parliamentary Reception held by Freeport East, and hosted by Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, following the news that the development of the Freeport, which is expected to create up to 13,500 new jobs, will be boosted by £25 million in Government funding to support infrastructure enhancement.



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In other news...

- The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is undertaking research to gain a better understanding of how the [Business Support Helpline](#) can help businesses. BEIS is asking businesses to complete a short survey, which is open until 28th February. [Take the survey here.](#)
- Essex Chambers of Commerce is undertaking a survey for its [Local Skills Improvement Plan \(LSIP\)](#), a government initiative aimed at bringing together businesses from across Essex and education providers to improve the skills of the workforce. The survey is open until [28th February](#) and is [available here](#). You can also find out more about what's happening with the [Kent LSIP here](#), and the [Sussex LSIP here](#).
- Agri-tech businesses, farmers, growers and researchers can apply for a share of a [£12.5m funding pot](#) earmarked for developing cutting-edge innovation in automation and robotics. The funding competition from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) Farming Innovation Programme is open until 15th March 2023. [Find out more here.](#)
- [Maritime UK](#) is conducting an industry survey which seeks to address the shortage of green skills within the Maritime sector nationwide. The findings will feed into the [Skills for Green Jobs report](#). The survey is open until [15th March 2023](#) and [available here](#).
- [East Sussex County Council](#) is undertaking research into the likely future make-up of the Sussex workforce and the skills requirement over the coming 5-10 years. The survey will allow ESCC to gain first-hand views from businesses and employers in all sectors about their current and future workforce, the impact of digital technology and the challenges of transitioning to net zero. [Take the survey here.](#)
- Network Rail has awarded the first of two contracts to build the new railway station for [Chelmsford's Beaulieu development](#) to J Murphy & Sons Ltd. The £37.8m contract includes work to begin construction and enabling work for the new station on behalf of partners Essex County Council and Chelmsford City Council. [Read more here.](#)
- SELEP Chief Executive Adam Bryan spoke at the [Kent and Medway Business Summit](#), which took place at the University of Kent's Canterbury Campus on the 13th January, on the [changing economic conditions in the South East](#) and how businesses can flourish in the current environment.
- In January, SELEP Chief Executive Adam Bryan gave a presentation at the [Creative Estuary Symposium](#) at The Woodville, Gravesend, on the [opportunities ahead for culture and major projects in the South East](#).
- [Ambitious Essex](#) recently hosted a free half-day summit at The Plaza in Braintree – a project funded by SELEP – to [inspire innovation amongst local Essex businesses](#). The event featured local examples of business success, knowledge sharing and awareness raising. [Find out more here.](#)
- SELEP Chief Executive Adam Bryan attended the [I-Construct Celebration Event](#) in January, where he gave a talk on the positive contributions that I-Construct has made to the South East LEP. [Find out more about I-Construct here.](#)
- SELEP Chief Executive Adam Bryan recently spoke at the launch of [Chelmsford College's Construction Centre](#), which received Local Growth Funding from SELEP, and the [Institute of Technology](#), which covers our LEP geography and is led by South Essex College. Vicky Ford MP also attended the official opening.
- SELEP's [Economic Recovery and Renewal Quarterly Dashboard](#) is available to view in the [Data and Intelligence Centre](#) on the SELEP website. Our [Levelling Up Index](#) (published September 2022) is also available to view and download. [Read both here.](#)

Latest from the South East Major Projects Group...

- The next [South East Major Projects Group](#) meeting is set to take place on the [1st March 2023](#). The group held its last meeting on the 24th November 2022 at the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, where members discussed project updates and decarbonisation.
- The [Lower Thames Crossing Community Fund](#) has been opened to support local charities and community groups near the proposed Lower Thames Crossing. Through this funding, organisations can apply for [grants of up to £10,000](#) to deliver a range of schemes. Applications are open until 1st March 2023. [Find out more here.](#)
- [Balfour Beatty](#) has been awarded the [Roads North of the Thames package for the Lower Thames Crossing](#). This is a two-stage design and build contract delivering around 10 miles of new road north of the Thames in Thurrock. Balfour Beatty will look to spend [£500m with local businesses and supply chain partners](#) and will set up an 'Operator Skills Hub' to provide innovative training programmes to upskill plant operators and inspire the next generation of talent in the UK. [Find out more here.](#)

Coming up...

- The third annual [Building Garden Communities Conference](#) is taking place on [26th April](#) at RIBA London, with SELEP supporting the event as a headline partner. The conference will bring together councils, housebuilders, planners, stakeholders and industry experts within garden communities, to discuss key topics including making the financial case, design, inclusivity, travel and climate change. [Find out more and book your place here.](#)
- The [South East Digital Skills Partnership](#) will be relaunching in April under [Catalyst South](#), a strategic alliance of six Local Enterprise Partnerships (Coast to Capital, Enterprise M3, Hertfordshire, South East, Solent and Thames Valley Berkshire).

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