



SEMLEP

South East Midlands
Local Enterprise Partnership

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SEMLEP

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Our year

Highlights from 2018

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Dr Ann Limb CBE DL
Chair, SEMLEP



Foreword

As 2018 comes to a close, I take the opportunity to look back on the huge amount we've done this year. It's been an incredibly busy year for SEMLEP. For me personally, it's also a time for me to reflect on how far we've come since we formed SEMLEP in 2011 as this will be my last AGM as Chair. My seven-year tenure draws to an end in Spring 2019.

This was a step-change year for our network of LEPs, a year that has reinforced our foundations built-up over the last seven years and set us up for an even stronger future.

2018 is the year that the Government strengthened our key status in the economic development landscape in three significant ways:

- Through the publication of the modern Industrial Strategy and the role LEPs are given to implement the strategy through Local Industrial Strategies
- The enhanced profile LEPs now enjoy in Government, confirmed by the Prime Minister's biannual meeting with the Council of LEP Chairs.
- The importance that this Government has placed on LEPs' roles going forward, as detailed in the LEP review. This focuses on creating organisations ready to distribute Government investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

For SEMLEP specifically it was an incredible year that has put our partnership at the forefront of these agendas.

Chosen as one of the three trailblazer areas to develop the first wave of Local Industrial Strategies, this role has reinforced the recognition of the economic strengths and potential of Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor as a significant opportunity for transformational growth, critical to stimulate economic growth in the national interest. The SEMLEP area is at the heart of this corridor and our work as a key contributor to the Local Industrial Strategy for the wider Growth Corridor is vital.

SEMLEP has made a major contribution to the Prime Minister's Council of LEP Chairs, invited to present and develop the LEPs' work on the skills agenda, arguably the most significant growth challenge businesses face.



And, as we now progress and implement the recommendations of the LEP review published this Summer, I was invited to chair the overarching steering group tasked with implementing the different workstreams involved. This is possible because SEMLEP is recognised as a well governed, well organised LEP. We have the experiences that the LEP review requires of other LEPs. We have good development plans, we have robust governance and, we are the only LEP to have managed a merger and so are in a good position to support LEPs to address issues of overlapping geographies.

We have a lot to contribute.

SEMLEP is a strong, well governed and independent LEP, agile to adapt well to the changes we face.

Overall 2018 was a very good year for SEMLEP and we head into 2019 viewed as the model for the future.



Going from strength to strength

2018 brought our area's global economic position into sharp focus. Our economy continues to be one of the most innovative in the UK and will be further enhanced by greater collaboration and investment across the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor.

During this year of significant change, our local economy has demonstrated much more than economic resilience. The richness and diversity of our local businesses and our clusters of expertise are leading the way to finding solutions to the grand challenges defined in the Industrial Strategy. This will ensure that the UK remains a global leader in innovation and the technology of the future.

2018 for SEMLEP was a year about embedding our Strategic Economic Plan to deliver key economic outcomes for our area:

- Through the development of the Local Industrial Strategy. This has enabled us to delve deeper into our area's economic assets and business strengths, constraints to growth and future trends in order to reaffirm what economic development actions we must take to prepare businesses for the opportunities that new trade agreements will bring.
- By ensuring that we deliver what we set out to deliver through our programmes and projects. SEMLEP is recognised by government as a well-performing LEP, a position that was confirmed during our annual conversation and audits during the first part of the year.
- By making sure that we further strengthen our partnership, governance and management by promoting diversity and equality and, enhance our collaboration so that we continue to give our partners, local businesses and our communities confidence in our ability to drive growth and prosperity for the benefit of everyone who lives and works here.

2018 has been an action-packed year for us.

In this review of 2018, we highlight some of the milestones and achievements of our programmes and projects.



Hilary Chipping
Chief Executive, SEMLEP

SEMLEP publishes all Board meeting documents and minutes on our website. You can also read more about our governance and decision making processes in our Assurance Framework located in the Transparency page on our website.

For more information go to www.semlep.com call **01234 436100** or email info@semlep.com



Promoting our role as the **commercialisation core** of the Growth Corridor

Strengthening our businesses at the cutting edge of **Next Generation Transport** innovation

Creating a **centre of excellence in advanced logistics** – driving productivity, efficiency and clean growth

Our area as a **test-bed for new settlements** that preserve natural capital

Shaping economic priorities

Our place in the world – Local Industrial Strategy

In November 2017, the Government published the modern Industrial Strategy. With this they also announced three trailblazer areas for the first three Local Industrial Strategies to be led by LEPs. SEMLEP, with our neighbouring LEPs within the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Growth Corridor area, were chosen as one of the Trailblazers. Work on the Local Industrial Strategy for the South East Midlands, which builds on the Strategic Economic Plan, began in earnest in Spring 2018.

Over the the past six months SEMLEP has:

- Undertaken an extensive evidence gathering exercise across a wide number of themes and includes the development of the South East Midlands' Energy Strategy.
- Consulted with around 20 different groups including business representatives, cluster groups, sector representatives and SEMLEP's Envoys.
- Analysed key industrial sector data, current business constraints and future trends and projections, and assessed the South East Midland's economic position and USP within the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor.
- In July we hosted an early LIS evidence information and consultation event at the Transport Systems Catapult, Milton Keynes.
- Throughout the autumn, we continued to test our analysis, emerging themes and propositions with government, local businesses and other groups.

This has informed the partnership work on a joint vision and preparation of a Local Industrial Strategy for the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor, which will continue into Spring 2019.

For more information about emerging themes for the Local Industrial Strategy, visit www.semlep.com/industrial-strategy

SEMLEP's investment programme

Local Growth Fund milestones

2018 was a remarkable year for delivering investment through our Local Growth Fund. Through this Government investment programme, SEMLEP is able to inject £265million into capital projects that will deliver significant growth for our area. Our LGF programme aims to deliver 40,000 jobs and 30,000 homes and thousands of learners by 2030.

This year we successfully disbursed over £23,700,000 to local projects in line with 2017/18 target programme spend – achieving our targets for the third year running. **Some of the project milestones for 2018 include:**

- Work beginning on site for a new 42,500 sq ft industrial development at Leyland Trading Estate, in Wellingborough which is now ready to open this November 2018.
- The official opening of Milton Keynes University Hospital Academic Centre, with an event attended by HRH The Duke of Kent.
- A visit from Transport Minister Chris Grayling to announce the final approval of Local Growth Fund investment to dual the section of A421 from the M1, Junction 13 in Central Bedfordshire to Magna Park, Milton Keynes.
- First phase construction of The Exchange, Aylesbury Vale celebrated in a ceremony attended by the Chair of AVDC. An unveiling of The Exchange public art is planned for December 2018.
- Luton Culture purchased the site of a demolished building, the missing piece of the jigsaw puzzle so they can now develop the site to build Hat Studios, contributing to the creation of Luton's creative cluster comprising the Studios, Hat Works and the Hat Factory Arts Centre.
- The official opening of MAHLE Powertrain's Real Drive Emissions Test Centre, Northampton
- Official opening of Millbrook's Building 22, a state-of-the-art building to provide vehicle technology companies with work, garage and meeting space.
- A celebration event at Stanton Cross to mark the launch of the first phase of new homes.
- Professor Helen Atkinson, Cranfield University officially opening the Buchanan Centre the Advanced Engineering Centre, Bedford College.
- A sod-cutting ceremony to start works on Northampton College's Advanced Construction Engineering College.



Visit from Transport Minister Chris Grayling to announce A421 project LGF funding, hosted at Amazon, Central Bedfordshire.



Official opening of MAHLE's RDE Test Centre, the UK's first testing centre with climatic and altitude capability.



Opening of Building 22, Millbrook Proving Ground's technology park. Attended by Automotive Minister, Richard Harrington.



Buchanan Centre, Bedford College

BUCHANAN CENTRE

This year we celebrate success right across the Local Growth Fund project portfolio as the projects report on their outputs.

Woodside Link which opened in Summer 2017 joins the industrial area to Junction 11a of the M1, opening up land for 2000 new jobs and 10,000 new homes.

Daventry Campus, Northampton College opened in Spring 2017. This campus has now welcomed over 1000 students, 220 apprentices and supported 100 businesses.

Since opening in April 2016, the Bedford Western Bypass has reduced congestion and opened up land for employment and new homes. Over 50 new houses have been built to date.

In addition, the Board announced investment for three new projects, supported by our LGF Skills Capital Fund:

- Bedford College Group's Wellingborough Campus.
- Northampton College's proposed new Advanced Construction Engineering College.
- Milton Keynes College city centre campus plans.

This Autumn, SEMLEP launched a new bidding round for the last phase of the Local Growth Fund investment programme. Our campaign included a roadshow of events to support potential funding applicants and resulted in 34 project applications, totalling £118m. Appraisal work is on-going with initial approval decisions expected to be announced by SEMLEP's Board in December 2018.

For full details about our investment programme, visit www.semlep.com/investment-programme



Artist impression of the new Academic Centre at Milton Keynes Hospital, opened February 2018

Growing people

Skills and employer engagement

In November 2017 we launched the Growing People skills plan. 2018 has focused on key campaigns and pursuing activities to develop a talent pipeline for a skilled workforce. A key element of this work is delivered through providing direct support to careers leaders in schools and colleges to help them provide quality careers guidance and develop employability skills, attitudes and behaviours through employer interaction.

The SEMLEP Skills Board, formed in January 2018, now oversees performance and progress made against the objectives set out in the Skills Plan.

This year SEMLEP has:

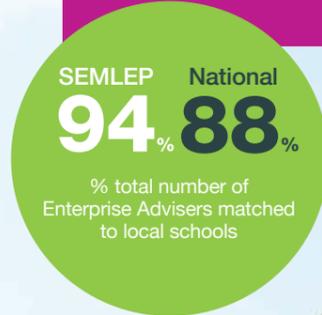
- Achieved a milestone by supporting over 100 schools in the SEMLEP Careers and Enterprise Company Enterprise Adviser Network. This means we are working with over 77% of all mainstream schools across the SEMLEP area to improve employer-led careers education for young people.
- Supported schools to assess their careers education using the Compass Tool. This identifies strengths and areas for improvement against the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks for good careers guidance. The SEMLEP skills team actively helps the schools to find solutions to challenges and have created a bank of additional resources to help ensure quality provision is delivered.
- Developed digital Labour Market Information resources, shared across schools for use in their careers education for both young people and parents/carers.
- Brought together members of the Enterprise Adviser network for events to establish and share best-practice.
- Launched a new campaign, #GrowingTalent, to increase the number of businesses that engage with young people and schools to inspire people into careers in growth sectors with the attributes expected by employers.
- Highlighted the opportunities and benefits of apprenticeships through promotion in schools using resources aimed at parents and carers and linking local SME businesses with our Growth Hub advisers and through our participation at the National Apprenticeship Show in Milton Keynes, by bringing together local employers and potential apprentices.
- Promoted 'Open Recruitment' through signposting to relevant schemes and awareness of the benefits, to address skills shortages and increase diversity in the workplace.



Inside Central Bedfordshire College, advanced construction and engineering centre

Benchmarking employer engagement in skills development: going from strength to strength

Source: Careers and Enterprise Company Enterprise Adviser Network, Compass and EAN Evaluation survey in the SEMLEP area.



Feedback from schools



Central Bedfordshire College, advanced construction and engineering centre

Growing business

Our growing business activities focus on three core areas:

- Promoting the area to prospective investors, working in partnership to match businesses with suitable land and premises and specialist business support.
- Coordinating business support and providing tailored growth advice and access to finance through our Growth Hubs.
- Strengthening links between business and government.

2017/18 brought the strongest results for Foreign Direct Investment for the SEMLEP area in the last three years, with the highest number of FDI wins from electronics and communications, automotive, software and computer services and the food and drink sector.

A key part of our work is to facilitate communication and collaboration, making sure that our local businesses are aware of growth opportunities, such as Sector Deals and funding opportunities.

Alongside our regular programme of showcase sector meetings, SEMLEP hosted three key events:

- **Logistics** – opportunities for the sector, with guest speakers from Chartered Institute of Logistics, Highways England and Network Rail.
- **Cultural and Creative Industries sector** – looking at how the creative industries can drive growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor.
- **High Performance Technology Sector** event hosted alongside the Silverstone Technology Cluster special interest group, with guest speakers from Meridian and The Faraday Institution.

This year, SEMLEP joined with our local authorities as well as other LEPs, businesses and with England's Economic Heartland from the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor area to promote the investment and growth opportunities for our area at MIPIM UK.

This event showcased our area's economic assets and growth potential – with guest speakers, among others, from London Luton Airport, Cranfield University and Silverstone Technology Park.



For more information visit www.semlep.com



76

Successful FDI* projects in 2017/18



2094

new jobs created



896

jobs safeguarded



*FDI projects include 7 multi-region projects

SEMLEP's Growth Hubs

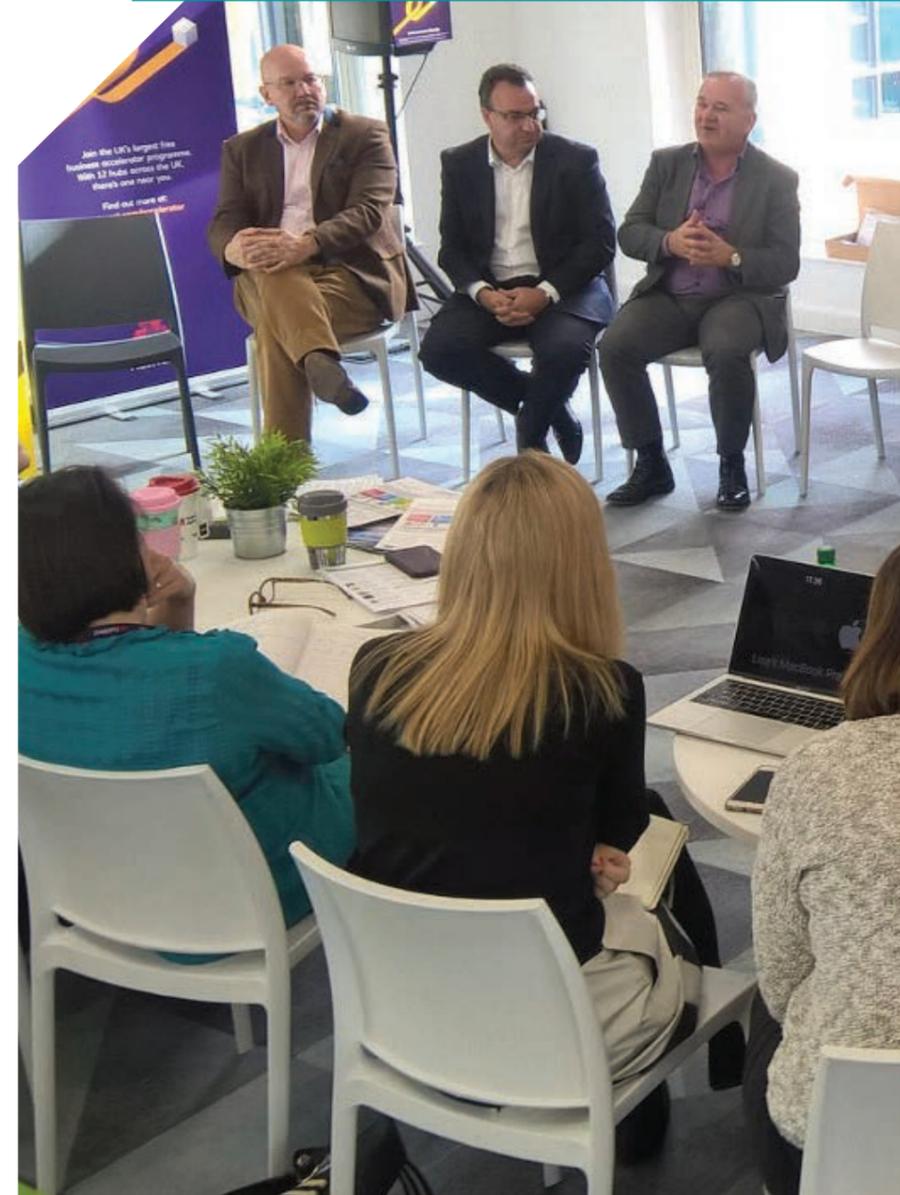
Key achievements

The Growth Hubs' role is to help businesses access good quality, impartial and specialist business support to help grow their business. To support this, the Growth Hubs also deliver projects part-funded by European funding. Through these projects, our team of advisers can assist businesses with a range of growth challenges from reviewing their business plans, kickstarting exports, developing new products and services, improving management processes to improving their marketing strategies.

Together, SEMLEP's Growth Hubs have achieved amazing results this year, a double celebration as we draw to a close our ERDF-funded projects in December 2018 and March 2019. **For the 12 months to October 2018, our Growth Hubs have:**



“ The Growth Hub has made a very quick and positive impact on the way we think about and go about our business... ”
Toru Interactive



I found the advanced modelling strategies masterclass really helpful in re-affirming direction and focus for the business going forward.”
Blue Star Print Solutions



“ The Ready2Grow project supported our company with a grant towards the costs of our promotional marketing campaign. This really helped us with our online presence and strengthened the brand awareness giving us opportunities to engage with new clients and grow our business. ”
NN1 Personnel



This year Velocity Growth Hub's ERDF project delivered new masterclasses on planning business growth, modelling success and business finance. For the second year, Velocity hosted 'Show me Success', a business conference for ambitious SME business leaders who want to get ahead on finance, scaling up effectively and improving productivity through business skills. Alongside their workshop and masterclass programme, Northamptonshire Growth Hub joined with Innovate UK and Google Garage for an event on Fuelling Success through Innovation, attended by over 60 businesses. Northamptonshire Growth Hub were shortlisted for the SME Business Awards 2018, 'Best customer service' category.

This year also saw the launch of the Midlands Engine Investment Fund, a £250million fund to provide Small Business Loans, Debt Finance, Proof of concept and Equity Finance to SMEs in the Midlands area. SEMLEP is one of 10 LEPs to contribute to the fund, with European Regional Development Fund, the European Investment Bank, British Business Bank and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. SEMLEP has worked closely with the British Business Bank and the MEIF fund managers to raise awareness of finance options available through the Fund and to support businesses get themselves investment ready for growth finance.

“ After my sessions with Velocity, I got a better understanding of how to evaluate and progress the business. It has been incredibly useful for improving my confidence as well as giving me the tools to make the business successful. ”
CuDoS Software Ltd

European Funding programme

2018 was a successful year for European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) programme within the SEMLEP area.

Through our Technical Assistance work, SEMLEP was instrumental in launching European Social Fund (ESF) calls across all European Investment Axis' as well as European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) calls across 5 Investment Priorities. We also successfully concluded the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) in May 2018.

Key achievements for 2018 include:

European Social Fund

Promotion of two tranches of ESF calls. This resulted in project applications with a total value of £6.9million. Projects are now being appraised. SEMLEP's ESF campaigns included a variety activities to promote the opportunities open to SMEs and communities across the area, such as:

ESF Roadshow:

ESF information events in 9 different locations, providing detailed information about the calls to over 280 businesses.

ESF Celebration Event:

To mark the midway point of the 2014-2020 ESIF programme, SEMLEP hosted a celebration event at Towcester Racecourse to showcase 25 projects that have received a share of nearly £30million through ESF. The event brought together over 90 people to hear first-hand the positive impact the European Social Fund has had on individuals and the workforce across the South East Midlands.

ESF IMPACT Brochure:

In February we showcased the successes of a selection of ESF-funded projects through stories told by people who have directly received support. These showed the potential and the impact that this targeted support can have.



ESF celebration event, Towcester Racecourse



ESF celebration event: project leads, Towcester Racecourse

European Regional Development Fund

Our work to promote opportunities open to SMEs through the ERDF programme resulted in £10million worth of applications this year. Projects are currently being appraised.

ERDF IMPACT Brochure:

In August we launched a document to feature 10 ERDF- funded projects operating in the SEMLEP area. This brochure highlights the value that this investment has brought to local SME businesses and communities, as told by the businesses themselves.

Events:

The ESIF team hosted a variety of ERDF information events and promoted investment opportunities at several partner meetings across the SEMLEP area.

For more information about the European Structural Investment Fund Growth Programme and the projects part-funded, visit www.semlep.com/European-funding

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

This rural pot of European Funding closed in May 2018. SEMLEP worked with the Rural Payment Agency to encourage project applications from three themes, business development, tourism infrastructure and food processing. Final applications exceeded the notional allocation of £6.5m.

