

# ANNUAL **REPORT** 2021/2022



# CONTENTS

Foreword	03
Highlights of 2021/2022	04
<b>Delivering for Dorset:</b>	
Dorset Gateway – Boosting Business	08
Dorset Careers Hub – Enterprising Careers	12
Skills for Business	14
Capital Investments	16
Highlight Projects	18
<b>Growing Places Fund</b>	19
Local Growth Fund	20
Case Studies	21
<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	22
Supporting Business Growth and Investment	24
<b>Dorset Innovation Park:</b>	
Advanced Engineering Manufacturing (AEM)	26
Driving Talent	28
<b>Corporate Responsibility:</b>	
Governance	30
Equality & Diversity	31
Board of Directors	32
Dorset LEP team	34

# FOREWORD

As a business-led partnership, Dorset LEP has used its unique position as a strategic lead to drive economic growth and productivity in Dorset for the past ten years. Since launching in 2011, Dorset LEP has generated over £309 million of government, European and match funded investment for the region. Our capital investment programme alone has secured £196 million for Dorset.

We have supported over 5,218 businesses and engaged with 76 schools to develop skills, employment and career opportunities to improve people's life chances in Dorset. We've worked with partners to champion Dorset's capacity to push boundaries, accelerate business growth in our established and growth sectors, and develop new markets through developing place-based strategy for our region.

There's no denying that 2021/22 continued to be a hugely challenging time, and I am incredibly proud of the ambitious strategies, collaborations and initiatives we have delivered to support and accelerate recovery and growth for Dorset's economy and quality of life for its residents.

We are delighted that the Levelling Up white paper recognises the vital role local enterprise partnerships will continue to play in focusing strategic direction for local economies. We look forward to developing our close working with all of our stakeholders to deliver ongoing and meaningful results that create jobs, long-term growth, and investment across the county.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors and the Dorset LEP team for their commitment, hard-work and excellent outputs during what have continued to be uncertain times.

I hope you enjoy this latest snapshot of Dorset LEP's work and achievements.

Cecilia Bufton, Chair



# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

We have continued to support the vision of Dorset to become an exemplar of sustainable coastal living. Where new ways of living and working are tackling climate change head-on and where 'a way to age' that's fit for the 21st century forms a key economic and social opportunity.

We have all the advantages of a highly self-contained location with a simplified governance landscape that includes the newest emerging City Region in the UK, alongside vibrant, largely rural surrounds and we have remained focused on these unique features of Dorset.

Dorset is evolving, innovating and accelerating its economy and we have built on this over the last year. We now have an economy worth £18.5 billion, a population approaching 800,000 and a business community of over 63,000 with Dorset being the location of choice for financial services market leaders, and the top area for high-growth digital business.

However, with a persistent productivity gap and the oldest population in the UK leading to a potential vacancy replacement of over a third of our workforce by 2027, we have continued to work to minimise this as well as addressing the climate emergency, the impact of COVID-19 and establishing a new trade environment after the UK's exit from the EU.

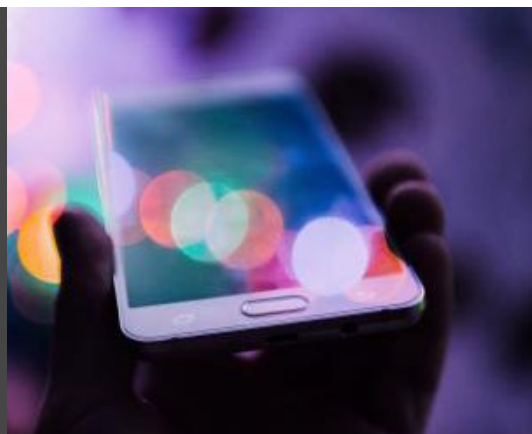
It is our role to champion Dorset's potential and act as a convener and catalyst to drive a strong and sustainable economy and this delivery year, was unlike any other. We increased our focus on skills, business support, and building confidence in our economy post COVID-19 and EU transition, and helped map how Dorset can achieve its net zero targets with our unique physical assets.

Our work has focused on delivering projects that bring long-term economic benefits to Dorset. Working in partnership with government, Dorset's two local authorities, businesses, and education providers, we're providing better infrastructure, new jobs, access to housing, enabling developments in skills and supporting businesses across the region.



## Developments in Digital

- Supported digital infrastructure and superfast broadband roll-out across the county to ensure all residents and businesses can benefit and form thriving communities.
- Improved IT network developments, digital resources and facilities across our local colleges and universities to enable skills development.



## Supporting businesses and growth

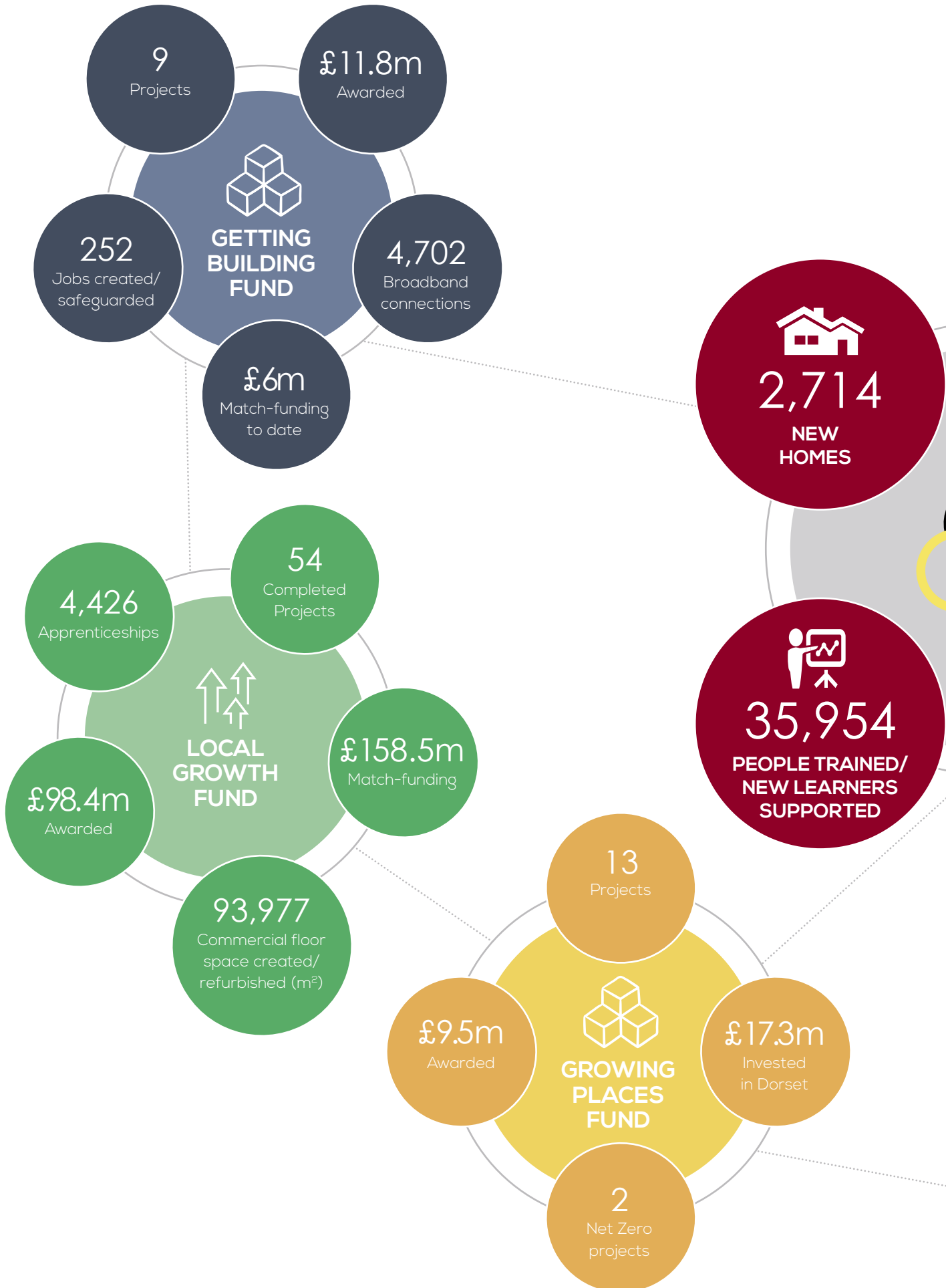
- Delivered specialist support to aid business resilience, growth and international trade.
- Enabled R&D innovations through our bid writing support service securing Innovate UK funding.
- Continued to promote and support high potential opportunities for inward investment – Sustainable Aquaculture and Marine Autonomy.
- Commissioned analysis of Dorset's supply chain.
- Hosted our 4th One Health Conference, this year focused on agritech and food innovation.

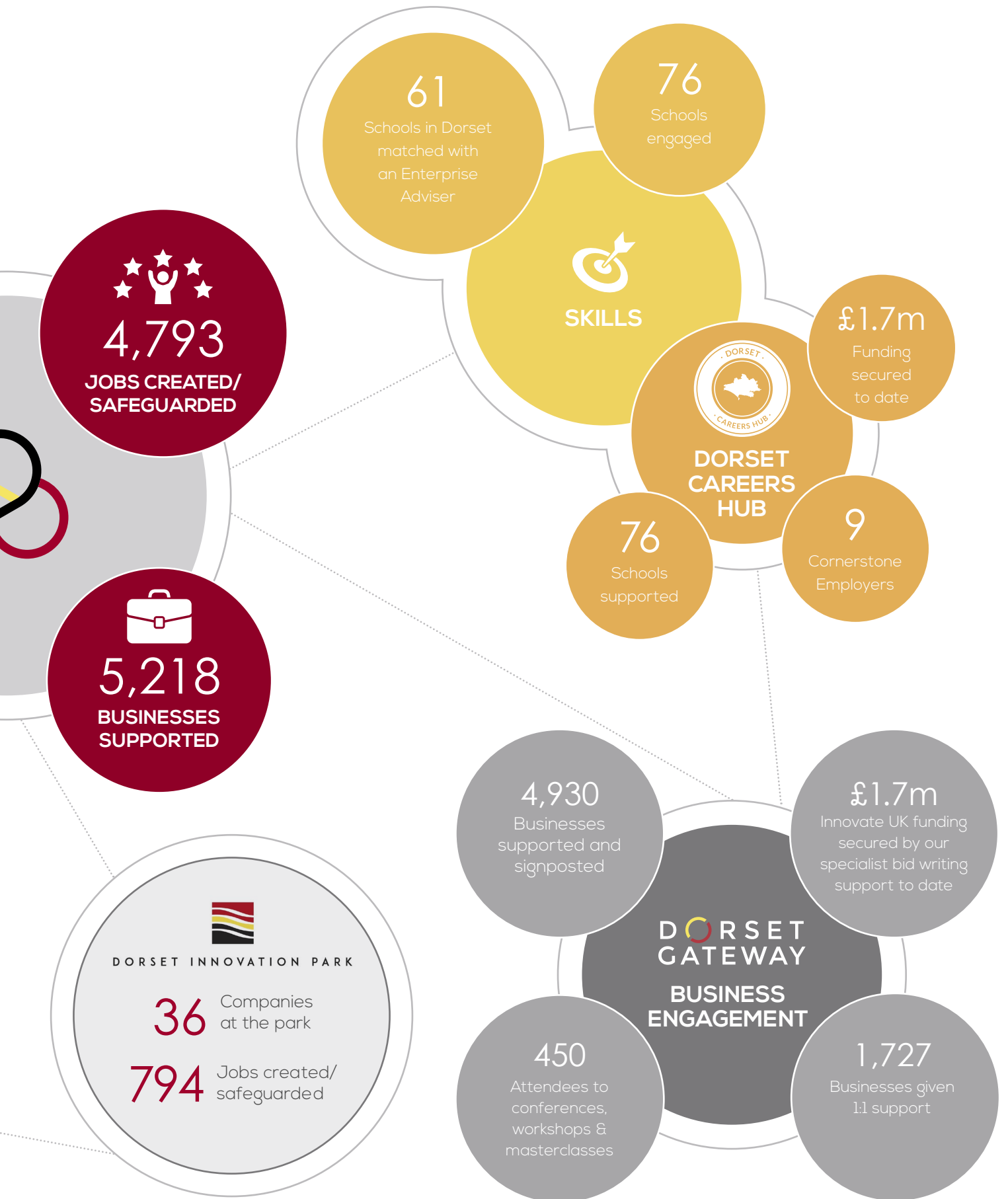


## Setting our sights on net zero

- Published the [Dorset Low Carbon Investment Opportunities](#), providing a roadmap for renewable energy solutions across the county.
- Invested in two 'first of their kind' solutions in our region: Dorset Green H2 – the first green hydrogen production facility in the South West, and Stokeford Renewables Grid Connection – the first national grid connection using energy generated by solar and wind in Dorset.
- Delivered our Getting Building Fund project investments which collectively save 23,100kg of carbon omissions across the region.







# DORSET GATEWAY

## DELIVERING FOR DORSET: BOOSTING BUSINESS

Ranked in the Top 10 for Business Friendliness (FDi, Feb 2022), we help businesses across Dorset find the right advice, support and funding and enable them to start, grow, innovate and prosper through our business growth hub, Dorset Gateway.

Home to well-known international businesses as well as a multitude of fast-growing local enterprises, Dorset is the UK's top area for high-growth digital businesses, second fastest-growing area for start-ups, and home to the third largest financial sector and 10th largest urban area. It is an innovation hotbed and cultural hotspot, with a strong entrepreneurial culture.

Dorset's industry strengths are many and varied, including advanced engineering & manufacturing, the digital and creative industries, financial services, healthcare and agritech.

Thanks to another incredibly successful year, since 2018, we have signposted more than **2,080** businesses to local and national business support schemes, **691** to local partners, and supported more than **2,450** business enquiries from Dorset-based businesses and entrepreneurs.

Through our specialist bid writing support service, to date, we have provided **835** hours of one to one support to **140** local businesses applying for innovation funding, which has helped increase innovation funding for regional businesses to over **£1.7 million**.

**1,431** businesses have benefited from one to one specialist support on topics such as export, apprenticeships and raising finance from our Business Relationship Officers, and **450** businesses and key stakeholders have attended our conferences, workshops and masterclasses. **296** business leaders were recruited to our highly successful Peer Networks programme, a third of which were female.





## Peer Networks

We have delivered one of the most successful programmes across the LEP network, directly supporting 188 businesses this year, achieving 88% customer satisfaction.

Part of a national business resilience programme in response to the pandemic, this programme supports business leaders to grow and unlock potential. Participants are able to openly discuss and seek solutions on topics such as overcoming challenges, recognising and acting on new opportunities, building a trusted network of connections, on-going business support networks and improvements to long-term personal and business performance.



## SCALE UP

### Scaling Up Dorset: A development programme

Continuing our work with high-growth SMEs and scale-ups, we partnered with a financial and professional services firm to convene Dorset based-businesses that have been successful in scaling up.

Through a series of virtual roundtables they shared insights, advice and experiences of the major challenges and issues they faced in growing their businesses – and how they overcame them. Following this work, we created a series of short videos covering a range of scale-up topics, called [Enterprising Minds](#).



## Design Innovation

To address an important business readiness gap in start-up's, we built on our previous £1.6 million Local Growth Fund investment and partnered with Arts University Bournemouth to support six emerging businesses in development stage to develop and test prototypes, through exclusive, consultant and specialist-led innovation and design funding. This included high-tech digital and manufacturing kit and design support, plus critical business mentoring, flexible learning and robust business planning, to help these entrepreneurs distinguish successful enterprises.



## Bid Writing support

We have provided more than 520 hours of specialist bid writing support, engaging with more than 250 businesses and individuals in the last 12 months. Our specialist support has resulted in 20 Innovate UK grant applications and £75,000 of innovation funding for Dorset SME's and projects this year, taking the total Innovate UK secured through our service to over £1.7 million in the last three years.



## SME Internationalisation Fund

We have helped 33 of Dorset SMEs apply for the Department for International Trade's match-funded grant scheme, the SME Internationalisation Fund. The scheme offers match-funded grants of between £1,000 and £9,000 to help support organisations' future export activity. To date, 32 of these SMEs have received funding offers totalling just over £230,000 to expand their global reach.



## ShopAppy

Small high street businesses were significantly impacted by lockdowns at the height of the pandemic, particularly those in more rural areas. To support them through this challenging time, we developed a fully-funded programme that enabled around 100 small businesses across Dorset continue trading goods and services with ecommerce site, ShopAppy, which generated additional revenue for businesses across the region.



## Back to Business

This programme helped businesses in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area recover from the pandemic. 110 businesses engaged in the programme, with 50 further benefitting from an in-depth business diagnostic with a member of our team. 15 businesses were also able to access further funded support aimed at addressing a specific business challenge.

**“ Thank you, I really benefited from some time out to look at the business from another perspective. It made me feel more positive about what we are doing well instead of concentrating on our weaknesses. ”**

MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
CARE HOME SUPPLY SPECIALISTS



“ I’ve always wanted to join a group like this but didn’t really know what to expect. The best bit is talking to like-minded business owners and leaders in a similar situation but work in completely different fields.

The honesty of the group has been phenomenal with every effort made for the group to know this is a safe environment. The programme has been well thought out and it is nice to see how each of us develops every three weeks over the course.

During the pandemic, my business was severely hit... but the support of the group in these dark times has really helped me. ”

ROSIE RADWELL, MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
MARSHAM COURT HOTEL AND PEER NETWORK PARTICIPANT



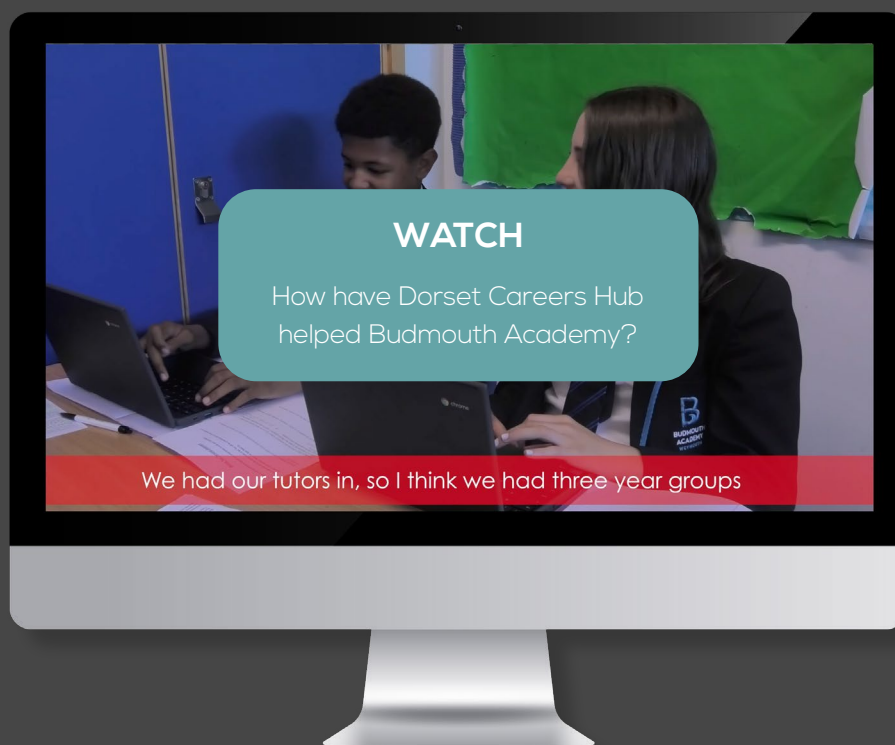
Marsham Court was titled Winner of Winner’s at the Dorset Tourism Awards 2021 after it collected three gold awards: Hotel of the Year, Business Events and Wedding Venue of the Year and Dog Friendly Business of the Year.





## DELIVERING FOR DORSET: ENTERPRISING CAREERS

We have been co-funding Dorset Careers Hub with the national body for careers education, The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC), since the autumn of 2019. Delivered in partnership by Dorset LEP with BCP Council and Dorset Council, the hub first launched with a pilot of 40 schools, shortly followed by a successful bid to extend this offer to 76 schools and colleges – and their 51,000 students – across Dorset. We're delighted to have been showcased as an example of excellent practice to other careers hubs around the country.



**Our focus has always been to ensure that our young people progress into promising careers and reach their potential across all areas of Dorset, with funding ring-fenced for Dorset's most deprived area of Portland and Weymouth, and a tailored focus on our SEND community and younger cohorts in middle schools.**

### Key achievements this year:

- 93% of schools have been successfully linked with local businesses through our Enterprise Advisers network, using local labour market and skills research to support them deliver ambitious careers education programmes – programmes based on industry standard best-practice, known as Gatsby Benchmarks.
- 20,000 students, 400 teachers, parents and carers and over 64 exhibitors took part in the south's largest Virtual Careers and Apprenticeship Show in May 2021. The show was a major success, attracted staggering attendance, with online booths visited over 33,000 times for work and study-related questions.
- 850 Virtual Work Experience Insight Days delivered in partnership with Speakers for Schools and local employers for young people across Dorset.
- 140 students from The Sir John Colfox Academy, Bridport, North Dorset took part in our Virtual Work Experience pilot. Five different employers engaged, including: Magna Housing, Workers' Educational Association, Shrinkwrap Machinery Co, the Royal Air Force and The Samee Project.
- £1,000 Activation Fund awarded to 30 schools across the county to support development of their careers education programmes, secured by Dorset LEP. Schools have invested in IT equipment, online careers platforms and developing resources, as well as enabled special education needs/disabilities (SEND) schools to identify specialist equipment for students to access enterprise resources and access the world of work.
- Launched a series of SEND-specific events to dispel myths, highlight benefits and resources to support employers in diversifying the workplace.
- Strengthened relationships with key business groups and companies to raise awareness of our work and increase opportunities for young people to have meaningful employer encounters.
- Delivered work experience for a small group of high performing autistic young people with the National Trust on Studland, South Dorset.
- Developed a programme of careers coaching for a group of SEMH (social, emotional, mental health) students with a CEC Community of Practice fund.
- Designed a Work Experience Toolkit to help schools to deliver a strong, safe and impactful in-house programme.



# DELIVERING FOR DORSET: SKILLS FOR BUSINESS

By combining our knowledge of skills and enterprise, this year we have delivered initiatives that support skills for business, including working alongside two of our local universities, to encourage innovation in the way people approach business practices.



## Apprenticeship myth busting

With the government’s incentivisation of apprenticeships, we provided a bespoke service to businesses interested in hiring an apprentice for the first time, and myth busting the challenges. Local businesses have benefited from clear support and advice to take on new apprentices and change business recruitment practice to the benefit of all.



## Skills brokerage

To support local businesses in making sense of the range of skills support available – including Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) and apprenticeships – we launched a specialist skills brokerage service. Through this service, we have advised businesses and developed action plans for them that will help them expand opportunities for innovation and those they employ.



## MidLife MOT

We delivered the Midlife MOT programme to help employees aged 45+ to look at their skills, health and finances with the intention of making the next 10-20 years of working life the most productive. This included developing digital resources, supported by webinars which was distributed to over 360 employees across Dorset.



## Promoting Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Connecting industry with universities and students, knowledge transfer partnerships (KTPs) have huge potential to drive impact, growth and enterprise.

In September 2021, we became the first business support service to drive forward local KTP ambitions, promoting their benefits. As funding applications for KTPs require strong business cases, our successful bid writing support service positioned us perfectly to address this need and support applications.

## Help to Grow: Management

This government-backed and subsidised continuing professional development styled programme has been designed to open the door to growth for thousands of business leaders.

Partnering with Bournemouth University’s internationally recognised Business School, accredited to the Small Business Charter, we delivered 50 hours of in-depth training and 1:1 business mentoring to SME senior leaders.

The 12-week leadership skills-focused course covered strategies for growth and innovation, leading high-performance teams and digital adoption, as well as financial management and responsible business practices.



HM Government

# DELIVERING FOR DORSET: CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Our investment programme, financed through Local Growth, Getting Building and Growing Places funding, is at the heart of our delivery. Our investments have attracted additional associated match-funding and exceeded our original anticipated outputs. This year, we have continued to invest in a range of projects to bring jobs, improved transport, skills, housing, productivity, and innovation to Dorset.



**AUB** Arts University Bournemouth  
**BPC** Bournemouth & Poole College  
**BU** Bournemouth University  
**CEC** Careers & Enterprise Company  
**ESIF** European Structural and Investment Funds  
**KMC** Kingston Maurwood College  
**WC** Weymouth College





## Capital Investment Highlights

Investing in skills and innovation plays an intrinsic role in building our economy which has been critical as we have persevered through the COVID-19 pandemic and understood the implications of the EU transition on our region. We have been focused on capitalising on our productivity potential through innovation in key sectors including health, creative industries and advanced manufacturing – and by investing in skills we are creating an agile, productive workforce that meets the demands of current and future employers.

To date, our investments and initiatives have enabled 4,793 jobs, 4,446 apprenticeships, 2,714 new homes, supported over 250 businesses, assisted learning/training for 35,954 people, and facilitated the development of 142,422 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space as well as 16,051 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for learning.

## GETTING BUILDING FUND

Launched by government in 2020 to target areas facing the biggest economic challenges and aid recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Getting Building Fund was designed to support shovel-ready infrastructure projects to boost economic growth, and fuel local recovery and jobs.

Dorset LEP secured £11.8 million of this funding to support recovery with initiatives specific to Dorset. All nine of the projects we invested in continued to progress throughout the year at an incredible pace, despite ongoing national restrictions and supply chain issues. Collectively, these projects focused on supporting infrastructure, stimulating jobs and economic recovery, ensuring sustainable growth in rural areas, developing an uplift in skills provision in Dorset, and building on existing specialisms such as healthcare.



## Getting Building Fund: Highlight Projects



[Remote management of hypertension](#)



[University Centre & Rural Business Hub](#)



[Public Trade Office](#)



[Border Control Post](#)



[View all nine Getting Building Fund projects](#)



## GROWING PLACES FUND

**Our Growing Places Fund loan scheme supports capital projects and is designed to unlock projects with potential to create significant economic impact, increase innovation and productivity and enable jobs and housing. A key feature of this scheme is that it is used where businesses are unable to access alternative funding mechanisms for viable schemes that will deliver economic growth and tangible outcomes that support our strategic objectives to develop Dorset's economy.**

To date, using the interest accumulated from loan repayments to increase the funding available to loan to other applicants, we have invested £17.3 million across 13 projects. This year we invested £4.8 million in two projects which are first-of-their-kind initiatives in the region, and which will act as important catalysts for Dorset's green economy and renewable energy plans.



### Dorset Green H2 – £3m

A green energy project in green hydrogen production delivered by Canford Renewable Energy (CRE) Ltd, this project includes developing brownfield land at Canford Resource Park, Wimborne, to create the first green hydrogen energy production facility in the South West. This will create renewable hydrogen as a fuel source through a solar plant.



### Stokeford Renewables Grid Connection – £1.8m

The first renewable grid connection in Dorset, this green energy project by Holme Mineral Processing Limited, will put in place an underground electricity cable connecting renewable electricity generated at East Stoke to an existing SSE substation in Wareham. Energy provided through this grid connection will be generated by solar and wind.

# LOCAL GROWTH FUND

**Dorset LEP successfully secured £98.4 million of Local Growth funding for Dorset through the government's Growth Deal to bring together local, national and private sector funding. The initial programme funding ended in 2021, but outcomes and match funding continue to be delivered until 2025.**

The programme comprised of 54 projects –delivered on time and on budget – unlocking key housing and employment sites, creating more highly skilled jobs, and supporting economic growth. Through our careful portfolio management, we were able to issue an additional project call, creating a pipeline for investment on under-spend and enable additional delivery of projects important to Dorset's economic landscape. Our investments have delivered a wide range of schemes to revitalise and strengthen specific geographical and industry sectors in Dorset.

## Key achievements:

- To date, every £1.00 of funding has generated an additional £1.10 in GVA annually and £3.87 in private investment
- By 2025, it could generate an additional £3.36 GVA annually, and leverage £8.19 private investment
- By 2030, the potential and indicative GVA impacts could equate to £1.54 billion by 2030 – **that's a return on investment of £15.70 for each £1.00 spent.**

Visit our [website](#) for a summary of our Local Growth Fund achievements for Dorset and details of all 54 projects.

## Local Growth Fund: Case Studies



Agritech Centre



Bournemouth International Growth (BIG) Programme



Dorset Innovation Park



Orthopaedic Research Centre



Port of Poole Programme

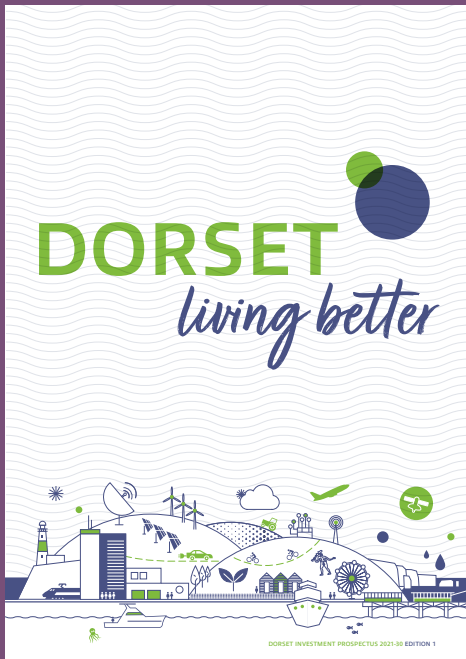


Smart Place Investment Plan and Pilot



# STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Our ambition is to make Dorset the best place in the UK to do business, building the right foundations to drive productivity.



## Investment Prospectus

We worked with our partners to create the [Dorset: Living Better Prospectus](#), an ambitious 10-year portfolio of investment opportunities across all that's best and unique about Dorset, focused on COVID-19 recovery.

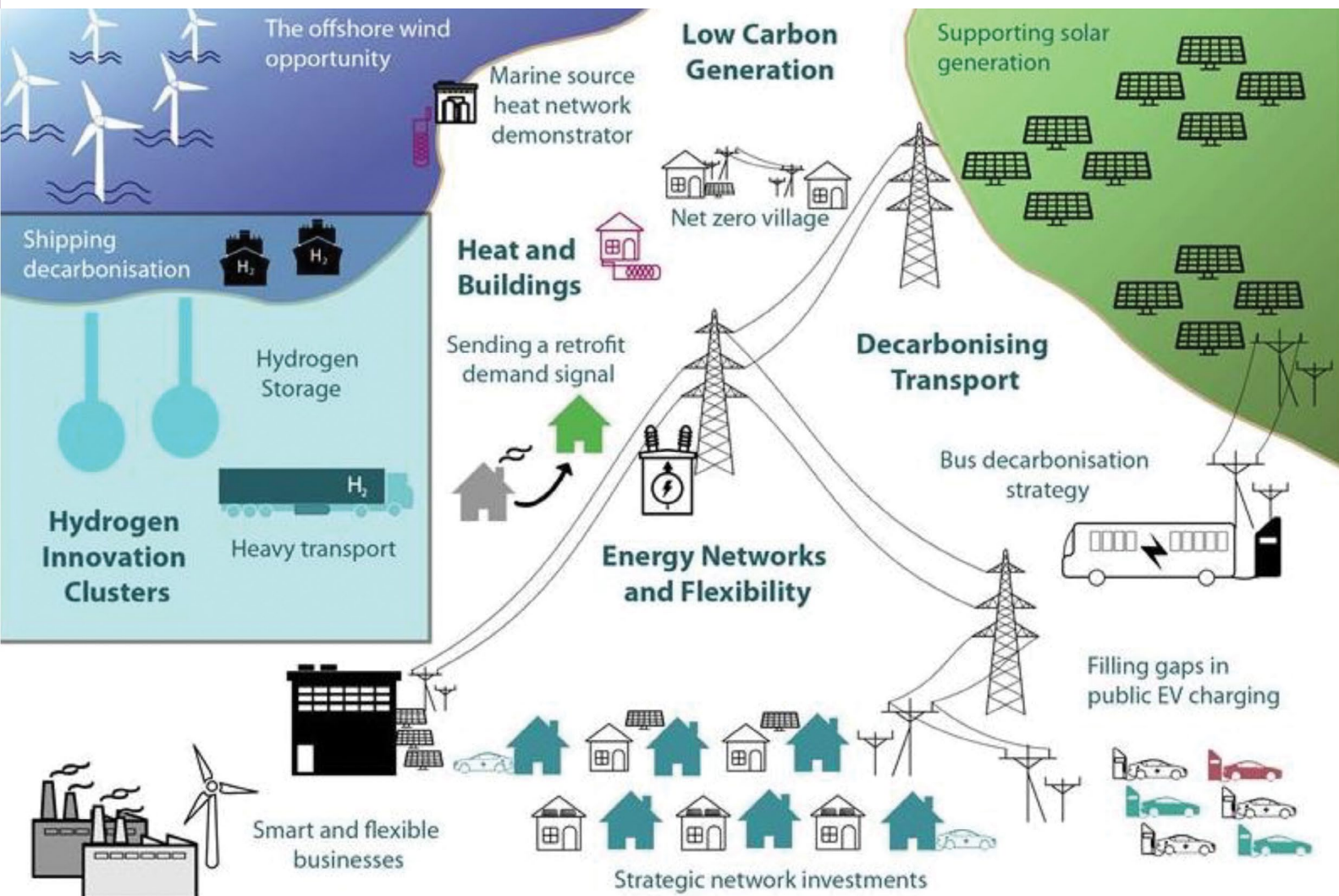
The investment prospectus, launched in April 2021, focuses on four key themes - Smart, Living, Wellbeing, Natural - and presents a portfolio of opportunities that would generate a £24bn GVA return and generate 48,000 jobs.



## Local Skills Report

Through extensive partnership working and intelligence gathering this document is the go-to evidence base for local skills insights and initiatives.

Published in February 2022, the [Dorset Local Skills Report](#) offers a reflection on Dorset's skills journey to date and outlines the strategic direction of travel that will enable prosperity going forwards. It is supported by an annex and two year action plan around the key skills priorities.



Visualisation of the Opportunities to Decarbonise in Dorset

## Dorset Low Carbon Investment Opportunities

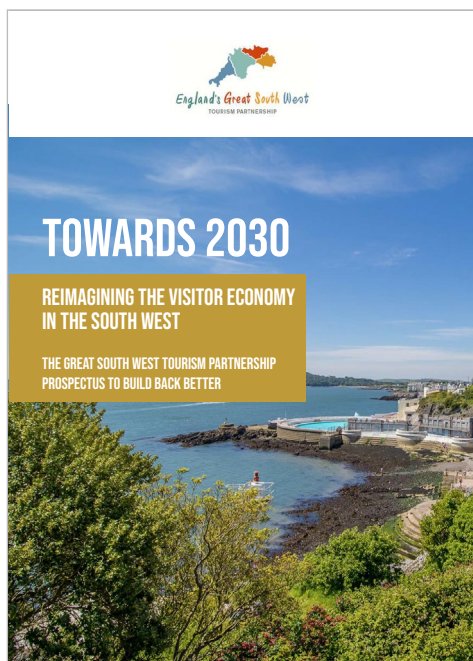
Building on strategic documents relevant to decarbonisation in the county, including the investment prospectus and local authority plans, we produced the [Dorset Low Carbon Investment Opportunities](#) document in June 2020.

Underpinning this is a comprehensive evidence-base which presents a range of opportunities for decarbonising Dorset to help the region deliver on net zero, jobs and green recovery.

The document showcases opportunities for inward low carbon energy investment and it's aligned with the UK Government's goal of national net zero emissions by 2050.



# SUPPORTING BUSINESS GROWTH AND INVESTMENT



## Reimagining the visitor economy

As a member of the Great South West, in September 2021 we worked with partners to produce [Towards 2030: Reimagining the Visitor Economy in the South West](#). This is an ambitious 18-month plan, mapping out opportunities to re-energise the visitor economy and steer it in a new direction. The partnership is hard-hitting in its proposal with ambitions to increase accessible visits by 33%, reduce the environmental impact of the industry and level up our rural, coastal and city areas.



## One Health

The One Health agenda – the interrelation between plant, animal and human health – is a key focus of Dorset's Local Industrial Strategy and a priority focus this year.

In March 2022, we hosted our fourth One Health Conference, bringing together senior decision makers from academia, industry, and government to plan and share ideas on agritech innovation.



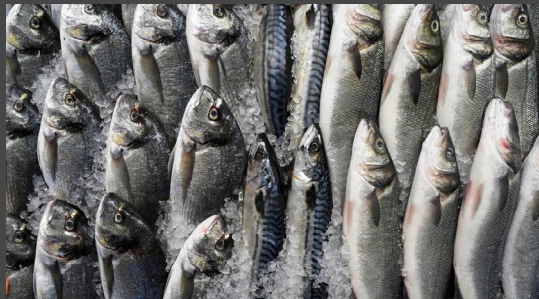
## South West Agritech

In autumn 2021, we published the [South West Agritech Positioning Paper](#) outlining our region’s position as the UK’s growing powerhouse in Agritech. This work has been shared with the government’s Investment Services Team (IST) and the Department for International Trade is targeting activity specific to this area of opportunity.

## High Potential Opportunities

Work has continued on the promotion of both the Sustainable Aquaculture HPO and the multi-LEP Marine Autonomy HPO. In the autumn of 2021, we commissioned the government’s Investment Services Team (IST) to undertake market research for to identify engagement opportunities with potential investors.

We have continued our partnership working with the likes of South West Maritime UK, South West Aquaculture Network, Dorset Coast Forum, Cefas and both local authorities to support key sector research and initiatives such as the English Aquaculture Innovation Hub.



[Marine autonomy in the South West – great.gov.uk international](#)



[Sustainable aquaculture in Dorset – great.gov.uk international](#)



DORSET INNOVATION PARK

## ADVANCED ENGINEERING MANUFACTURING (AEM)

**Dorset is home to a thriving and varied AEM sector, specialising in aerospace, defence, composite and marine technologies, employing around 17,300 people and contributing over £803 million to Dorset’s economy.**

Dorset Innovation Park is Dorset’s only Enterprise Zone and home to a cluster of AEM specialists and supply chain organisations. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is the latest to join the likes of Norco GRP and draperVENT in setting up on site, accelerating interest from innovators in defence and security.

Through our ongoing investments we have enabled and continued to support the development of throughout this year:

- Full-fibre accessibility.
- Collaboration between businesses on the park.
- A simplified planning system provided by a Local Development Order which allows approval of applications within 28-days.
- Greater academic engagement in order to provide access to talent for R&D, testing, spin-outs.
- Creation of tech clusters /incubators to enable co-development, sharing ideas, transfer of knowledge and building success.
- Direct contact with MoD for collaboration.



# DRIVING TALENT

**Dorset's skills ambitions stem from local challenges and our priorities have been designed to meet Dorset's skills needs. We have worked hard to firmly ground our interventions in the skills needed by our local people and economy in ensuring we invest our energy in tackling our key local challenges:**

- Recovery: Economic recovery, upskilling and retraining
- Place based regeneration
- Scale and Dorset wide focus
- Future growth: talent and attraction including innovation and enterprise
- Living Well/ Increasing productivity/ removing inequality.

To date, we have invested over £26 million in skills through our various investment programmes, £19 million of which directly has been allocated to our region's educational institutions. This has made a real difference to providers' ability to offer and deliver skills for Dorset's future, and as boosting the creation of new business start-ups, an estimated 968 new jobs and 1603 apprenticeships for the local economy.



[Bournemouth & Poole College Career Hubs](#)



[Weymouth College Centres of Excellence](#)





## Digital Bootcamps: Train4Tomorrow

Designed to help people enter highly-paid growth industries in the region, such as cyber security, data science, software development, digital marketing and IT, we have supported these South West focused bootcamps in Dorset.

### Labour market intelligence

**Our Labour Market Intelligence analysis provides an evidence-base for a talented, skilled and competent future workforce.** We have regularly provided [Labour Market Insight reports](#) outlining challenges, labour trends, sector strengths and opportunities as well as highlight possible effects from the pandemic. As well as delivering webinars, more recently, we've been delighted to take this information on the road to support and discuss options with providers as they set curriculums and strategic narratives.

Through our partnership working we have identified case studies illustrating how key local stakeholders from business, local authorities and learning providers in Dorset are working collaboratively to solve this challenge and shape innovative skills solutions for a Dorset that can thrive.

### Skills Advisory Panel & Board

Established in 2019, this year the work of this strategic committee, which brings together leaders in education, public sector and private businesses, has enabled developments in planning for skills demand, understanding labour market needs. It plays a pivotal role in enhancing and utilising our rich evidence-base, while simultaneously growing it through data contributions, case studies and analysis.

We are creating a lifelong learning skills ecosystem for Dorset where employers, educational providers, communities and policy makers work together in a joint effort to deliver evidence-based interventions.



# CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

## Governance

We are committed to exceptional standards of governance, working to the highest standards of transparency, accountability and regulation to ensure our decision-making offers value for money and tangible economic benefits aligned to our strategic goals.

To ensure our decision-making is sound, thorough and fair, we have a robust governance structure in place. Our Board is supported by 12 committees, working groups and advisory panels with members of the Dorset LEP Board and industry professionals meeting regularly to drive forward Dorset LEP's strategic goals, advising and making recommendations to the Board. Both councils in Dorset have two representatives on our Board to ensure strong local partnership. We operate strictly within the government's National Assurance Framework and we have committees such as Overview & Scrutiny,

Performance & Investment and Finance, Audit & Corporate Risk to oversee key decision-making to ensure organisational sustainability and risk management. Our risk register is shared at every board meeting.

Our Local Assurance Framework demonstrates our commitment to transparency, accountability and stewardship of public resources, and sets out our approach to appraise, deliver, monitor and evaluate schemes to deliver maximum economic and financial value for Dorset. As a Community Interest Company, all our agreements, funds, finances and processes, such as due diligence, are overseen by our accountable body, Dorset Council. We are also subject to regular review by the government through the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and voluntarily take part in Peer Reviews with other LEPs.

## Our Governance Structure



### Dorset LEP Board



○ Government Department ● Strategic Committee ● Governance Committee  
 ● Working Group ● Advisory Group

## Our Finances

We publish our [financial statements](#) online, in accordance with our Local Assurance Framework. End of year statements are usually available from June.

## Business Plan 2022/23

We publish our annual [business delivery plan](#) online, in accordance with our Local Assurance Framework. Our 2022/23 is awaiting Board approval and will be published at the soonest opportunity.



## Equality & Diversity

We are committed to having a Board which embraces diversity and promotes equality and are proud of our female board members, including our Chair and Deputy Chair, aiming to meet the national target of 50% gender equality in our board membership by 2023.

To support this ambition, we launched We Mean Business on International Women’s Day (8 March 2022) to celebrate, advocate and inspire Dorset’s female business leaders and entrepreneurs, using the voices of some of our private sector female board members.

Sara Uzzell, our Deputy chair, is also our equality and diversity champion and ensures our work is representative of Dorset’s businesses and communities.

Two thirds of our board come from the private sector, and Sophia Story, MD of digital tech agency, 3 Sided Cube, is our SME representative who plays an important part in ensuring their voice is heard throughout our work.

### We Mean Business: Dorset – #WMBDorset

We kickstarted our activity with an event to inspire future women entrepreneurs to follow their ambitions, and have secured £20,000 of funding from NatWest to support and inspire women looking to set-up their own business. This funding will provide 18 new female-led enterprises to receive grants of up to £2,000, with match funding, to help them get started.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our board brings a wealth of experience from the private, public and education sectors. We are fortunate to have 20 board members whose energy, commitment and wisdom lead the development of our strategic priorities and oversee all our decisions and activities. They meet every two months to review, advise and determine our delivery and risk management to ensure we remain on target to achieve against our business plan and strategic aims.



**Celia Bufton**  
Chair



**Sara Uzzell**  
Deputy Chair



**Jim Andrews**  
COO, Bournemouth  
University



**Cllr John Beasley**  
Councillor,  
BCP Council



**Cllr Tony Ferrari**  
Councillor,  
Dorset Council



**Cllr Spencer Flower**  
Leader of Dorset  
Council



**Nick Gaines**  
Consultant for  
Illuminated Holdings



**Ian Girling**  
Chief Executive,  
Dorset Chamber



**Professor Paul Gough**  
Vice Chancellor,  
Arts University  
Bournemouth



**Arabella Lewis-Smith**  
Founder of Salad



**Cllr Drew Mellor**  
BCP Council  
Leader



**Nicola Newman**  
Former Chief  
Executive,  
Ansbury Guidance



**May Palmer**  
Managing Director,  
Harry J Palmer



**Luke Rake**  
Principal & Chief  
Executive, Kingston  
Maurwood College



**Paul Reed**  
Director of  
Sustainability  
and New Supply,  
Magna Housing



**Phil Sayles**  
Principal & CEO,  
Bournemouth &  
Poole College



**Jim Stewart**  
Chief Executive,  
Poole Harbour  
Commissioners



**Sophia Story**  
Director,  
3 Sided Cube



**John Sutcliffe**  
Director,  
SMI Consulting



**Andrew Wickham**  
Managing Director,  
Go South Coast



**Dr Liz Williams**  
Board Director  
in Education/  
Technology



## MEET THE TEAM

Our investment in the team has enabled delivery of the many of the successes included in this report. We recruited new team members to enhance our business resilience and growth offering in Dorset and achieve delivery plan objectives. Through our bi-annual appraisal process we continued to identify and support training and development needs and have provided rewards through various schemes, including honorarium and pay progression. The team has positively responded to remote and hybrid working for the best part of the year, and meet regularly to maintain engagement, support, knowledge of all our activities and celebrate successes.



**Corrina Osborne**  
Interim Director



**Amy Blackham**  
Communications  
Manager



**Greg Brina**  
Business  
Engagement  
Coordinator



**Nicoleta Chesaru**  
Dorset Careers Hub  
Administrator



**Rebecca Davies**  
Head of Enterprise,  
Skills & Industry



**Daniela Doncakova**  
Senior Programme  
Manager



**Clare Dunn**  
Dorset Careers  
Hub Employer  
Engagement  
Enterprise  
Coordinator



**Lucy Green**  
Business  
Relationship Officer



**Martina Hanulova**  
Strategy  
Development  
Manager



**Kathryn Hill**  
Executive Officer to  
the Interim Director



**Charlotte Knight**  
Communications  
Manager



**Mira Koseva**  
Skills Analyst



**Nimisha Loveridge**  
Programme  
Manager



**Rosie Macnamara**  
Programme  
Manager



**Helen Macsorley**  
Business Gateway  
Coordinator



**Finn Morgan**  
Business Engagement  
and Dorset Gateway  
Manager



**David Mutton**  
Business  
Relationship Officer



**Becky Phillips**  
Dorset Careers Hub  
Strategic Lead



**Helen Stevenson**  
Dorset Careers Hub  
Operational Lead



**Janek Tarnowski**  
Dorset Careers Hub  
Enterprise  
Coordinator



**Jacqui Timm**  
Project Delivery  
Coordinator



**Laura Zisa-Swann**  
Programme  
Manager





**Connect with us**

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