

How We're Already Helping To Level Up Lancashire

The LEP's 2021/22 Year End Summary

Over the last 12 months, the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership has continued to support businesses, create jobs, boost skills, improve infrastructure and unlock investment across the county.

Below is just a brief snapshot of some of the work we have undertaken this financial year, and we will publish a full account of our 2021/22 activities in our *Annual Review* later in the summer.

However, this has only been achieved through us collaborating closely with a wide range of partners including all of Lancashire's local authorities and public agencies, the county's extensive network of education and training providers, local MPs and government departments, the county's businesses and employers, and many others, and we would like to thank them all for their continuing support.

Much of this activity has also been enabled through the securing of government and European funding, including the [Lancashire Growth Deal](#), the [Getting Building Fund](#), the [Growing Places Fund](#), and the [European Structural and Investment Funds \(ESIF\) Growth Programme](#). Without such financing, none of the LEP's work would be possible.

Further, the LEP itself could not function without the ongoing hard work and support of its [Board Directors](#), and members of its business-led Sector Groups, who give up their time voluntarily. Their commitment to helping make Lancashire an even better place to live, work, visit, and invest, is truly appreciated.

Debbie Francis OBE, LEP Chair

Transformational Investments to Drive Economic Growth

Accelerated growth in priority sectors such as cybersecurity, low carbon and the digital industries, has the potential to transform Lancashire's economy. In response the LEP has worked hard to secure major investments which create new jobs, support businesses, and boost skills, in these and other areas.

Some highlights over the last 12 months include:

- Lancashire partners playing a pivotal role in the government's decision to base the [National Cyber Force](#) campus at Samlesbury in Lancashire - a £5bn investment which will create thousands of new jobs, and unlock millions in additional investment across the cybersecurity and technology supply chain
- Also at Samlesbury, the opening of the [Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre North West](#) (AMRC North West) – a LEP-supported facility which will help hundreds of SMEs across Lancashire move towards more digitalised systems and 'smart manufacturing' processes, together with the R&D capabilities to explore new low carbon technologies and 5G applications
- Supporting the development of [RedCAT](#) - the Lancashire Centre for Alternative Technologies based in East Lancashire – which is set to be a hub of low carbon innovation, collaborative R&D, and rapid commercialisation, for local businesses
- Funding a new [Drone Control Centre](#) at UCLan's Engineering Innovation Centre, an R&D hub for drone technology focused on humanitarian aid, search and rescue, journalistic and other non-military uses.

Supporting Lancashire Businesses

The impact of Covid on all of our communities has been significant, but for many of our businesses the road to post-pandemic recovery has also been hampered by the impact of Brexit, rising costs for materials and energy, and skills shortages.

As Lancashire's 'Voice of Business', the LEP has worked hard over the last year to support the county's key industries at a strategic level, while the [Boost Growth Hub](#), in partnership with Lancashire County Council, has been delivering an extensive programme of advice clinics, workshops, bootcamps, masterclasses - and many other support programmes - to Lancashire businesses at a grass roots level.

In addition, we have been working on interventions to help address the economic implications of Brexit, have invested in new commercial spaces, and have developed new sector-specific strategic growth plans through our business-led Sector Groups.

Some highlights over the last 12 months include:

- [Boost's](#) continuing frontline support for thousands of Lancashire businesses – including start ups, scale-ups, SMEs and large employers - across a wide range of challenges and opportunities including the impact of Covid, Brexit, finance and funding, starting a business, improving skills, mentoring, marketing, and more
- Securing funding from The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to extend Boost's [Peer Network programme](#), enabling a further 242 local businesses to benefit from the scheme
- Supporting the now completed redevelopment of Padiham Town Hall – including a new Business Hub and co-working space, which is already fully occupied, and supporting Chorley's new £11m business and industrial hub, [Strawberry Meadows Business Park](#)
- Following on from our [Energy & Low Carbon Sector Plan](#), we've developed two further strategic sector growth plans– for Lancashire's Digital Industries and the county's Food & Agriculture sector - underpinned by business-led expertise, insights and recommendations from our private sector-led Sector Groups

Investing In Placemaking & Infrastructure

From funding road junctions and improving town centres to facilitating transformational investments which will benefit the whole of Lancashire, the LEP continues to support schemes and programmes which are focused on placemaking, infrastructure and connectivity – all of which are vital to driving economic growth, creating jobs, and unlocking new opportunities for everyone.

Some highlights over the last 12 months include:

- The official opening of the [Blackpool Conference Centre](#), and Blackpool [Tramway extension](#); both LEP-supported schemes which are part of a wider LEP-funded regeneration programme for the resort which includes major town centre transport, leisure and retail improvements
- The LEP-supported proposals for the £125m [Eden of the North](#) visitor attraction and environmental research centre moving forward having secured planning consent from Lancaster City Council
- Investment milestones along the Fylde Coast with a new [manufacturing facility](#) built at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone; good progress on the '[Project Neptune](#)' mixed-used development in



Fleetwood; funding for key enabling works at the Hillhouse International Business Park; and work commencing on the [M55-Heyhouses link road](#), set to improve access between Lytham St Annes and the M55 while unlocking new housing and business sites

- Improved connectivity in East Lancashire through the completion of the Darwen East link road (which will help bring forward a new major mixed-used scheme), and motorway junction improvements in Blackburn as part of the [Pennine Gateways](#) programme
- A new [mixed used community-focused](#) scheme in Tatton, Chorley, which will feature assisted living units, a new community centre, community café, a GP surgery and pharmacy.

People, Skills & Employment

The prosperity and wellbeing of Lancashire's people is what drives the LEP's investment programmes, job creation strategies and skills initiatives. With Lancashire County Council, we further support the county's award winning [Skills and Employment Hub](#) across a wide range of projects and invest in schemes which support local communities.

Some highlights over the last 12 months include:

- The [Lancashire Careers Hub](#) achieving full coverage across the county, meaning it now engages with all 156 of Lancashire's secondary schools and colleges, bringing 'the world of work' directly into the classroom.
- Increasing the number of Lancashire businesses committing to our [Skills Pledge](#) to 180, meaning even more local companies are now actively promoting the value of vocational skills for young people through a variety of activities
- The success of 2020's trailblazing [Digital Skills Bootcamps](#), delivered in partnership with the Department for Education, saw us roll-out further bootcamps to help upskill residents in digital and green skills.
- We have continued to support our [Adult Skills programme](#) – supported by the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) – to ensure the right employment resources are matched with the right vacancies
- The LEP has supported the launch and implementation of the government's new '[T Levels](#)' in [Lancashire](#) - an alternative to A-Levels, apprenticeships, and other 16-to-19 courses, which focus on vocational skills
- Supporting and promoting a wide range of [skills programmes and STEM pathways](#)- directly aligned to technology roles and careers and the digital sector - including InnovateHer, Cyber Girls First, and the Lancashire Teen Tech Festival
- We secured funding to help drive the 'Building Blocks' project – a scheme which will train over 5,000 [Workplace Health Champions](#) in SMEs across Lancashire to help boost the health and productivity of employees
- The provision of a new apprenticeship scheme and SME engagement programme at Myerscough [College's Food and Farming Innovation & Technology Centre](#)
- Funding a new STEM [School of Science Centre](#) at West Lancashire College
- Through the LEP-supported *Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub*, all of our partners -including employers, local authorities, government departments, training providers, and local schools and



Lancashire
Enterprise Partnership

colleges – can now access comprehensive local [Labour Market Information](#) and economic forecast data

Promoting Lancashire's International Offer

Working with key partners, including [Marketing Lancashire](#) and the [Department of International Trade \(DIT\)](#), the LEP actively promotes Lancashire as great place to live, work and invest, both in the UK and globally.

In addition, through the Boost Growth Hub and other partner programmes, we support Lancashire businesses with advice on how to maximise international markets, increase exports, and think more globally about their growth plans.

Some highlights over the last 12 months include:

- Developing a comprehensive *Internationalisation Strategy and Export Plan* for the county - which will act as a global growth roadmap for all our businesses and key partners – and is due to be published soon
- Hosting a government [COP26 roadshow in Burnley](#), as well as helping to deliver several low carbon and net zero events at COP26 in Glasgow which targeted international investors
- The creation of a new International Trade Working Group, featuring a mix of public and private sector representatives from across the county, who will help inform the LEP's internationalisation strategy as it rolls out
- Securing over £2m of [ESIF Internationalisation Funding](#) to help local businesses increase international trade which has already seen over 50 match-funding offers made to Lancashire SMEs
- Supported a major [Lancashire International Trade Conference](#), in partnership with BEIS, DIT, Boost and Lancashire Business View, which targeted local businesses considering exporting for the first time and more established exporting businesses looking to reach new markets
- Helping to facilitate a potential 'sister city' partnership between Preston and Baoding City in the Hebei province of China, building on an existing, long-standing relationship between [UCLan and Hebei University](#)
- Supported the DIT on over 80 regional events to help promote the ESIF Internationalisation Fund and other [Lancashire-specific DIT](#) activities

In addition to these achievements and outcomes, the LEP has continued to put social value and inclusive growth at the heart of its investments and activities, and in the last five years we have helped to generate £54.1m in social and economic value across the county.

To read our current *Annual Review 2020/2021* please [click here](#).