



## LSEP Set to Invest Millions into Leicester Shire

LSEP will have almost £30 million to invest over the next three years to regenerate the economy of Leicester and Leicestershire. This sum has been pledged by East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) as part of an overall package of £151 million across the East Midlands.

*emda* made the announcement after it had approved LSEP's Sub-regional Investment Plan. LSEP is the Sub-regional Strategic Partnership (SSP) for Leicester Shire and is committed to encouraging sustainable growth in the economy.

SSPs are partnerships that include the private, public and voluntary sectors, statutory bodies and *emda* who provide most of the funding although SSPs also lever in additional funding from a range of other sources.

The Sub-regional Investment Plan for Leicester Shire was approved following an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the local economy and six priorities for LSEP were identified.

These priorities are the need for strong local leadership, a clear and distinctive identity for Leicester Shire, effective working partnerships, a successful economy that plays to economic and cultural strengths, an improved level of skills including a better match between supply and demand and an improved quality of life for everyone.

Of the total funding allocation for next year (2007/08), LSEP will invest 50% on productivity priorities covering skills, business support and innovation, 20% will be invested in sustainability with most

supporting land and development priorities whilst 30% will be allocated to equality to improve community cohesion, reduce economic disparity and regeneration.



**Kishor Tailor**

chief executive of LSEP

*"In making this announcement covering the next three years, emda are enabling us to plan our future programme. LSEP recognise that some projects need a long term commitment so the impact on Leicester Shire's economy can be maximised."*



**Bryan Jackson**

chairman of *emda*

*"We are delighted to demonstrate our continuing commitment to LSEP and the six other SSPs by approving this funding for the next three years. SSPs will play a vital role in achieving our vision to become 'a flourishing region' by 2020, as they are in a strong position to take practical steps to ensure we create vibrant economies at the very heart of our communities."*



**Martin Traynor**

interim chairman of LSEP

*"This represents a major investment in the Leicester and Leicestershire economy. Working closely with both emda and our local partners, I am convinced that we can deliver significant economic change in the sub-region and significantly contribute to the regional objectives."*

### Over the next three years (2007/10) LSEP will be striving to:

- Create or safeguard 3400 jobs
- Support 4400 people into employment
- Create 320 new businesses
- Assist 2300 businesses to improve their performance
- Attract £33 million from the public and private sectors for regeneration
- Reclaim 6 hectares of brownfield land
- Help 6600 adults develop their skills
- Enable 1700 people to gain basic skills
- Ensure 1700 adults achieve NVQ level 2 qualifications

# New Approach to Delivering Business Link Service

A new approach to delivering the Business Link (BL) branded service in the East Midlands has taken place. East Midlands Business Ltd (EMB) has been established to bring together the five county-based BL operators to a single BL.

EMB's proposed new framework for business support builds on the strong foundation established by all five BL organisations. The structure is based on a regional office supported by five local area offices and up to 30 local access points positioned where the need for this type of support has been identified. As a result, at

least 4,000 more customers could benefit from the new BL service.

Mike Carr, executive director of business services at *emda*, said, "Regionalisation presents a unique opportunity for us to deliver a real step-change in the provision of business support services. The new approach will create access to an even greater range of services to make the East Midlands 'a flourishing region' by 2020."

EMB is aiming to increase the number of SMEs trading in the East Midlands, improve the survival rate of new businesses and

increase the growth rate and profitability of existing SMEs.

If you would like to find out more about EMB, with details of upcoming roadshows, please visit [www.businesslinksevents.com](http://www.businesslinksevents.com)



## Exciting Plans for Oadby and Wigston

A brand new look for the town centres of Oadby and Wigston is on the cards.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, in partnership with LSEP and Leicestershire County Council, has invested over £100,000 to commission a team of consultants to prepare the Masterplans which will result in a separate blueprint for each town centre.

The Masterplans will look to find new sites that can be developed and existing sites that can be redeveloped. It is intended that these sites will be used to increase the amount and variety of retailers represented in the towns, introduce new community and leisure uses and new housing and offices.

The Masterplans bring the opportunity to increase the number of jobs in the towns and to improve the overall prosperity of the whole Borough. Recommendations will relate to car parking, access, new public spaces and appearance and they will look to make the town centres more welcoming and attractive.



Oadby



Wigston

## Woodland Conference Exceeds Expectations

A Woodland Conference that was held at Conkers exceeded the organisers' expectations.

Demand for places at the event meant it had to be relocated to a larger site within the visitor attraction. In total around 160 people attended the event, mostly from the increasing range of businesses working in and around The National Forest.

Speakers, pictured right, included: Hugh Williams and Sophie Churchill, National Forest Company, woodland business adviser. Liz Thomas, Leicestershire Rural Partnership. Mike Seville, Country Land and Business Association, who spoke about the role and opportunities for woodland in addressing climate change.



# Our Future is Your Business

LSEP is beginning a period of consultation so that it can develop a new Economic Strategy for Leicester Shire. Separate consultation events will be held for the private, public and voluntary/community sectors and a website will be established for anyone who would like to contribute online.

The current Economic Strategy was published in 2003 for the period up to 2012. The document outlined LSEP's mission 'to create the right economic conditions which can improve the quality of people's lives and the environment within which we live'.

The Economic Strategy needs to be reviewed in light of *emda's* RES (Regional Economic Strategy) that was published in July 2006. The RES identifies ten strategic



priorities based around three key themes: raising productivity, ensuring sustainability and achieving equality.

The first of the consultation events is aimed at the private sector and will take place on the morning of Tuesday 15th May 2007 at the Leicester Marriott. Leicester Shire businesses need to articulate the issues that are hampering progress so that a vision for the next 15-20 years can be developed.

## Areas to be covered include:

- How education can be further geared to the needs of local businesses
- Ensuring that Leicester Shire has a 'Can Do' feel
- Ways in which the infrastructure can be improved to help meet business needs
- Harnessing technology and innovation
- Proving to investors that Leicester Shire is a great place to do business

To book a place or for further details of the 'Leicester Shire day – Our Future is Your Business' event call 0870 170 9697 or visit [www.leicestershireday.co.uk](http://www.leicestershireday.co.uk)

## Leicester Shire Benefits from Protective Personal Equipment

A showcase event for anyone interested in the production of personal protective equipment enabled Leicester Shire businesses to understand the market and in particular the current requirements of the police, local government and other public agencies.

The range of equipment ranged from body armour (with ballistic and stab protection) to foul weather wear for park attendants. The event aimed to encourage Leicester Shire companies, with skills and capacity, to develop their own products.

The speakers included representatives from:

- The Home Office who showed video clips of how equipment is tested
- The Health and Safety Executive who demonstrated their testing procedure
- Leicester company Kempton Clothing who outlined the opportunities for other businesses
- Manchester University who reported on a Knowledge and Industry project that will enable businesses to access current information



- Derbyshire County Council who presented on Source East Midlands and the opportunities to tender for local authority contracts

The event was supported by a number of partners and projects including LSEP and De Montfort University who funded the event, Smartex, Innotech and GO-FAST, a Nottingham Trent University Initiative.

# Over 100 New Jobs Created Through Hi-Growth

The LSEP funded Hi-Growth programme has been responsible for creating and safeguarding over 100 jobs in Leicester Shire. Hi-Growth is delivered by Business Builder who work with companies that have the potential to increase their turnover to over £1 million within the first three years.

A total of 103 jobs have been created or safeguarded within 25 businesses supported by the programme, which offers expertise to enable companies to overcome barriers to growth. Intensive one to one coaching with a combination of business support workshops enables businesses to address factors that impact on growth.

Companies that have grown significantly over the last 12 months include a Leicester

based domiciliary care agency Fortiz Ltd and The Old English Smokehouse in Arnesby.

Harvey Gardiner got inspiration for The Old English Smokehouse Ltd whilst watching a national fly fishing competition. He says, "I was watching a weigh in, waiting to see how my friend had got on, and was offered some trout as one team were keen to make use of the left over catch. It was then that the idea of starting a smokehouse came to me as I wanted to make use of the fresh fish."

Links with Jayquest smokery in Derbyshire resulted in the development of a smoked trout product, which won a Gold award as the best speciality food in the East Midlands. Since the initial success the smokehouse is now set to develop its own

custom made facility and a pilot retail shop backed by new investors based in Arnesby.

Kishor Tailor, chief executive of LSEP, said, "The results of this year's programme are very encouraging and we are seeing some of our SMEs grow and begin to exploit market opportunities. These companies are the large employers of the future and will make a major contribution to the sub-regional economy."

Paul Murphy, senior advisor of Business Builder, added, "The progress some of the companies are making is astounding and we hope that the programme will enable this rate of growth to continue. We also look forward to working with some new companies in the future."



## Developing Leicester Shire Networks

Grants made by Leicester Shire Networks will lead to the development of 17 networks instead of the eight anticipated when the programme was launched.

Contracts are still being confirmed but those provisionally awarded grants are to:

- A range of geographical areas

- Different sectors (eg food and drink, creative, textiles, IT)
- Various sized businesses
- Businesses from disadvantaged communities

For details on establishing a network visit [www.leicsnet.net/newnetwork](http://www.leicsnet.net/newnetwork) and for developing networks visit [www.leicsnet.net](http://www.leicsnet.net)



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