

# ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2019 – MARCH 2020



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## FOREWORD

Welcome to Dorset LEP's 2019/20 Annual Report, showcasing the many ways we have been supporting and driving forward Dorset's economy.

From business support initiatives in an uncertain political and economical landscape and investment in innovative, job-boosting projects to our focus on improving transport networks, digital connectivity, housing and local workforce skills, this year has been remarkable in many ways.

We were proud to support our local government reform and are already seeing the benefits of efficient and effective co-working with our two streamlined unitary authorities for the greater economic prosperity of Dorset. Partnership and collaboration are always at the heart of our work and the simplification of Dorset's local governance structure has bolstered this.

We submitted Dorset's draft Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) to government, our 20-year plan to deliver economic growth and productivity across Dorset. The LIS is our first joint strategy for a new Dorset focused on both people and the place.

We have forged ahead with our Local Growth Fund investment delivering a wide range of schemes revitalising and strengthening specific geographical and industry sectors in Dorset. Through our careful portfolio management, we have made significant savings in our delivery programme enabling a series of new economic development projects to be fast-tracked, and as a result of associated match-funding, a total of £130 million has been invested in the region.

We reviewed and introduced a new governance structure for Dorset LEP to advise and implement our strategic ambitions. Our board is now supported by 12 strategic governance committees, working groups and advisory panels.

To date, our investments and initiatives have created over 2,328 new jobs and 1,865 new homes, supported just over 1,702 businesses, trained 5,385 people and 1,770 apprentices



Jim Stewart, Chair and Lorna Carver, Director,  
Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership

and facilitated the development of 97,483sq<sup>2</sup> of commercial space as well as 5,839sq<sup>2</sup> of floor space for learning.

People are at the root of any organisation's success and we are fortunate to be supported by a talented, hard-working and committed board and team. I would like to express my gratitude to all of Dorset LEP's board members and staff for their significant contributions which have made these achievements possible. Together we are making great advances and positive change for Dorset.

Local Enterprise Partnerships continue to play a vital role in supporting businesses across England, creating the strategic direction for local economies, and implementing effective, timely and results driven programmes.

COVID-19 has hit the UK economy hard. We are operating in uncertain and challenging times. Never has it been more important for local communities to receive the financial support, advice, and investment they deserve. Dorset LEP is committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure our business community remains resilient and can not only survive but thrive.

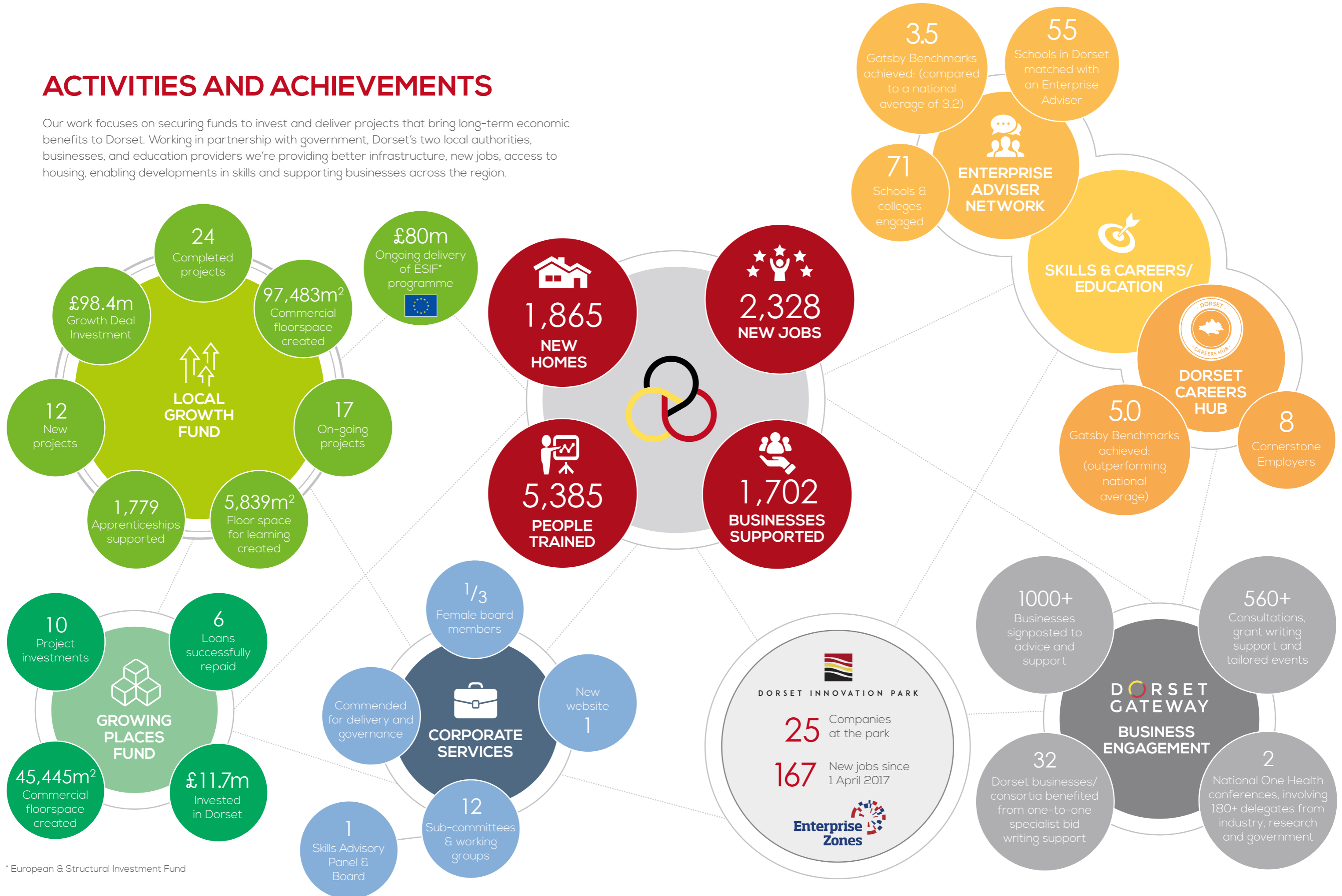
We look forward to continuing to work closely with our business leaders, BCP Council, Dorset Council and all of our stakeholders to deliver ongoing and meaningful results for our economy and maximising efforts to create jobs, long-term growth, and investment across the county.

I hope you enjoy reading about the scope of Dorset LEP's work and achievements. Best wishes for a productive and successful year ahead.

Jim Stewart  
Chair, Dorset LEP

# ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Our work focuses on securing funds to invest and deliver 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.



\* European & Structural Investment Fund

# INVESTING IN DORSET



Through our careful portfolio management of Dorset's £98.4 million Growth Deal allocation and associated match-funding from delivery partners, a total of £130 million has been invested into the region to date, with every penny allocated directly to a wide range of economy-boosting initiatives in Dorset, all of which are on track to deliver on schedule and to target.

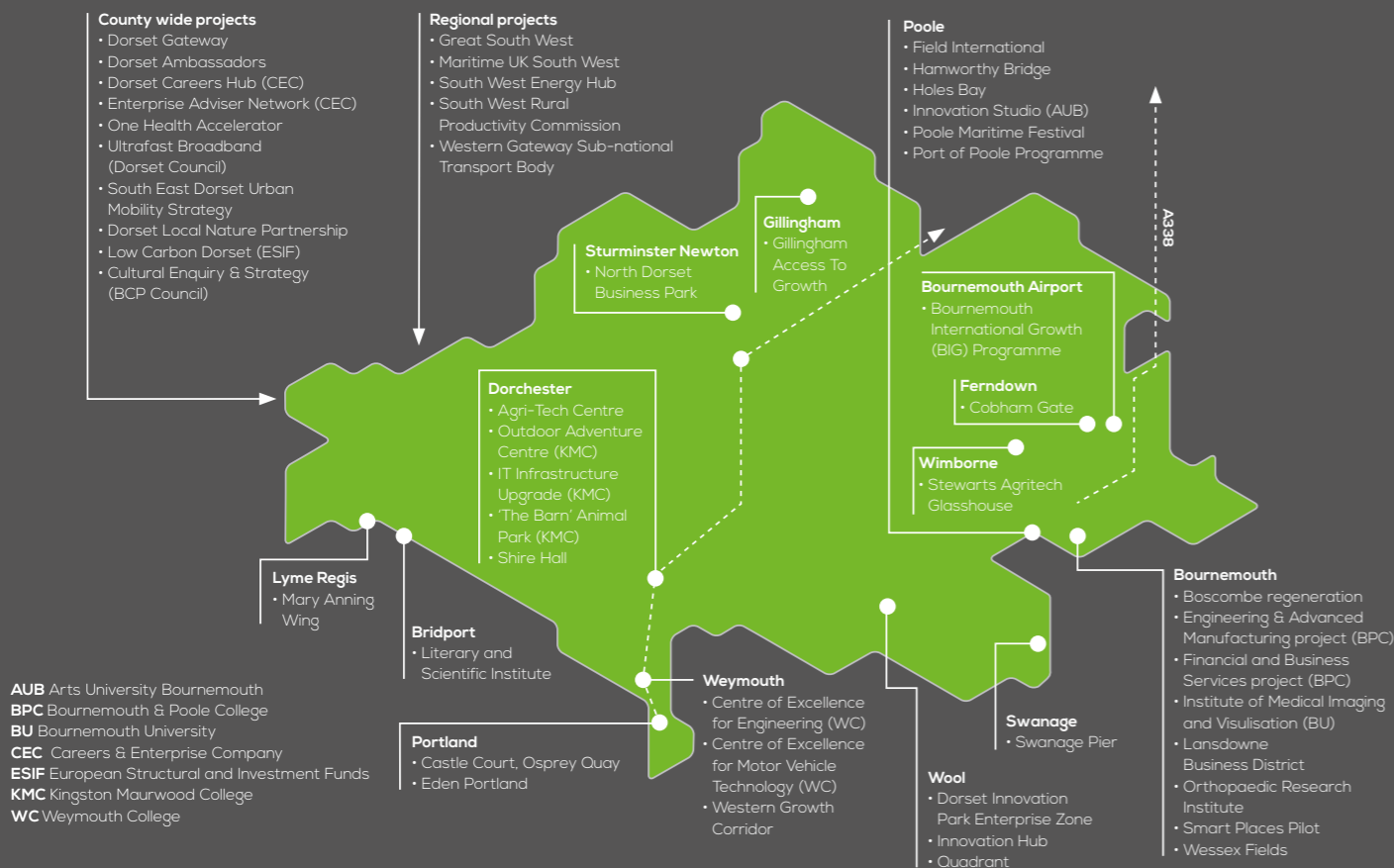
Our investment programme, financed through Local Growth and Growing Places funding, is at the heart of all that we do. We continue to invest in a range of projects to bring jobs, improved transport, skills, housing, productivity, and innovation to Dorset.

This year, thanks to our efficient programme management, another twelve projects were able to be brought forward. We have also identified new investment options through a call for new projects, further investing in Dorset's economy.

## Local Growth and Growing Places Funds

Investing in skills and innovation plays an intrinsic role in building our economy. We are 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.

### A snapshot of projects benefiting from Dorset LEP investment



## Ground-breaking medical science institute for Dorset

We awarded £1.4 million in Local Growth funding to Bournemouth University (BU) to establish an Institute for Medical Imaging and Visualisation in Dorset.

The institute will:

- Facilitate medical imaging technology programme and research development
- Enhance clinical practice, commercial development in intellectual property and advancements in the next generation of 3D medical imaging
- Offer trained, skilled technicians for local employers
- Facilitate regional economic development related to medical science
- Fill a skills gap in higher level technical provision, to the benefit of local employers.

“ As the use of artificial intelligence, computer visualisation and augmented reality continues to complement advances in medical technology both nationally and globally, it's crucial that significant investment is put into these areas. This important Growth Deal funding enables us to explore new research areas and build a new suite of programmes that will develop highly-skilled technical and medical roles within the region. ”

PROFESSOR STEPHEN TEE,  
EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,  
BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

## Orthopaedic Research Institute – global ambitions

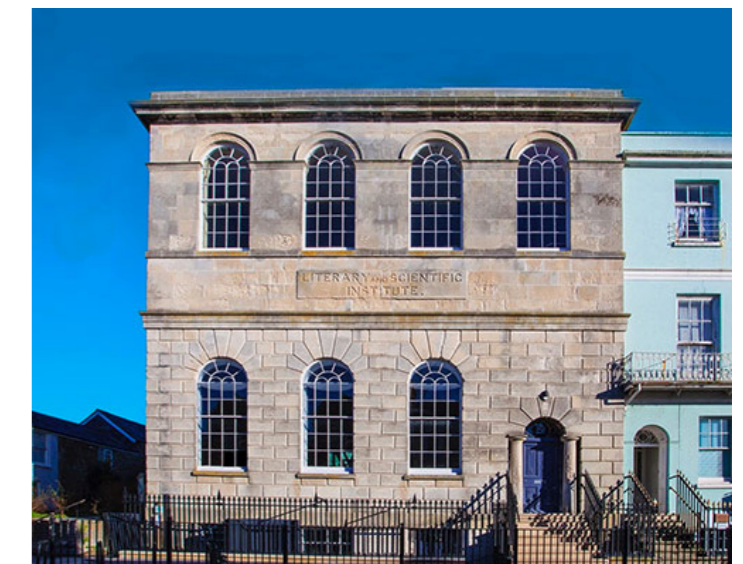
This innovative institute at Bournemouth University received £950,000 of Local Growth funding in November 2018 to purchase state of the art equipment and provide industry-based training for UK and overseas surgeons, and other high-value healthcare professionals. An initial £700,000 Local Growth Fund investment had previously helped establish the research institute, providing cutting edge facilities including a virtual reality gait analysis laboratory.

Following successful installation of ground-breaking simulators and specialist robotic simulators, this year, the team started training surgeons on open hip and knee surgery techniques. Clinical trials have continued including a study of robotic arm assisted hip replacements at the Nuffield Health Bournemouth Hospital and the Royal Bournemouth Hospital.

These investments accelerate the global reach of orthopaedic research at BU, helping establish a presence at global hub in South Africa, with further global hubs planned for India, Australasia and Eastern Europe.

## A look back: LSI Building

Two years on from receiving £56,250 Local Growth funding, the re-developed Literary Science Institute in Bridport is now a local workspace, home to Crowdfunder UK and Feel Good Drinks, and a popular hot desk space.





### A blooming economy

Stewarts Garden Centres benefited from £297,000 Local Growth Fund investment towards a new 9,000m<sup>2</sup> highly productive agri-tech glasshouse at its Broomhill site, near Wimborne.

Featuring automated machinery for handling plants and computer-controlled heating and shading zones, the glasshouse is designed to revolutionise productivity for the business and enable it to compete more effectively with importers.

Work is progressing on the facility, which is expected to also provide learning opportunities for local students, people with learning difficulties, special interest groups and local businesses.

“ Investing in agri-tech, which uses technology in agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture to improve yield, efficiency, and profitability, is one of the LEP’s top priorities. ”

JIM STEWART, CHAIR, DORSET LEP

## INVESTING IN SKILLS

We are passionate about equipping our young people – Dorset’s future workforce – with access to the facilities they need, developing their skills to find work locally. This year, we have continued to invest in our young people through the allocation of over £1.7 million of local growth funding into local further education institutions.

Approval of over £700,000 of Local Growth funding has been granted to invest in three facility upgrade projects at Bournemouth & Poole College. Construction, engineering and digital hubs will be created to focus on employability and enterprise skills, ensuring students learn in more modern environments to be work-ready before entering industry.

Weymouth College opened a new Centre of Excellence for Motor Vehicle Technology in November 2019. Students have already benefitted from this £250,000 Local Growth Fund investment, working on a fleet of hybrid and electric vehicles and developing the necessary skills for this increasingly popular mode of cleaner transport. The college is now set to undergo a refurbishment to create a Centre of Excellence for Engineering, thanks to our allocation of a further £605,000 of Local Growth funding to pay for machinery, IT infrastructure and a digital



Weymouth College Centre of Excellence for Motor Vehicle Technology opening ceremony

media suite for Computer Aided Design (CAD) and modelling skills.

Dorset LEP also allocated £111,000 Local Growth Funding to Kingston Maurwood College, for improvement works to the estate and the build of an Outdoor Adventure Centre that will provide a fun and inspiring way to introduce young people to agricultural education.

“ Increasing the local education skills offering and competitiveness is of great importance in consolidating Dorset as a great place to learn, and then work. ”

LORNA CARVER, DIRECTOR, DORSET LEP

### Lapsafe Learning

Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) students can now develop their digital and creative skills using specialist Mac laptops fitted with the latest creative industry software, thanks to a £51,000 Local Growth Fund investment.

ARTS  
UNIVERSITY  
BOURNEMOUTH

## GROWING PLACES FUND

### Cobham Gate employment site delivers

Glenbeigh Developments completed infrastructure improvements at Cobham Gate, one of Dorset’s prime employment sites, in January 2020, thanks to a £1.5 million Growing Places Fund loan. The loan was used to build new access roads and improved foot and cycle paths into and around Cobham Gate, as well as support operational services, and has released approx. 25 acres of employment land and 400,000ft<sup>2</sup> of floor space for warehouse, industrial and office use. Parcel delivery firm DPD became one of the first major investors on the site with the development of a 40,000ft<sup>2</sup> depot.



### Adventures in education at Kingston Maurwood College

In October 2019, The Barn doors were opened at a brand-new indoor activity centre and café at Kingston Maurwood this Dorchester-based education centre. A £250,000 loan from our Growing Places Fund paid for this

environmentally-friendly structure, making the park a year-round tourist attraction and providing an educational space for visiting schools, interest groups and members of the public. The new facility has already welcomed over 11,000 visitors.



Opening of The Barn, Kingston Maurwood College

# AMBITIONS

Our ambitions for Dorset's economic growth go far beyond what we deliver through our excellent investment programme. This Annual Report outlines our 2019/20 Delivery Plan priorities and achievements across four core areas: strategic infrastructure, business growth & inward investment, skills and corporate services.

Dorset is proud of its £17 billion contribution to the UK economy and its robust employment and business survival rates. However, like other areas of the UK, Dorset's productivity rate lags behind the national average and we face renewed global competition. Despite this, Dorset's economy is resilient, growing, and has the potential to deliver greater prosperity for Dorset and beyond, for generations to come.

We are investing in people and places to create an environment where people want to live, work and visit.



# STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Boosting the economy through investment in infrastructure and digital connectivity is at the heart of our investment strategy for Dorset. We are a largely rural region made up of smaller communities, while closer to the coast there is a large, complex conurbation spanning Christchurch to Poole.

## Bigger and better: Bournemouth International Growth (BIG) Programme

A major economic growth plan, receiving £41 million Local Growth funding in 2015, the BIG Programme is focused on improving connectivity, easing congestion, protecting existing jobs and creating new ones in and around Bournemouth Airport, Wessex Fields and the Bournemouth Area.

Completion of the A338/Blackwater Junction improvements on time and on budget in June 2019, marks a key milestone in the £10.3 million Blackwater Junction & A338 Widening element of the BIG Programme.

This section of the A338 now benefits from additional lanes in each direction between the Cooper Dean roundabout and Blackwater Junction, improved slip roads and completed pier protection works, including the widening of the bridge over the River Stour to accommodate an additional lane.



Representatives from Dorset LEP, BCP Council and Dorset Council marking the completion of improvement works at the A338/Blackwater Junction

“The major improvements to Dorset’s transport network will improve traffic flow and ease congestion to make journeys for all road users in the area much easier. I’m pleased to see work on this section of the roads improvement project completed and look forward to people and businesses across Dorset seeing the benefits.”

JAKE BERRY, MINISTER FOR LOCAL GROWTH (JULY 2019)

The BIG Programme has been further enhanced with a new contract and initial development of the South East Dorset Urban Mobility Strategy (SEDUMS) to provide an updated, modern transport strategy for the region.

## Port of Poole Programme on target

This programme supports six transport schemes improving access into and around the Port of Poole. Our investment is helping to drive local economic growth and bring an anticipated £500 million of leveraged private investment into the area.

Three schemes have been completed to date, and this year the conclusion of major improvement works at Hunger Hill in Poole marks a pivotal milestone for the £9.69m Local Growth funded Townside Access scheme. This key gateway into Dorset will benefit from transport improvements and enhanced links for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as landscaping and artefacts that celebrate the historic local identity, enriching the area for both residents and visitors.

“The Port of Poole is such an important business centre for Dorset and we are supporting it to thrive with over £21.8 million of growth deal funding. This major investment in transport networks, new homes and businesses is already delivering significant benefits for the local community and helping to drive the economy across the region.”

JAKE BERRY, MINISTER FOR LOCAL GROWTH (JULY 2019)



Councillor Andy Hadley, BCP Council, Lorna Carver, Director of Dorset LEP and Jim Stewart, Chair of Dorset LEP at Hunger Hill (Port of Poole programme)

## £3.2 million for Gillingham

The north Dorset town of Gillingham will benefit from a £3.2 million Local Growth Fund investment for transport improvements to the town’s road junctions and sustainable transport, aiming to deliver up to:

- 1,800 houses
- 2,500 jobs
- 9 hectares of employment land

“Gillingham is one of North Dorset’s main towns and improvements to the B3081 junction are essential to not only support the existing local economy but also unlock the economic growth potential of this area.”

JIM STEWART, CHAIR, DORSET LEP

### This year the BIG Programme also saw:



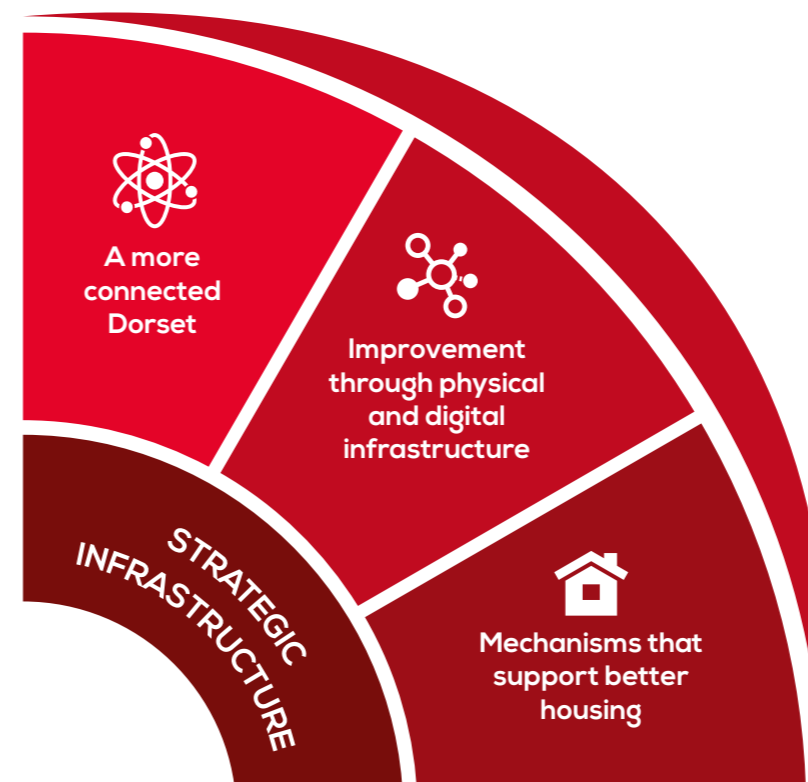
Work start on the B3073 Blackwater Junction West.



Work start on an access road to Wessex Fields.



Approval for investment along the A348 /A3049 corridor scheme connecting Ferndown, Wallisdown and Poole.



### Boundary Roundabout improvements

A project to upgrade Boundary Roundabout, an important Bournemouth-Poole commuter corridor, has been approved. Improvements will support the growth of Bournemouth University and Arts University Bournemouth as well as address congestion and road safety issues in the area.



### Trailblazing digital connectivity

Dorset is at the forefront of 5G wireless communications technology with roll-out plans in place across the county.

Our £1 million investment of local growth fund to BCP Council's pioneering 5G Smart Place Pilot in Bournemouth's Lansdowne business district supports a high-tech, fibre optic venture aimed at implementing a world-first in 5G mobile deployment. It will provide:

- Increased Wi-Fi connectivity speed
- 5G-enabled machines for advanced manufacturing
- Smart mobility, healthcare and social care programmes.

The Lansdowne area is expected to be transformed into a more commercial business district with transport upgrades and the introduction of a public realm focus. The digital infrastructure offered by 5G will enable this new business district to thrive, attracting a range of new businesses to the area and providing better connectivity for those already there.

### Housing plans for Holes Bay

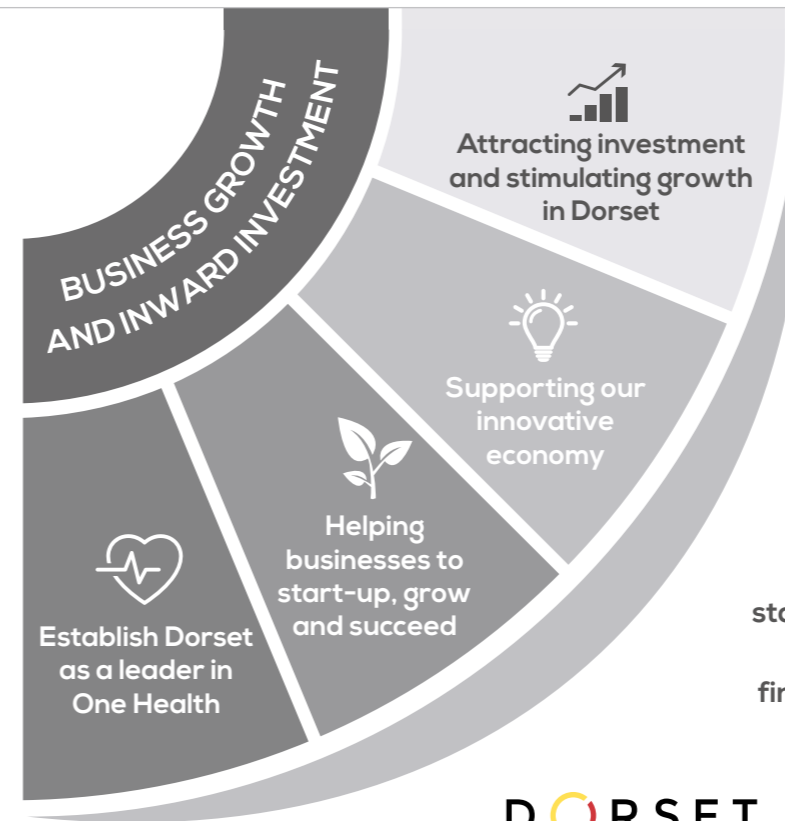
£5 million of Local Growth funding has been approved to unlock the potential of Holes Bay – the largest brownfield regeneration site in the south west of England. The site will provide up to 830 new homes and 700m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floorspace on a strategic 16 hectare brownfield site on the waterfront of Poole Harbour, close to the town centre, and the commercial Port of Poole.



Artist's impression of Holes Bay

**“ The Smart Place pilot is not just about faster data speeds through 5G. It will enable things and machines to connect to the internet and gives us capacity in the network to do this. It will also help us understand how 5G and other new technologies could help improve public services and quality of life for residents. ”**

COUNCILLOR VIKKI SLADE, LEADER OF BCP COUNCIL



## DORSET GATEWAY

This year has seen huge disruption and uncertainty for the UK business environment, and with uncertainty still surrounding the UK's economic relationship with Europe and the rest of the world, matters have been compounded by the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

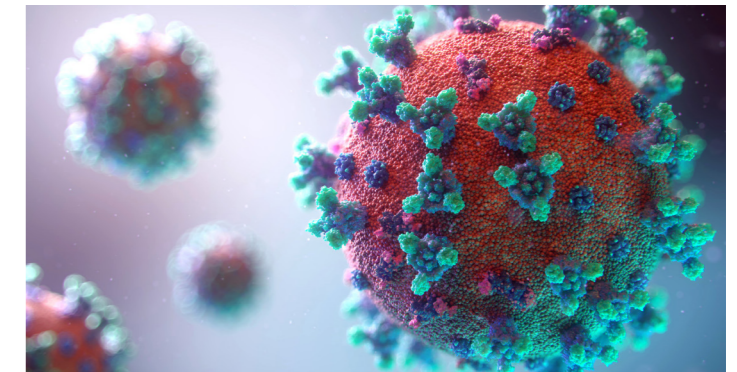
Dorset LEP's growth hub, Dorset Gateway, delivered in partnership with Dorset Chamber, has been busy supporting businesses to navigate their way through these uncertain times. Initiatives this year included:

- Hosting seminars for scale-ups and high-growth SMEs
- Delivering 1-2-1 support to over 550 businesses
- Providing specialist Brexit readiness advice
- Co-presenting two corporate pitch-day events for MedTech and advanced engineering and manufacturing businesses
- Promoting government funding and grant opportunities
- Helping local businesses and projects secure £631,000 of funding and doubling Dorset's bids to Innovate UK, through our fully-funded specialist bid writing service
- Hosting two national 'one health' conferences and launching the One Health Accelerator
- Launching successful social media campaigns for #Aquabites and the #BidBites podcast series.

# BUSINESS GROWTH & INWARD INVESTMENT

Home to well-known international businesses as well as a multitude of fast-growing local enterprises, Dorset is recognised as a hot spot for innovation and business.

Dorset's natural assets offer businesses the opportunity to capitalise on emerging capabilities in AgriTech and Aquaculture. This is complemented by a £1bn GVA tourism sector, an increasing number of start-up's and an emerging city region with an expanding digital and creative sector and a large, established financial sector. Set against a beautiful backdrop, Dorset is able to provide the perfect work-life balance.



### Supporting business during COVID-19

Dorset Gateway was receiving enquiries as early as the start of March, when businesses first felt the impact of the outbreak. By mid-March, Dorset LEP had invested in a range of resources and initiatives to support businesses:

- Posted the very latest information and links to business advice and government support
- Expanded Dorset Gateway's capacity to manage the large influx of business enquiries
- Launched the Dorset COVID-19 Business Impact Survey to identify specific support requirements for Dorset - results are being used to inform our reports to government as they develop business support measures at a national and local level

The 'Looking to the future' section on **page 29** includes more detail about Dorset LEP's response to COVID-19 and future plans to support Dorset's economic recovery.

[www.dorsetlep.co.uk/covid19](http://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/covid19)



## Sector strengths

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

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 for 2019/20. Dorset LEP hosted two national conferences this year, bringing together members of the Dorset agritech and aquaculture business community and introducing the Department for International Trade to the many opportunities Dorset has to offer.

## High potential for aquaculture

As a result of the hard work of Dorset LEP's 'Invest in Dorset' team (which includes representatives from both of Dorset's local authorities) and involvement from the likes of the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), the Department for International Trade has identified Dorset's thriving sustainable aquaculture sector as a High Potential Opportunity for foreign investment.

This year, we hosted the UK's first aquaculture expo event with a focus on 'One Health' which is critical to sustainable protein production in aquaculture.

Dorset offers overseas businesses the opportunity to enter the UK aquaculture



Department for International Trade

“ DIT sees aquaculture as a unique opportunity for the UK to attract further investment and grow exports overseas, and Dorset is particularly beneficial with the opportunities on offer. High Potential Opportunities are a means of promoting an area which has had little traction or profiling but has the opportunity for more investment to grow a sector in that region. ”

ELIZABETH WARHAM, AGRI-TECH LEAD FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE (DIT)



Brown Trout at Hooke Springs Trout Farm

market to meet growing national and global demand for fish, shellfish and aquatic plants by developing and deploying technologies whilst using our county's unique natural assets, sustainable environment and local infrastructure. Over 90 people attended the expo including CEFAS, the Department for International Trade, aquaculture businesses, researchers and investors.

Global seafood consumption has more than doubled in the past 50 years, putting stress on the sustainability of fishing. As a result, aquaculture is projected to be the prime source of seafood by 2030. As global demand grows, aquaculture, when practiced sustainably, can help provide livelihoods and feed a global population that will reach nine billion by 2050.



Luke Rake, Dorset LEP board member and Kingston Maurwood Principal presenting at the One Health OH20 Expo

## Making a splash with #DorsetAquabites



A video showcase of Dorset's aquaculture businesses and the opportunities for sector growth in the region

[DorsetAquabites](#) [Youtube/DorsetLEP](#)



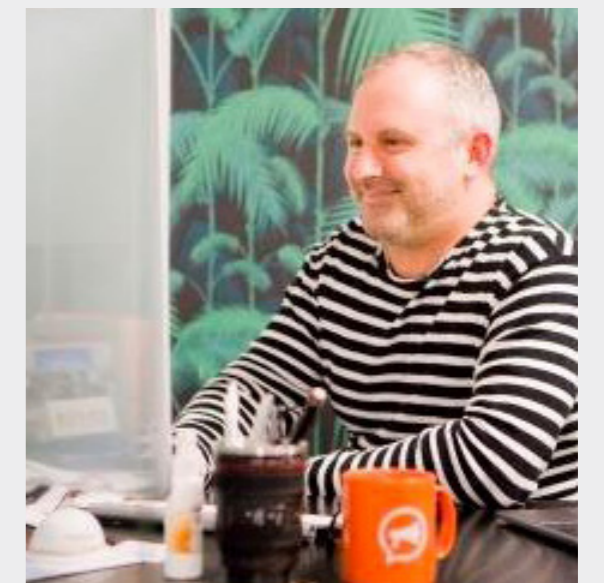
## BFX Summit

Dorset LEP was a proud sponsor of Bournemouth University's BFX Festival, the UK's largest visual effects, computer games and animation festival, where we hosted the BFX Summit, showcasing Dorset's creative economy and potential to expand as a cultural capital.



## Dorset Business Awards – recognising industry leaders

Jamie Sergeant, Managing Director of creative agency, Crowd, won the Dorset LEP sponsored 2019 Business Leader of the Year award at the annual Dorset Business Awards. Finalists included Marianne Storey, Dorset Mind and Martin Edwards, Julia's House.



Jamie Sergeant, Managing Director, Crowd



Marianne Storey, Chief Executive, Dorset Mind



Martin Edwards, Chief Executive, Julia's House

“ We have been overwhelmed by the inspirational achievements of Dorset's business leaders. ”

JIM STEWART  
CHAIR OF DORSET LEP



## Dorset Innovation Park – Enterprise Zone

Dorset Innovation Park is developing into an advanced engineering cluster of excellence for the South West, building on existing strengths in the marine, defence, energy and cyber security sectors. This Enterprise Zone in Dorset amplifies Dorset LEP’s strategic function and ability to maximise the potential of the site. In December 2019, working closely with the new unitary authority, Dorset Council, we have aligned income generation and reinvestment for the full benefits to be delivered across Dorset.



## Dorset Ambassadors

Over 40 local business volunteers work with Dorset LEP to promote Dorset, support young people, seek opportunities with government for regional investment and advocate business opportunities in Dorset.

Networking events this year focused on the global reach of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution’s new manufacturing facility.



L-R: Mark Northey, Managing Director, Norco GRP and Jim Stewart, Chair, Dorset LEP

“ The Dorset Innovation Park offered us the welcome opportunity to continue to grow our business in Dorset. In addition to the creation of skilled engineering and manufacturing jobs and multiple opportunities right across the supply chain, the project will also help raise the profile of Dorset and showcase the strategic nature of the county with its defence manufacturing links. ”

MARK NORTHEY, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NORCO GRP

## SKILLS

This year we have made significant progress in laying the foundations that will bring to life our vision for a highly-skilled workforce to ensure Dorset’s priority sectors thrive with home-grown talent and deliver future growth ambitions.

### Skills Advisory Panel and Board

Over the summer of 2019 we established a new committee, combining our existing advisory panel and skills board and refreshing our membership and terms of reference. This group works to create a lifelong learning skills ecosystem for Dorset, with employers, educational providers, communities and policy makers working together to, ultimately narrow the Dorset productivity gap, by:

- Proposing evidence-based interventions
- Addressing supply and demand for people and skills
- Tackling issues of social disadvantage and firm productivity
- Stimulating investment and innovation.

### Skills Analysis

Throughout 2019 we have strengthened our analytical capability and embarked on an analytical deep dive to understand the changing employment landscape and the provision of skills through our educational system in Dorset. This intelligence will influence our strategic responses and enable us to plan for emerging skills needs.

Recently we have refocused our research to understand the sudden and fundamental changes occurring as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown to offer relevant strategies and support towards recovery.



## Dorset 2020: Employer Skills Survey Report

At the start of 2020, 242 businesses and organisations took part in an employer skills survey to identify Dorset’s current and future skills and workforce training requirements and challenges and their impact on growth and productivity. The findings are helping Dorset LEP’s Skills Advisory Panel and Board to pinpoint strategic priorities for the county and develop a long-term skills plan, including calls for government funding, to support business performance and growth.



The launch of Dorset Careers Hub with representatives from Dorset LEP, The Careers & Enterprise Company, BCP Council and Dorset Council.

[www.dorsetlep.co.uk/investing-in-skills](http://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/investing-in-skills)

Our delivery of the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) programme has successfully connected a range of employers in key sectors with Dorset's further education institutions through Dorset Careers Hub and a wider Enterprise Adviser Network, providing careers education and opportunities to an increasing number of our region's young people.

### Launch of Dorset Careers Hub

Dorset Careers Hub plays a lead role in ensuring excellent careers education for young people across the region. Working in collaboration with local schools, colleges, universities, training providers, career professionals and employers, Dorset Careers Hub aims to improve career support for young people and prepare them for the world of work.

Our launch event in Autumn 2019 brought these groups of people together and marked a key milestone for Dorset Careers Hub. Backed by a national investment from the CEC, Dorset Careers Hub offers 40 schools and colleges across Dorset:

- Training for 'careers leaders'
- Access to support and funding
- Staff to coordinate activity and build networks
- A central fund for employer engagement including funds ring-fenced for Weymouth and Portland, one of Dorset's most deprived areas.

We are delighted that our initiatives have already generated exceptional progress and that by the spring of the 2019/20 academic year, the performance and achievements of our schools and colleges, which includes the national Gatsby Benchmarks is beyond the national average.



**“ We are delighted to roll out this model to a quarter of schools and colleges in the country, helping more young people get the vital support and opportunities they need. ”**  
 CLAUDIA HARRIS, CEO OF THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY (2015-2020)

### At the cornerstone of careers education

Dorset Careers Hub is backed by a network of Cornerstone Employers, representatives from local organisations who work collaboratively to drive enterprise and business engagement ensuring all young people have the opportunities they need to be prepared for the world of work.

Dorset's Cornerstone Employers include:



### Enterprise Adviser Network

Our Enterprise Adviser Network has continued to grow, helping students across 71 institutions build positive work skills and experiences. The network matches schools and colleges with business volunteers, inspiring and motivating young people about career options and helping them make informed choices about their future.

**“ Being an Enterprise Adviser is such an amazing opportunity to give back to your local school and the wider community. There is a lot of evidence to show that young people's life chances can be improved when schools are linked with employers and I have gained so much personally from getting involved. ”**



LUCY BRAMLEY, SENIOR PARTNER TECHNOLOGY MANAGER, MICROSOFT UK

## CORPORATE SERVICES

### STRATEGY

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

### A Local Industrial Strategy for Dorset: Living better, high performing and naturally collaborative.

Dorset LEP is leading the strategic economic direction for the county, acting as a business champion for Dorset. We raise important issues with government, secure investment and identify sector strengths and opportunities to grow Dorset's economy.

In December 2019 a draft Local Industrial Strategy for Dorset was submitted to government. The product of 18 months' collaboration with BCP Council, Dorset Council, local businesses, higher and further education institutions, communities and organisations, it outlines future plans to deliver economic growth, prosperity and productivity across Dorset.

We would like to thank the hundreds of organisations who contributed to our extensive consultation process, participating in public events and responding to our business surveys. Your views have played a crucial role in crystallising our thinking on Dorset's market strengths, opportunities and challenges, and are very much reflected in this strategy, developed for all of Dorset.

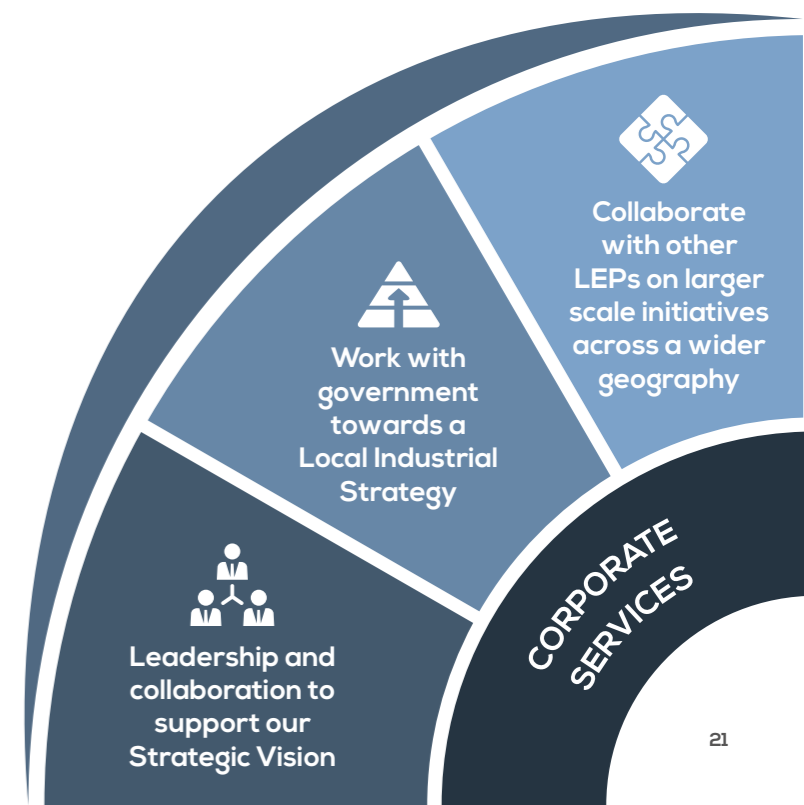
**“ Dorset has all the advantages of a self-contained location with a simplified governance and includes the newest emerging City Region in the UK alongside vibrant, largely rural surrounds ”**

EXTRACT: DORSET LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

### Dorset vision

By 2030 Dorset will be:

- A national leader for One Health and aquaculture, adopting a holistic approach that ensures our population ages well and lives sensitively in the environment.
- A key defence hub for the UK, and a leader in defence technology and commercialisation.
- Leading a digital and cultural transformation across all communities.



## A 'total place' economic ambition for Dorset

The Local Industrial Strategy is the first joint strategy for a new Dorset.

Dorset has all the advantages of a self-contained location with a simplified governance and includes the newest emerging City Region in the UK alongside vibrant, largely rural surrounds.

Dorset's Local Industrial Strategy leverages these advantages of a 'total place' proposition and supports the wider priorities and ambitions of the region.

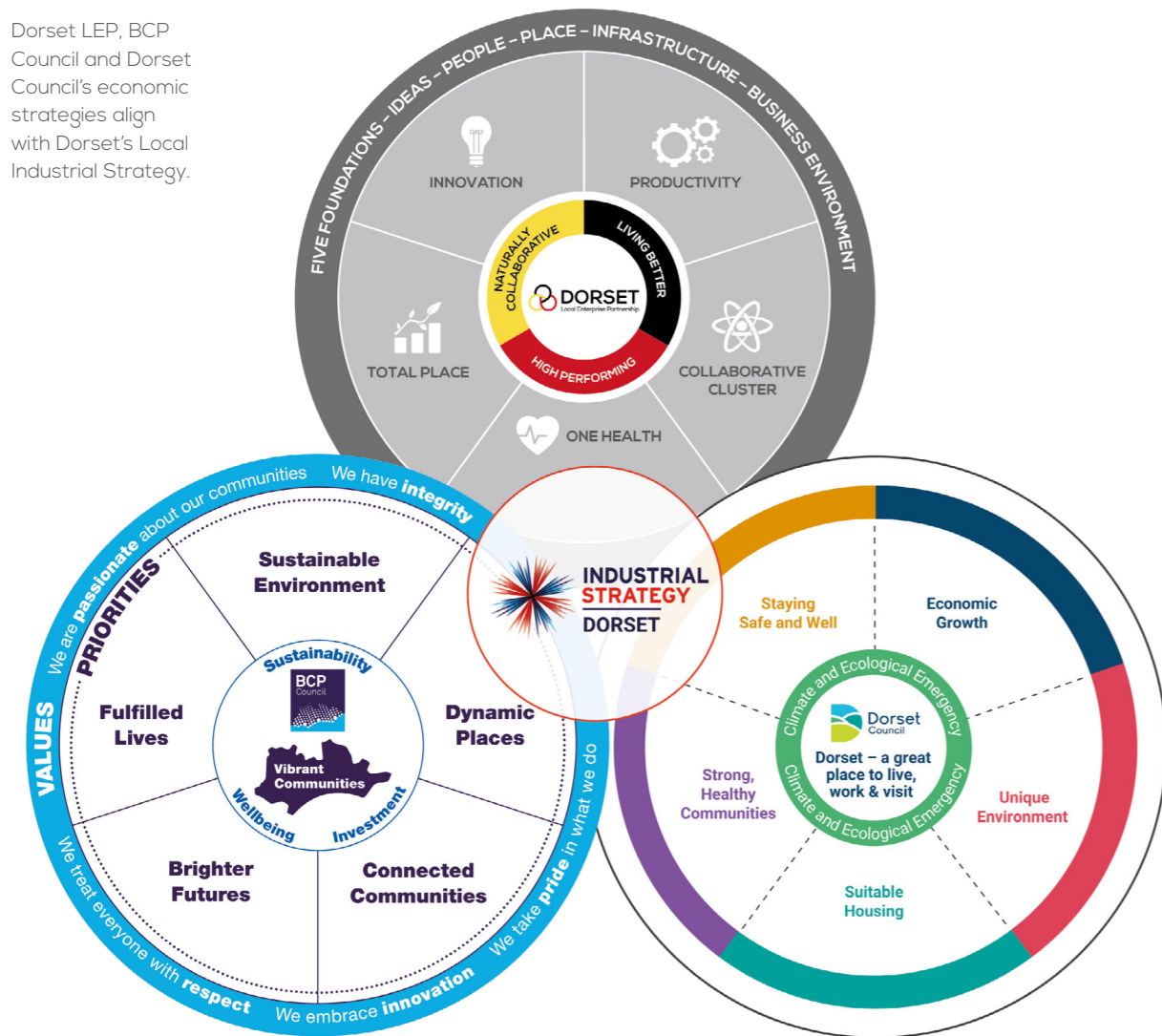
It also maximises the benefits of a new simplified governance across Dorset LEP, the unitary authorities, an innovative Dorset Integrated Health Partnership and a highly collaborative business community, that enables strategic leadership, test-bed innovations, pace and effective delivery mechanisms.

The evidence-base for Dorset's Local Industrial Strategy has also informed complementing emerging strategies across the region, including the strategic plans of both unitary authorities, BCP Council and Dorset Council. Our collaborative efforts have ensured aligned, evidence-based policy-making which can be implemented at pace - a truly unique offering.

We are in a strong position to target new opportunities for the region while building on solid foundations, driving growth and productivity and creating a sustainable environment for living in the context of climate change and an ageing population.

The full draft submission is available on our website: [dorsetlep.co.uk/local-industrial-strategy](https://dorsetlep.co.uk/local-industrial-strategy)

Dorset LEP, BCP Council and Dorset Council's economic strategies align with Dorset's Local Industrial Strategy.



## A strategic approach to skills

Key to Dorset's successful economic future is ensuring an increase in a skilled and work-ready local labour market. We want our working-age population to drive future economic growth through greater productivity.

Our newly reformed Skills Advisory Panel & Board of local authority, education and business sector representatives has set out a skills roadmap within the Local Industrial Strategy, focused on ensuring a high-skilled workforce that will meet the needs of Dorset's growing economy and priority sectors.

“ Our focus is to support the ambition of all people in the region – one that is sustainable, developmental, smarter, inclusive and more productive, whilst addressing the emerging 'demographic crunch' that challenges our region's growth. ”

EMMA HUNT, VICE-CHANCELLOR, ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH

## Back the Great South West

We are a founding partner of the Great South West, a powerhouse collaboration promoting the LEP areas of Dorset, Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly, and the Heart of the South West.

In January we launched a new prospectus revealing plans to deliver £45 billion of economic benefit and 190,000 jobs for our region's economy by 2035. In it, we ask the government for formal recognition of our alliance, and investment of £2 million over three years to build a business case for investment across a range of projects. This includes a Tourism Zone to help the industry become more productive, sustainable and adaptable, an agreement to create a Rural Productivity Deal to address specific needs of our rural economy, and an export and investment hub.

## Maritime UK South West

As an active member of the South Coast Marine Cluster, we fully supported the cluster's reformation as Maritime UK South West in January 2020. This affords us stronger links to government and stakeholders and creates a clear route to sector development in the South West, promoting the region's world class ocean economy and aiding business development across the region.

“ The South Coast Marine Cluster has built a valuable regional network across business, research and the public sector. By becoming part of Maritime UK we aim to forge stronger links with national government and stakeholders and create a clear route to sector development in the South West. ”

JIM STEWART, CHAIR OF DORSET LEP, CHIEF EXECUTIVE PORT OF POOLE AND SOUTH COAST CLUSTER BOARD MEMBER, represents the organisation on the main board of Maritime UK.

## Strategic partnership

Our impressive record of joint working across multiple sectors including energy, science and innovation, transport, aerospace, marine and health spans Dorset and beyond.

Working in partnership throughout different geographies allows us opportunities to deliver improved value for money, including shared infrastructure.

## South West Energy Strategy

Dorset LEP, working with Cornwall & Isles of Scilly LEP, Heart of the South West LEP, universities, colleges, local government, and business leaders developed a joint strategy for delivering low-carbon economic growth. This has played an informative role as we developed Dorset's Local Industrial Strategy and identified further collaboration opportunities through the Great South West partnership.

# GOVERNANCE

**Dorset LEP is 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.**

To ensure our decision-making is sound, thorough and fair, this year we reviewed and simplified our governance structure. Our board is now supported by 12 committees, working groups and advisory panels with members of the Dorset LEP board and industry professionals meeting at least once per quarter to drive forward Dorset LEP's strategic goals, advising and making recommendations to the board.

Moreover, each council in Dorset has two representatives on our board to ensure a strong local partnership.

We are mindful of our public responsibility when working with public money and operate strictly within the government's National Assurance Framework.

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 Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and this year were commended for delivery and governance.

## Introducing a new governance structure



Dorset LEP Board (and Accountable Body)



## Equality & diversity

We are committed to having a board which embraces diversity and promotes equality and are proud that a third of our members are female, putting us on track to meet the national target of 50% by 2023.

Deputy chair, Sara Uzzell, is our equality and diversity champion, ensuring our work is representative of Dorset's businesses and communities.

## Policy & public engagement

Our agendas and papers are published ahead of board meetings and the minutes made available within seven days of the meeting.

The occasional decision taken under the written procedure (due to urgency) is reported at the next relevant board meeting to ensure they are part of the public record.

Attendance at our board's annual meeting is open to the public and our Chair provides a progress report at our annual conference which is open to business representatives and the public.

It is essential that our strategies and reports are informed by the business interests across the county, and we work closely with businesses and business representatives, such as Dorset Chamber, in order to ensure each programme we support is soundly grounded within the needs of both our business and resident communities. The support of our local authorities and education partners is particularly important in providing routes to a clear understanding of issues that will lead to the future success of Dorset.

## dorsetlep.co.uk gets a refresh

This year, we redesigned and launched a new, mobile optimised, website to better communicate the depth and scope of our work and the support services available for local businesses. The site's structure aligns with our Local Assurance Framework, providing greater transparency and easy access to important information.



# MEET OUR BOARD

Our board brings together a wealth of experience from the private, public and education sectors, and collectively, they are our key decision-making body.

We are fortunate to have 21 board members whose energy, commitment and wisdom lead the development of our strategic priorities and oversee all our decisions and activities. Over two thirds of our board members are from private sector businesses and higher or further education establishments, while the remainder work in the public sector. This year we warmly welcomed Sophia Storey to our board, who has taken on the role of championing SMEs in Dorset



**Jim Stewart**  
Chief Executive,  
Poole Harbour Commissioners,  
Chair, Dorset LEP



**Sara Uzzell**  
Manager, National Trust  
Former hotel owner and hospitality  
& tour operator  
Deputy Chair, Dorset LEP



**Jim Andrews**  
Chief Operating  
Officer, Bournemouth  
University



**Nick Brook**  
Chief Executive,  
Inca Group



**Councillor  
Spencer Flower**  
Leader of  
Dorset Council



**Nick Gaines**  
Managing Director,  
Ultra Electronics  
Energy



**Ian Girling**  
Chief Executive,  
Dorset Chamber of  
Commerce & Industry



**Dianne Granel**  
Principal &  
Chief Executive,  
Bournemouth &  
Poole College



**Councillor  
Mark Howell**  
Deputy Leader,  
BCP Council



**Professor  
Emma Hunt**  
Deputy  
Vice-Chancellor,  
Arts University  
Bournemouth



**Arabella  
Lewis-Smith**  
Founder, Salad



**Nicola Newman**  
Chief Executive,  
Ansbury Guidance



**Luke Rake**  
Principal and Chief  
Executive, Kingston  
Maurward College



**Paul Read**  
Head of Development  
and Sales, Magna  
Housing



**Dr Phil Richardson**  
Chief System  
Integration Officer,  
NHS Dorset Clinical  
Commissioning Group



**Councillor  
Vikki Slade**  
Leader of  
BCP Council



**Richard Smith**  
Director,  
The Tank Museum



**Sophia Storey**  
Director,  
3 Sided Cube



**John Sutcliffe**  
Director,  
SMI Consulting



**Councillor  
Gary Suttle**  
Economic  
Development Portfolio  
Holder, Dorset Council



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

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Financial information for the 2019/20 finance year ending on 31 March 2020

Dorset LEP receives funding from central government through the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy as well as local partners to support its day to day activities and delivery of Dorset's Strategic Economic Vision and Plan. In addition to core programme funding received from government, we receive further funding and investment from our partners including the local authorities which provide a significant resource to support our work and activities to directly impact Dorset's economy.

Funding stream	2019/20 Budgeted	2019/20 Expenditure	2020/21 Budgeted
Careers and Enterprise Company	£250,738	£144,459	£313,997
Core Fund	£1,325,000	£1,057,592	£1,325,000
Dorset Gateway	£205,000	£316,302	£627,000
Growing Places Fund	£2,050,000	£218,018	£3,562,848
Local Growth Fund	£26,587,507	£16,403,736	£28,207,124
<b>Total</b>	<b>£30,418,245</b>	<b>£18,140,107</b>	<b>£34,035,969</b>

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

**We have a long-term vision of what we believe is needed to underpin future local economic growth, increase productivity and build long-term business resilience in the region.**

An economy worth £17 billion, a population approaching 800,000 and a business community of over 30,000 with the UK's third largest finance sector, a fast growth area for start-ups and the top area for high growth digital business – there is much to build on.

However, with a persistent productivity gap and the oldest population in the UK leading to a potential vacancy replacement of over half our workforce in the next 15 years, there is much to do, particularly in a climate emergency, the impact of COVID-19 and establishing a new trade environment after the UK's exit from the EU.

Our 2020/21 Delivery Plan sets out our ambition and priorities for the year ahead, building on our excellent track record of delivery and our outstanding work across stakeholders in effecting meaningful impact.

These plans align to our recently completed Local Industrial Strategy and a wider suite of detailed economic reports that have helped us to better understand where Dorset LEP can really make a difference to our economy and business community.

With strong leadership, clear plans in place, a co-ordinated capacity and shared set of ambitions for Dorset, the business year will be an important one in making progress to our overall ambition of cutting our productivity output gap by over £1.5 billion in the next decade.

We will continue to manage the impact of the COVID-19 emergency measures – this plan, therefore, is subject to change during the business year.

# COVID-19 RECOVERY AND ACTION

**COVID-19 has had an impact on the lives of those living in Dorset in every way imaginable. This includes deaths from the virus, an impact on the physical health, mental health and wellbeing of many residents, huge uncertainty in home and business lives, and of course, a financial impact on the people and communities of Dorset.**

As a place, it would however, seem that Dorset's economy has been severely and disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in comparison to the physical presence of the virus, which to date has been amongst the lowest in the country.

COVID-19 has exposed the fragility that this type of crisis can present to business resilience and stability. It has also created opportunity, and the ability to find solutions with new investment such as skills development or businesses repurposing their offering to new markets.

To date, we have:

-  Invested £13.4m in shovel ready projects as an important first step in supporting Dorset's recovery, and develop opportunities for our businesses and young people.
-  Invested in additional resource to support businesses through our growth hub, Dorset Gateway.
-  Established and invested £50,000 in Crowdfund Dorset Business, helping small and micro businesses generate much needed cash-flow.
-  Supported local businesses secure in excess of £190,000 funding to help respond to the pandemic and delivered an online Business Summit in collaboration with Dorset Chamber.
-  Provided on-going support to young people, schools and colleges through Dorset Careers Hub and the Enterprise Adviser Network, by developing a bank of online career-focused resources for remote and home learning and exploring innovative options for on-going work experience support.

We are also providing a coordinated voice, informing and influencing government decision-making, made possible by working with and listening to our local stakeholders, and maintaining regular contact with government departments and MPs to highlight the needs of Dorset's businesses and communities.

We have already submitted a series of recommendations for government to expedite recovery in Dorset post COVID-19.

Using the Local Industrial Strategy as our framework, we are committed to:

-  Offering enhanced business support
-  Driving the development of a more resilient, adaptable and skilled workforce
-  Creating more dynamic and resilient supply chains
-  Ensuring evidence-based decision-making.

**COVID-19 has already had devastating impacts but we are determined to build back better where we can – working smarter, not harder.**

# MEET THE TEAM



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Keep up to date with Dorset LEP's activities and news:

**Sign up to our newsletter:**  
[dorsetlep.co.uk/newsletter](https://dorsetlep.co.uk/newsletter)

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