



SOLENT
LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

DELIVERY PLAN



#solent2050

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1. Foreword

As we begin the first steps to recovery from the unprecedented challenges faced by our business community brought on by the Coronavirus pandemic, we believe there is much cause for optimism.

The LEP's agility and commitment to respond quickly and effectively to the challenges of the past year have been recognised by central Government. We have faced these challenges head-on, redirected resources and put in place a range of support, working together with our partners and businesses to build resilience to see us through the uncertainty of the last 12 months.

We are deploying new funds from central Government to support businesses through the pandemic, establishing new partnerships to exploit faster routes to market for key business support funds, meeting new Government reporting requirements on local business intelligence, and launching new forums and panels to share knowledge and best practice.

We know the effects of the pandemic have not been felt evenly, and that different businesses and sectors have been affected in different ways; so we have defined three themes of focused activity in our Economic Recovery Plan to reflect this: Survival, Stability, Growth.

Our Economic Recovery Plan forms the basis of our Delivery Plan for 2021-22. Seven priorities define the focus of our activity and investment areas to maximize our impact on the economic recovery of the Solent region, and fully exploit its potential.

The Economic Recovery Plan recognises how the pandemic has accelerated changes in how we live and work, and the potential lasting impacts this could have on our economy. The increase in home working, the consequences of changing commuting patterns, the future of the high street,



Brian Johnson, the Solent LEP Chair and Business Director

plus the importance of digital infrastructure, the growth in online commerce, evolved learning and training models – all of these have shifted faster than we could have anticipated before the pandemic.

At the same time, we have seen a renewed appreciation of our surroundings, improved air quality and focus on environmental regeneration, as well as a better understanding of the significance of our individual health and wellbeing to a resilient economy.

The Solent LEP is committed to supporting businesses in the long term and our Delivery Plan for 2021-22 demonstrates how we can operate flexibly in this dynamic environment, post-pandemic and post-Brexit.

The announcement that the Solent bid has been selected by the Government as one of the eight regions in England to be a Freeport sets us well on the way to positioning the Solent as a world-leading marine and maritime economy. This will build on our investment in green energy infrastructure at the Port of Southampton.

Our Delivery Plan sets out major investment in improving connectivity alongside our commitment to accelerate housing delivery to build sustainable



Anne-Marie Mountifield, the Solent LEP Chief Executive

communities, including transport infrastructure improvements at North Whiteley and the Stubbington Bypass, and a broadband scheme in the Waterside. It demonstrates our commitment to the future and our ambitions to create a world-class talent base, such as through continued investment into the University of Portsmouth's Centre for Creative and Immersive eXtended Reality.

The Solent Growth Hub goes from strength to strength and this coming year will provide support for more than 1,000 businesses through a range of programmes, including Peer to Peer Networks, Start-up Launchpad, Solent Business Wellbeing Support Programme, Growth Accelerator Programme, Business Resilience Programme, Grant finder funding searches for businesses and Brexit one-to-one advisor support.

We are determined to help the Solent build back better by supporting pioneering approaches to climate change adaptation and decarbonisation, such as investment in the Southsea Coastal Flood Defence Scheme which will reduce flood risk for 10,000 homes

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and 2,300 businesses. We believe the area has the potential to become a leading hub for environmentally friendly innovation, so we are investing into the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Nitrate Mitigation Programme to provide a nature-based solution to reduce pollution in the Solent and unlock stalled housing developments, and the University of Portsmouth Centre for Enzyme Innovation to accelerate the commercial exploitation of bio-recycling technologies.

With our partners, we will use the Solent's

unique heritage, environmental and cultural advantages to help create a thriving visitor, creative and cultural economy, and develop a new strategy to promote our visitor economy to national and international audiences.

The pandemic has shown us how health and wellbeing are at the heart of economic success, so we are working with FSB Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to provide Solent business owners with access to free health and wellbeing support, and will put in place a framework to ensure health inequalities across the Solent are considered as part of economic strategy and investments.

As the economy continues to open up in the coming months, and as Government support for local economic growth evolves, we will ensure we are in the best possible place to help shape the successful economic recovery and growth of the Solent. We know how critical the continued support of our business, academic and public sector members is to achieve our ambitions – as well as a wide-range of strategic and delivery partners. We look forward to working with you in the year ahead to ensure the Solent continues to recover from the challenges of the past year, and builds the foundations to secure prosperity for the future.



University of Portsmouth's Centre for Creative and Immersive eXtended Reality

2. The Solent LEP

2.1 The Solent LEP

Established in 2010, the Solent LEP is a business-led collaboration between private, public and education sectors across the Solent. This includes nine local authority members, which are Eastleigh Borough Council, Fareham Borough Council, Gosport Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Havant Borough Council, Isle of Wight Council, New Forest District Council, Portsmouth City Council, and Southampton City Council.

Of the 38 LEPs across England, the Solent LEP represents one of the most significant coastal gateway regions in the country, and is responsible for securing and investing large amounts of public and private sector funding in ambitious projects to create new businesses, jobs and homes.

Since its formation the Solent LEP has benefitted from business expertise and acumen. We have created a new partnership between the public and private sector in the Solent that represents the diversity of local businesses and communities.

We are a partnership that brings together the business community, the further/higher education sectors, three unitary authorities, five district councils and one county council.

As an organisation, the Solent LEP prides itself on demonstrating innovation, passion and commitment for the region by working in a collaborative and inclusive manner with its complex and varied stakeholder networks.

2.2 Our Values

As a partnership organisation our approach is built on the belief that 'together we are stronger' and our corporate values underpin this demonstrating our commitment to:

- **Support** businesses to grow, individuals to succeed and communities to flourish
- Be **Open**, transparent and honest and work without bias, ensuring that an evidence-based approach drives our decision making
- **Lead** by example and value Leadership which is ambitious, fair and objective
- **Embrace** diversity as an essential component in the way we work
- **Nurture** the talent, innovation and creativity of those we work with
- Believe trust and mutual respect is essential for **Teamwork** and collaboration.

2.3 Our Board, Our Members

Our Board of 16 directors is the main decision-making body within our governance structure, providing strategic leadership and determining policy direction and priorities.

The Board is democratically elected by our members and is underpinned by robust, transparent and accountable delivery structures. Our executive team then carries out the functions necessary to implement Board decisions and objectives.

A Funding, Finance and Performance Management Group supports and advises the Board in relation to overall performance.

A series of thematic delivery panels, each with a LEP Director as lead, provide operational responsibility for investment as well as strategic advice on future priorities to the Board.

We regularly recruit new members to our panels. If you think you might be interested in such a role, register your interest via our email: info@solentlep.org.uk

The Solent Growth Forum provides an important advisory, overview and scrutiny role for our investment programmes and economic plan and the group includes representatives from all local authorities in the LEP area.

The creation of the Solent Joint Leaders Board brings together the elected leaders and senior officers of the councils within the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) with the purpose of strengthening the local authority engagement of the the Solent LEP, to assist in the development and implementation of actions that will deliver the Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy, and to collaborate on economic development issues affecting the wider area.

Further information on governance is available at www.solentlep.org.uk

3. Solent Strategic Economic Plan and Strategic Objectives

3.1 The Solent LEP Area

The Solent LEP area covers a functional economic geography, spanning approximately 600 square miles of the mainland coastline and the Isle of Wight (IoW). The area is highly urbanised in the eastern half but mostly rural in the west, including the New Forest National Park. The Solent's 340 miles

of coastline influence our economy, our people and our identity. The LEP is well served by transport infrastructure, including the M3, M27, A3, A27 and A31, good national rail links, Southampton International Airport and two major ports. As at 2020, the Solent population was 1.3 million, with a working age population of 670,000. There are an estimated 608,000 residents in employment in more than 41,600 enterprises.



3.2 The Solent LEP economy and our approach to local growth

The Solent is recognised as a global leader in the marine and maritime sector and plays an important international gateway role to spearhead UK trade and investment. With a population of around 1.3 million people and 41,600 enterprises, the region also boasts strengths in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, digital and computer science.

We are a globally-facing region with immense knowledge assets within our academic, research and industrial base, talented people with a strong cultural identity, boasting a world-leading natural environment that perfectly positions the Solent as the place to do business and growth.

Promoting a clean, green recovery lies at the heart of the Government's strategy to rebuild Britain and fuel economic recovery across the country, and the Solent is well placed to respond.

The area's combination of natural geography and industrial strengths provides a major opportunity to strengthen its position as a leading hub for environmentally friendly innovation and a pioneer of clean growth by incorporating emerging technologies with an appetite to deliver ground-breaking solutions within maritime, logistics, transport mobility and coastal protection.

Where are we today?

The Solent LEP is committed to building a positive growth agenda for the Solent region in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic and associated restrictions imposed on our everyday lives have caused a major economic shock to the global economy, and businesses and communities across the Solent have been affected by this.

All aspects of the region's economy have been impacted in some way and, in some respects, the future in the aftermath of the pandemic will look very different. So as a region it is vital that we not only continue to support a return to business-as-usual, but also take action now to ensure we can be more resilient to future disruption, and also seize the opportunities and benefits of doing things differently, brought about by the pandemic.

We have developed a robust Economic Recovery Plan, informed by our close working relationships with local partners, including local authorities, sector groups, the business community, colleges and universities.

Based around a three-stage approach of Survival, Stability and Growth, it articulates our mission to 'lead Solent's recovery, with key priorities around fighting Coronavirus, backing business, unleashing innovation, pioneering nature-based solutions, and optimising the Solent's critical role in strengthening the UK's trading relationship with the world'.

This three-stage approach to economic recovery provides an overarching framework to guide our activity over the coming months as we gradually pivot towards stability by bringing forward activities that accelerate the Solent's recovery from the pandemic and provide a positive platform for growth. We recognise that the timing and pace of recovery will be different for individual sectors and locations across the Solent, so will be flexible and responsive to real-time changes in circumstances.

The Solent economy contributed £31 billion in GVA to the UK Economy in 2018, and GVA growth averaged 1% between 2009 and 2017; and, as the home to a variety of assets that play an important strategic role nationally, the Solent's position as an international gateway means that it performs a critical role for the UK economy. For every £1 of additional investment spending in the Solent region, it is estimated that UK GDP increases by between £2.35 and £3.15.

This underlines the critical role that the region plays in supporting other parts of the country, such as the North and Midlands. The Solent forms a major component of UK competitiveness – which will become increasingly relevant as we look to establish new trading relationships following the UK's exit from the EU and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic – playing a key role in levelling up prosperity and opportunity.

Our three-stage approach



3.3 Our 2021 strategic objectives in support of Solent 2050

The Solent 2050 Strategy sets out a long-term action plan, aligned to the UK Industrial Strategy, to unleash the Solent's distinctive strengths that can power the local economy to increase productivity and support our communities to prosper in a fast-changing world.

It unifies the region's rich history as the globally leading marine and maritime cluster, with its environmental assets and wealth of knowledge capital to increase the economy's prosperity, enhance the thriving visitor economy, and realise our potential for clean growth.

The strategy sets out our vision for the Solent economy in 2050 to be the global leader in maritime and climate change adaptation, with towns and cities that are fantastic places to live, trade and with opportunities for all our communities to flourish.

This vision is linked intimately to issues central to the Solent economy, coastal communities and how they can adapt to a changing economic landscape, ensuring growth has wide benefits and our natural assets are protected from the effects of climate change.

To realise this ambition, we will focus on seven priority areas:

- 1** A world-leading marine and maritime economy, building on our existing assets and global competitive advantages to strengthen the UK's international trading relationships
- 2** Pioneering approaches to climate change adaptation and decarbonisation and establishing real expertise which other regions – nationally and globally – can learn from

3 The UK's capital of coastal renaissance, harnessing new technologies and approaches to revitalise coastal communities and ensure growth is inclusive

4 A thriving visitor, creative and cultural economy, capitalising on the Solent's superb natural beauty and rich maritime history

5 Developing a world-class talent base, helping people at all stages of their career build the skills they need to respond to new technology and drive an innovative knowledge-based economy

6 An outstanding business environment that encourages innovation, fosters collaboration and enables businesses of all sizes and sectors to thrive

7 Put health and wellbeing at the heart of economic success.

This Solent 2050 economic strategy aims to address the productivity underperformance of the Solent economy by raising our performance to above the UK average and closing the productivity gap with the wider South East.

Our substantial economic influence at a national level means investing in the Solent will strengthen the productivity and competitiveness of the UK economy, directly support other parts of the country which depend on the trade flows which pass through the Solent and the sectors we facilitate, and be critical in meeting the Government's ambition for levelling-up prosperity and opportunity across the UK.

We want to re-invent the Solent economy as future-ready, highly skilled, and globally-facing, with the latent potential of our coastal communities fuelling this ambition.

4. Priorities, activities and investment

4.1. Sources of funding

Getting Building Fund

The Government is making £900 million available through the new Getting Building Fund (GBF) for investment in local, shovel-ready infrastructure projects to stimulate jobs and support economic recovery across the country.

The Solent LEP has been allocated £15.9m from the GBF for a wide-ranging package of projects that will deliver a much-needed boost to the local economy, including a new cruise terminal at the Port of Southampton complete with solar generation and shore power; the development of Branstone Farm on the Isle of Wight, which will provide 42 affordable housing units and commercial space in new and renovated buildings; creating 100 new jobs, and investment in the University of Portsmouth's Centre for Enzyme Innovation (CEI) to develop green recovery solutions for the breakdown of plastics.

Local Growth Fund

Now in the close-down phase of the Local Growth Deal, which has seen £182.9m secured to create jobs, support businesses and enable growth in the area during three funding rounds since 2015, the Solent LEP is completing financial and monitoring details, ensuring the legacy of the projects delivered benefit the region for years to come.

The projects funded through the Local Growth Fund (LGF) support the long-term objectives of the Solent 2050 Strategy by enhancing the region's distinctive strengths, especially in the maritime sector; supporting coastal renaissance, and targeting investments which will increase productivity and resilience through skills, infrastructure and business support. These projects have also supported the goals of the Economic Recovery Plan for survival, stability and growth in the aftermath of Covid-19.

Recently completed projects which have benefited from investment from the Local Growth Deal include the transformation of the internationally renowned Warsash School of Maritime Science and Engineering, which has safeguarded 131 jobs to date, will see a further 137 new learners begin courses leading to a full qualification over the next 12 months, in addition to the 120 people already enrolled, and the Civil Engineering Training Centre (CETC), run by Fareham College and based at the Solent Enterprise Zone – a purpose-built facility designed to help meet the future workforce requirements for civil engineering and construction businesses in Hampshire.

Building Foundations for Growth

Established in 2013, the Building Foundations for Growth fund was established by the Government as a £100m fund to accelerate development in Enterprise Zones, in recognition of the fact that some Enterprise Zone sites require direct grant

support to make them commercially viable for development.

The Solent LEP secured a total of £7,090,000 for the development of key enabling infrastructure on the Solent Enterprise Zone at Daedalus.

Infrastructure to Support House Building

The Government granted the Solent LEP a total of £7,675,921 in order to contribute to essential public infrastructure at Centenary Quay, including river works, public realm improvements, ecological works and a district heating network. This will support the development of 342 housing units and 500m² of commercial floor space.

Skills Advisory Panel funding

Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) bring together employers, skills providers and key local stakeholders to better understand and resolve skills mismatches at a local level; identifying current and future local skills needs, and using this intelligence to shape the provision of post-16 education and training and careers guidance. The Department for Education (DfE) supports SAPs with grant funding of £75,000 to produce high quality analysis of local labour markets and Local Skills Reports.

Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company was established in 2015 to help link schools and colleges to employers, in order to increase employer engagement for young people.

To date, the Solent LEP has secured grant funding totalling £957,587 and is matching this with £515,000 from its own resources to deliver a comprehensive programme of activity, aimed at unlocking the potential of the Solent's young people by strengthening interactions between employers and schools.

Solent Growth Hub

Growth hubs work with local and national, public and private sector partners. With funding of £536,000 secured, the Solent Growth Hub is working with partners - such as the Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, universities, Enterprise Zones, and banks, and in partnership with three neighbouring LEP's, to co-ordinate local business support, including Brexit support, and connecting businesses to the right help for their needs. Throughout 2021/22, our Growth Hub will provide critical support to SMEs as the economy starts to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, including delivering a programme of activity to enhance business resilience and the Peer Network programme with £210,000 secured funding. The Growth Hub is locally driven, locally owned and at the heart of HM Government's plan to ensure business support is simpler, more joined up and easier to access.

4.2. Our seven priorities

1 Support our world-leading marine and maritime economy

The Maritime sector represents 20% of the Solent economic output and is the local economy's most significant sectoral specialism when benchmarked internationally.

The Solent LEP is committed to enabling the fast track recovery of this sector through innovation and promotion, positioning the industry for a low carbon return to growth fit for the 21st century. Investment will support green and sustainable growth, including two shore-based power units at the Port of Southampton and a new cruise terminal, complete with solar generation.

We will work with Government and local partners on the development of a Freeport following the news that our Solent

bid has been selected by the Government as one of the eight regions in England to be a Freeport, securing governance arrangements followed by tax and custom sites designation by the end of the year.

We will continue to explore opportunities to develop clean maritime technologies while maximising local innovation by investing in a Marine Innovation Hub through the Solent Freeport proposition to support research and development.

Our work with the Solent's Maritime sector, including with Maritime UK at a national, regional and local level, has never been more important as the economy begins to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, and we support our global gateways during periods of travel restrictions and adapting to changing trading relationships with the EU.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Support our global gateways and maritime sector during lockdowns, periods of travel restrictions and adaptation to changing trading relationships with the EU.	Work with Maritime UK at a national, regional and local level to ensure the Solent Maritime sector is supported and has a strong voice in the wider UK maritime economy.	Support the development of a dedicated Maritime UK Solent Economic Recovery Plan by summer 2021. Publish a Solent maritime Sector Economic Footprint Study as part of the wider MUK Maritime Sector Economic Study during 2021/22.
	Work with the Solent Freeport Consortium to secure a Solent Freeport designation.	Complete quality assurance work to enable the Solent Freeport to commence operation from December 2021.
Position our cruise industry for a low carbon return to growth.	Investment of up to £4.4m in shore power infrastructure at the Port of Southampton.	Installation and commissioning of two shore based power units by summer 2021.
	Investment of up to £8m in a new fifth cruise terminal at the Port of Southampton.	Construction and opening of a new cruise terminal complete with solar generation and shore power by summer 2021.

2 Pioneer approaches to climate change adaptation and decarbonisation

The Solent area's natural geography and industrial strengths provide a major opportunity to pioneer clean growth and create a hub of environmentally friendly innovation. We are committed to helping the Solent economy make the shift to a net zero carbon economy and adapt to the impacts of climate change through investment in sustainable infrastructure, and research and development opportunities.

As part of the development of the Solent Freeport proposal, we will bring forward low carbon solutions for the marine and maritime sector and develop a new Solent-wide funding call for launch in Spring 2021.

Our continued investment in the Industrial Engagement Hub at the University of Portsmouth Centre for Enzyme Innovation will accelerate the commercial exploitation of bio-recycling technologies. This pioneering research aims to find a solution to the global plastic pollution crisis by discovering and engineering new enzymes that break down plastics, and then work with industry partners to transform the research into real-world solutions.

We will continue to invest in our coastal infrastructure - including investing in Phase 1 of the Southsea Coastal Flood Defence Scheme due for completion this autumn. Once all the phases are complete, the scheme will help reduce the risk of coastal flooding for more than 10,000 homes and 2,300 businesses, as well as create significant employment and housing.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Promote a clean, green recovery and prioritise sustainable infrastructure development and support decarbonisation of the Solent economy via investment.	Investment of up to £2.225m into Isle of Wight Council's phased development of a mixed-use scheme at Branstone Farm.	Construction of Phase 1 complete by March 2022, ensuring delivery of rural employment units, and unlocking the delivery of housing and a biodiversity park.
	Investment of up to £5m into Phase 1 of the Southsea Coastal Flood Defence Scheme.	Construction of Phase 1 on target for completion in September 2022. Once all phases are complete, the scheme will provide a much reduced risk of flooding for over 10,000 homes and 2,300 businesses.
Utilise the Solent's geography and industrial strengths to enhance economic resilience and become a leading hub for environmentally friendly innovation.	Investment of up to £2m into the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Nitrate Mitigation Programme which will provide a nature-based solution to reduce pollution in the Solent and unlock stalled housing developments.	Purchase of nitrate mitigation site by summer 2021 which will restore the historic landscape, providing wildlife rich habitats and removing 3500 kg of nitrate pollution per annum thereby unlocking the delivery of 5,000 new homes.
	Work with the New Forest National Park Authority, New Forest District Council and Fawley Waterside to develop a Natural Capital Study of the New Forest.	Publish a Natural Capital Study of the New Forest by July 2021.
Secure a shift to a net zero carbon economy.	Investment of up to £1m into the Industrial Engagement Hub at the University of Portsmouth Centre for Enzyme Innovation.	Construction and opening of Hub by March 2022 which will accelerate the commercial exploitation of bio-recycling technologies.

3 Cement our position as the UK's capital of coastal renaissance, harnessing new technologies and approaches to revitalise coastal communities

Securing a resurgence in our coastal communities has never been more important – the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted the challenges they already face in responding to de-industrialisation, changes in tourism and globalisation.

We know that, while our coastal communities define much of the heritage, culture and future potential of the Solent, the social and economic impact of the pandemic has been felt acutely and these communities require specific targeted support in both the short and medium-term.

We will accelerate local infrastructure investment to facilitate the 'levelling up' of our coastal communities and at the same time have ambitions to pioneer the next generation of coastal-urban living by adopting innovative practices and smart technologies in terms of improved transport and digital connectivity, such as the investment into Centenary Quay in Southampton and the

proposed Intelligent Merchant City on the site of the former Fawley Power Station.

We are committed to improvements in travel infrastructure which will support these communities, including investment of nearly £34m into the construction of a new bypass for Stubbington, which will ease congestion and improve access to the Gosport peninsula; improvements to the A326 along the Fawley Waterside and the re-instatement of a passing loop at Brading station to make rail a more attractive and sustainable travel option on the Isle of Wight.

The pandemic has demonstrated, without doubt, that digital connectivity is vital to our economic future and we will be working with partners explore how to better connect our coastal communities, including funding support for Fawley Digital to provide additional optical fibre capacity, and provide enabling infrastructure for the Intelligent Merchant City site, and the development of a Digital Infrastructure Action Plan for the New Forest.

Continued overleaf ►



CGI of the new Fawley Waterside development

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Support and accelerate the delivery of housing to build sustainable communities.	Continued investment of up to £7.675m in public infrastructure at Centenary Quay in order to support the ongoing delivery of Phase 4 of the Centenary Quay development.	Delivery of 342 new homes to the end of 2021/22, facilitated by investment into the key public infrastructure for the scheme.
	Continued investment of up to £14m at North Whiteley in order to support the continued delivery of the housing scheme.	Completion of Phase 2 highways infrastructure works by the end of 2021/22, seeing delivery of 875 new homes on site in the same period, rising to a total of 3,500 new homes by the end of the scheme in 2028.
	Continued investment of up to £5.55m for M27 J10 upgrade scheme preparation to support the delivery of Welborne Garden Village.	Hampshire County Council to secure technical approval from HM Government for key project documentation by 31 March 2022.
Improve travel and digital infrastructure and connectivity.	Continued investment of up to £33.9m into the creation of the Stubbington Bypass.	Completion by the end of 2021/22 of new 3.5km bypass for Stubbington. This will ease traffic congestion and improve traffic flows and journey times on the Gosport peninsula.
	Continued investment of up to £5.6m into improvements on the A326 and investment of up to £750,000 into broadband scheme along New Forest waterside area.	<p>Completion of Phases 1 and 2 by the end of 2021/22 will see significant improvements to eight roundabout junctions, reducing congestion and improving journey times on this key link by the time of scheme completion in summer 2022.</p> <p>Installation of 31 km of new ultrafast optical fibre by the end of 2021. This will see provision of over 19,000 new ultrafast broadband connections for businesses and homes within the New Forest waterside area, and help to bring forward the intelligent merchant city at Fawley Waterside.</p>
	Continued investment of £0.7m into the South Western Railway / Island Line Brading Loop improvements.	Re-instatement of a passing loop at Brading station to make rail a more attractive and sustainable travel option on the Isle of Wight during 2021/22.

4 Develop a thriving visitor, creative and cultural economy, capitalising on the Solent's superb natural beauty and rich maritime history

With a wealth of culture, heritage, outstanding natural environments and world-class visitor attractions, the Solent has much to offer visitors and we are committed to working with partners to implement a clear and unified approach to showcasing our regional tourism offer, encouraging more people to visit more often and stay longer.

The visitor and cultural economy is a critical part of the Solent's economy, but, like tourism everywhere, one that has been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic. We recognise that

international tourism may take longer to recover, so are focusing initially on attracting domestic 'staycation' visits to the Solent by capitalising on our area's superb natural beauty and rich maritime history, as well as developing long-term strategies with partners to develop the resilience and support the recovery of the Solent's visitor, creative and cultural economy.

We are working with local partners to progress a bid for Southampton to be the City of Culture 2025, linking this to the wider Solent visitor economy. We are also utilising the Solent Careers Hub to deliver 2,000 apprenticeships in the visitor and hospitality sector in the period to 2024, providing a vital entry to employment as our young people transition from education to employment in a highly competitive post Covid-19 labour force.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Develop a clear pathway to recover and grow the Solent visitor economy.	Working with partners, and informed by Solent 2050, develop a new strategy to promote our visitor economy - focusing on our heritage, environmental and cultural assets at a national and international level.	Development of a visitor economy recovery strategy to be published in March 2022.
Develop the resilience and support the recovery of the Solent's visitor, creative and cultural economy.	Continued investment of up to £3.6m into the University of Portsmouth's Centre for Creative and Immersive eXtended Reality, an integrated facility to support innovation in the creative and digital technologies of virtual, augmented and extended realities.	Opportunities for 500 new learners, 800 business engagements, 130 Research and Development bids and over 100 knowledge exchange outputs to be delivered over the next 10 years.



Blackgang Chine, Ventnor, Isle of Wight. Picture courtesy of Vectis Ventures

5 Develop a world-class talent base

As the economy recovers, attracting talent at the same time as ensuring people are supported to find employment opportunities and build the skills at all stages of their career is critical to the Solent's productivity.

We will work with local partners to provide opportunities for people to upskill and reskill, and support and accelerate the delivery of skills and training infrastructure projects, both traditional and digital; and, in partnership, will deliver the Solent Skills Action Plan, utilising our Skills Advisory Panel to monitor

and promote its delivery.

We will expand the Solent career outreach programmes working through the LEP's Solent Careers Hub, including collaborating with Maritime UK to develop a careers outreach programme for the maritime sector. Adapting to new ways of working in response to the pandemic, we will focus on providing virtual work experience opportunities for at least 300 students and young people as they transition to a very challenging labour market; and continue support for digital skills infrastructure such as the Centre for Creative and Immersive eXtended Reality at the University of Portsmouth.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Develop a clear pathway to developing and securing the skills and talent the Solent requires to raise productivity.	Expand the Solent career outreach programmes.	50% of Solent careers hub careers leaders to attend a maritime careers CPD session and 20 maritime employers in the Solent recruited as Industry Ambassadors during 2021/22. Provide a specific focus on providing virtual work experience opportunities for at least 300 students and young people by June 2021.
	Work with partners to deliver the Solent Skills Action Plan.	Publish a Solent Skills Action Plan and local Skills Report during spring 2021. Through the Solent Skills Advisory Panel monitor and promote the delivery of the Skills Action Plan.



Chief Executive of the Solent LEP, Anne-Marie Mountifield, visits the campus at Fareham College's Civil Engineering Training Centre (CETC)

6 Supporting an outstanding business environment

The Solent LEP is committed to supporting a business environment that encourages innovation, fosters collaboration and enables businesses of all sizes and sectors to thrive.

Our message is clear – the Solent area is open for business.

Our business community has positive ambitions for growth over the next 12 months, and a clear appetite for getting support to market and reposition their business in response to emerging opportunities. We will work with local partners to boost consumer demand and confidence and attract more spending back to our town and city centres through promotional activity, local purchasing campaigns and community projects.

Through our partnerships with Crowdfunder and Natural Enterprise, we will ensure small grants reach a minimum of 200 businesses over the next 12 months, as well as developing sector-specific interventions to support business resilience.

Our Growth Hub is set to provide support through a range of programmes this year to more than 1,000 businesses, helping them through the stages of responding to the impact of the pandemic, beginning to adapt and then building future resilience when they are ready.

Support for start-ups includes continued collaboration with the University of Southampton Web Science Institute on the LEP-funded Zero to One programme. This will support early-stage investment into commercialising the new web-based Business Ideas Institute.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Support business resilience and continuity.	Maintain and expand the Solent Growth Hub business support service.	<p>Provide support for more than 1,000 businesses during 2021/22, through a range of programmes to include Peer to Peer Networks, Start-up Launchpad, Solent Business Wellbeing Support Programme, Growth Accelerator Programme, Business Reliance Programme, Grant finder funding searches for businesses and Brexit one-to-one advisor support.</p> <p>Work with partners to develop sector-specific interventions tailored to priorities of our strategic clusters with a focus on marine and maritime, visitor economy and advanced manufacturing.</p>
	Share best practice and business intelligence in relation to business support.	<p>Provide business intelligence to HM Government on economic impact of Covid-19 in Solent economy at a frequency as directed by Government.</p> <p>Continuation of the dedicated Solent Coronavirus Business Support Task Force and Solent Connect.</p>
	Continuing provision of business support grants via partnership with Crowdfunder and Natural Enterprise.	Provision of small grants to a minimum of 200 businesses by 31 March 2022.

7 Put health and wellbeing at the heart of economic success

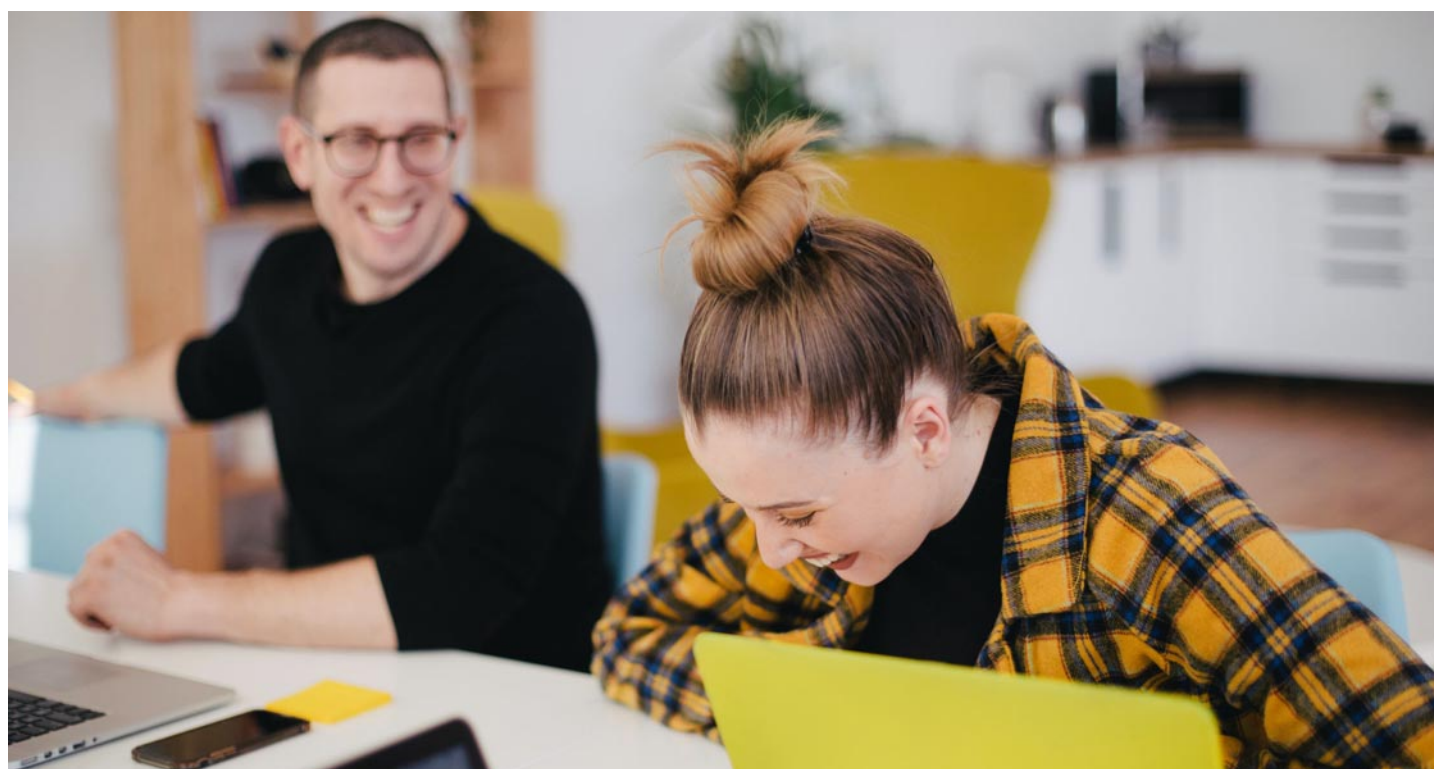
The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the impact that health and wellbeing inequalities have on the economy more sharply than ever before. We will continue to promote positive health and wellbeing for employers and employees by working with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) on the Business Wellbeing Scheme, providing access to support.

We will also raise awareness of the many existing resources available to promote positive mental health among businesses and employees across the Solent through our Solent Growth Hub, including resources developed by Public Health England to help employers take positive actions to build a culture that

champions good mental health and to better understand how to help those who need more support.

It is essential that healthier ways of living and working are embedded if we are to level up opportunities across all our communities. One of our key priorities this year is to make sure that health inequalities across the Solent are considered as part of the economic strategy, including ensuring health and wellbeing is at the heart of projects considered for LEP investment. Working with the Solent Skills Advisory Panel, we will explore skills developments which focus on health and wellbeing within our Solent 2050 economic strategy, engaging with education and training providers across the Solent to examine particular skills innovation opportunities as society adapts to a 'new normal'.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Support business owners' and employees' positive health and wellbeing.	Work in partnership with FSB Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to deliver the Solent Business Wellbeing Scheme.	40 Solent business owners to access the free health and wellbeing support service during 2021/22.
Enable health inequalities across the Solent to be considered as part of economic strategy and investments.	Explore the potential to introduce a specific health and wellbeing dimension into the LEP's Assurance Framework and ensure projects considered for LEP investment are scored against their ability to support health and wellbeing.	Introduce health and wellbeing as part of the strategic assessment of LEP funding calls.



5. Strategic Priorities

Alongside our immediate work to support businesses and build a positive growth agenda for the Solent region in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are committed to bringing forward a new ambitious and long-term vision and strategy for the area: Solent 2050.

The vision of Solent 2050 is for our region to be the global leader in maritime and climate change adaptation, with towns and cities that are fantastic places to live, trade and with opportunities for all our communities to flourish.

Solent 2050 is a long-term plan, aligned to the UK Industrial Strategy, but designed to the Solent's distinctive strengths, with the potential to power the local economy, increase productivity and support our communities to prosper as we recover from the pandemic.

It is an ambitious plan which will enhance the economic resilience of the Solent economy through working with partners

on economic recovery and infrastructure investment to build a more prosperous and productive regional economy. It will protect and enhance our region's natural capital and ensure opportunities are created for all our communities.

While the ongoing impact of the pandemic on the Solent's economy cannot be underestimated, we remain committed to bringing forward this long-term vision – a major opportunity to put our region on the path to realise its potential as a world-renowned economic cluster by 2050.

By continuing to collaborate and engage with partners and a diverse range of stakeholders, the Solent LEP will ensure support for the Solent 2050 vision. We will further strengthen our business leadership, including developing a more diverse LEP board and LEP Panels. We will broaden our use of convening powers locally and nationally, and enhance accessibility to public information on our services, decision making and activities.



Centenary Quay, Southampton

5.1 Solent 2050

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Enhance economic resilience of the Solent economy.	Develop an economic recovery plan for the Solent area.	Publish an updated Economic Recovery Plan in spring 2021.
Develop and publish a compelling, evidence-based, and ambitious economic Strategy for the Solent.	Develop infrastructure investment plans with partners for New Forest and Havant.	Havant Infrastructure Investment Plan published by spring 2021. Infrastructure Investment Plan and Digital Infrastructure Action Plan for the New Forest published by March 2022.
	Agree a final Solent 2050 Strategy with HM Government.	Hold a series of virtual thought leadership workshops to secure views on the inclusion of the Health and Wellbeing and Creative and Cultural priorities and the implications of the trends accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Convene the Solent Prosperity Panel to test the draft Solent 2050 Strategy in 2021/22. Ambition for final Strategy to be agreed during 2021/22.



5.2 Business Leadership, Convening Power and Advocacy

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Further strengthen the business leadership of the LEP.	Increase the private sector representation further on the Board in line with National Assurance requirements and support the development of a more diverse LEP Board and Panels.	Two new business directors appointed by April 2021, to include at least one additional female director (with a view to progressing towards equal female representation on our Board by 2023).
Broaden use of convening powers on a local, regional and national basis and enhance accessibility of information on the LEP's services, activities and decision making.	Convene the first virtual Annual General Meeting for all the Solent LEP Members.	By March 2021.
	Renew the Solent LEP website, incorporating the Solent Growth Hub and the Solent Enterprise Adviser activity.	Renewed website to be launched by autumn 2021.



Warsash School of Maritime Science and Engineering

6. Funding and Finance

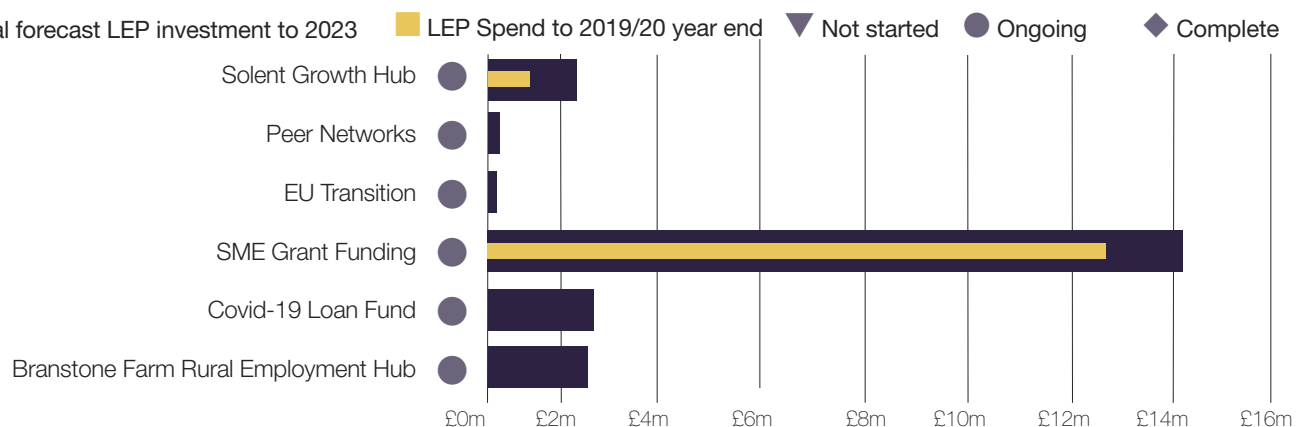
6.1. Financial Forecasts 2021/22 and 2022/23

Forecast budgets	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Total Forecast Budget 2021/22 to 2022/23 £
Business Support	3,856,500	0	3,856,500
Infrastructure	42,442,636	9,136,916	51,579,552
Skills	444,186	0	444,186
Innovation	691,718	0	691,718
Strategic Sectors	2,600,000	0	2,600,000
Other	1,866,061	1,020,000	2,886,061
Total	51,901,101	10,156,916	62,058,017

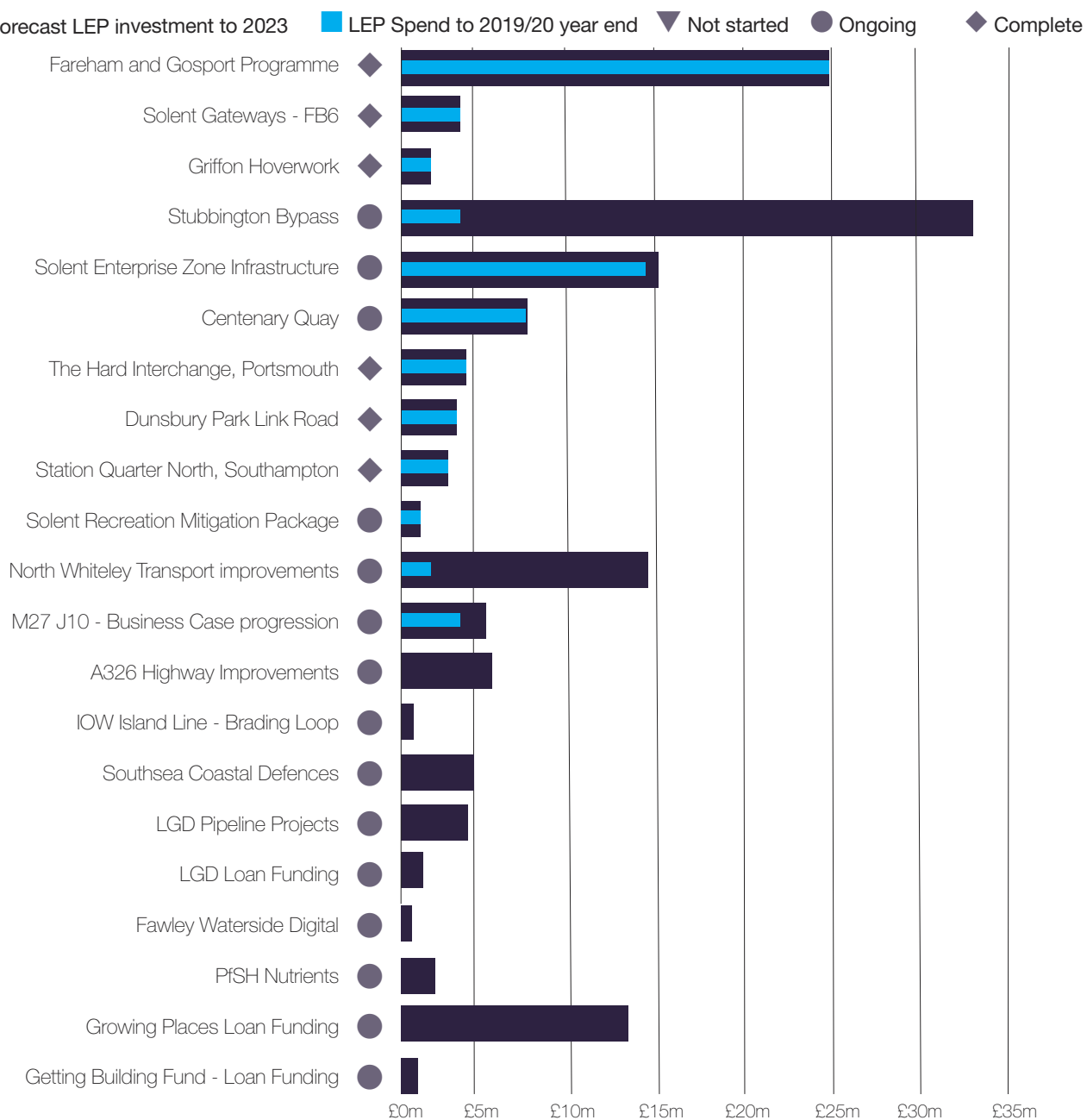
Sources of funding

Sources of Funding	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Total Forecast Budget 2021/22 to 2022/23 £
Other Government Funding Programmes	1,164,283	0	1,164,283
Solent Growth Deal	32,829,852	1,374,000	34,203,852
Solent Growing Places Fund	8,026,555	6,912,916	14,939,471
Central Government Funding	853,644	620,000	1,473,644
Other	390,049	88,335	478,384
European Funding	0	161,665	161,665
Getting Building Fund	8,636,718	1,000,000	9,636,718
Total	51,901,101	10,156,916	62,058,017

BUSINESS SUPPORT

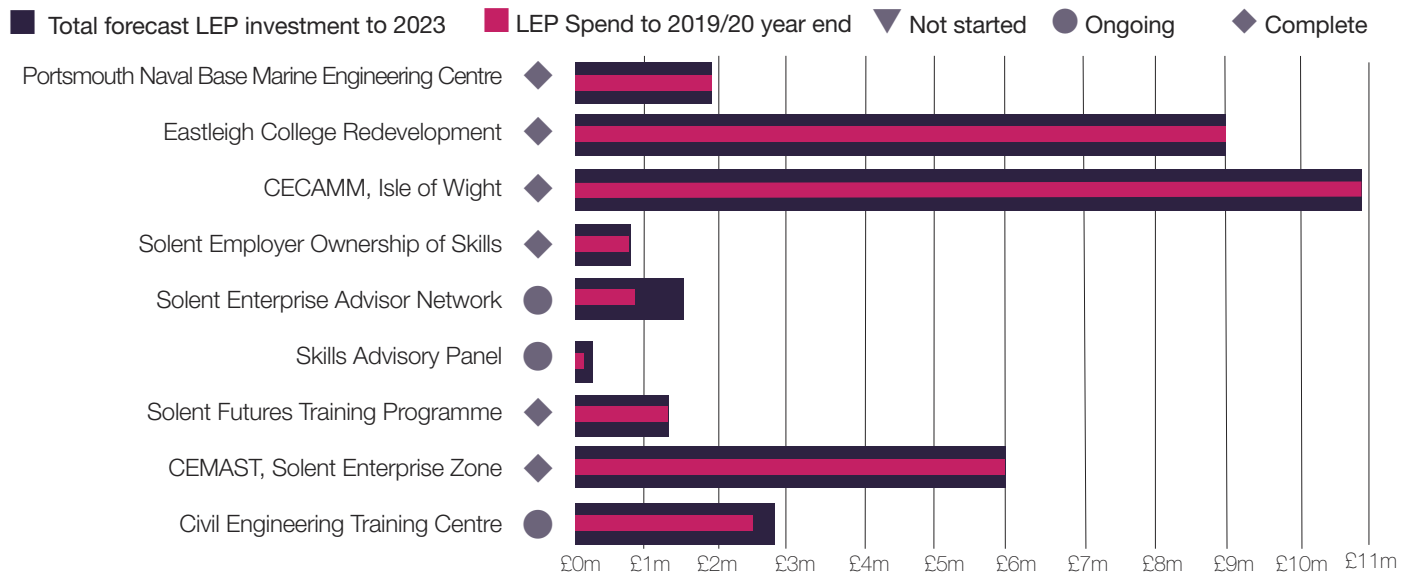


INFRASTRUCTURE

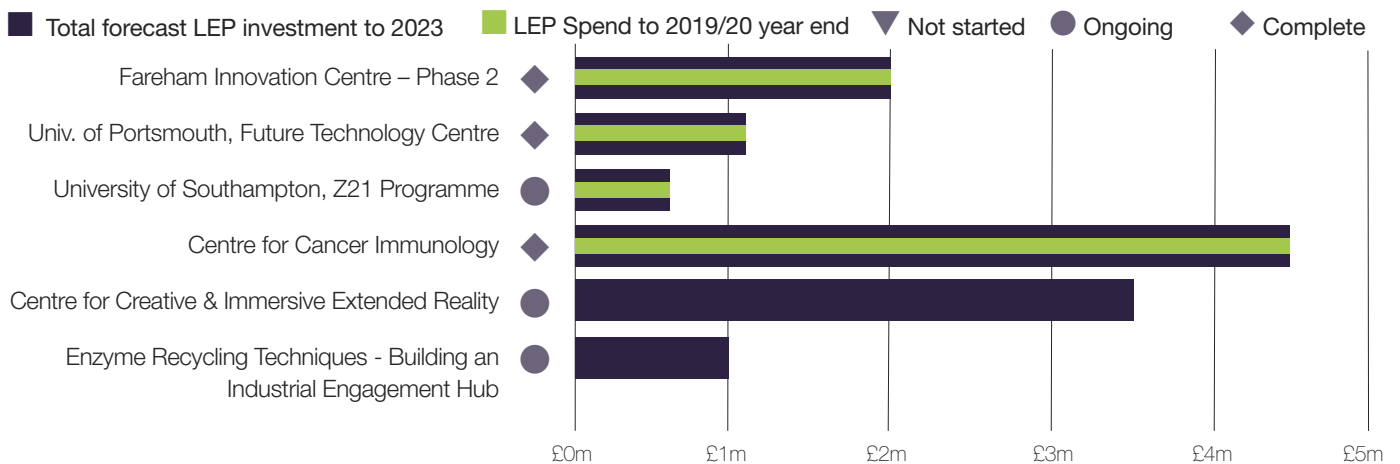


6.2. The Solent LEP – 2020/21 Project Dashboard

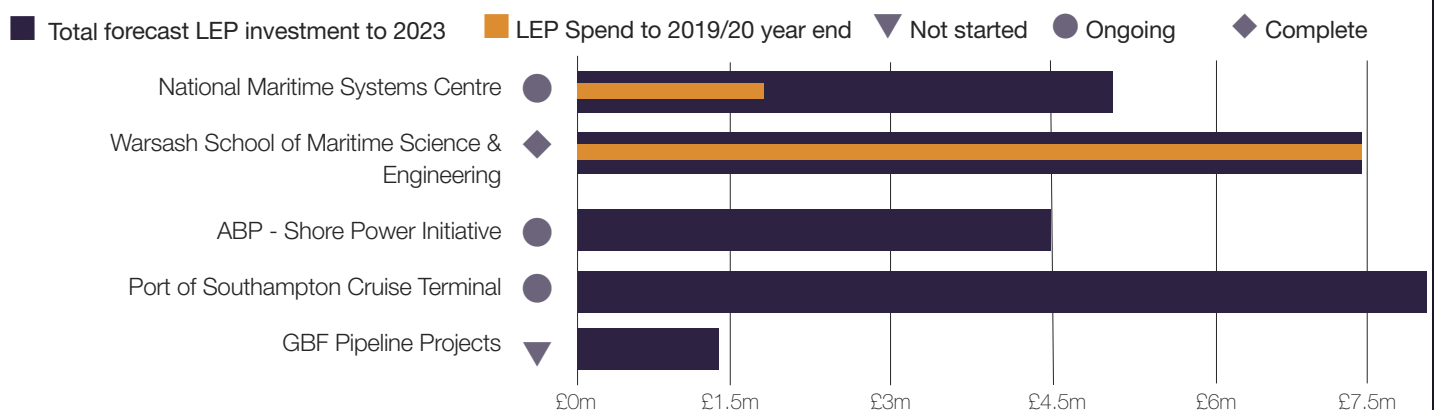
SKILLS



INNOVATION



STRATEGIC SECTORS





SOLENT
LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP
[#solent2050](#)

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