



SOLENT
LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

DELIVERY PLAN



#solent2050

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1. Foreword

The Solent LEP is committed to promoting sustainable economic growth to champion our region and ensure our communities can prosper, and this year will launch an ambitious strategy for the Solent. Building on strong foundations, proven resilience and unique strengths, the Solent 2050 Strategy will shape the future of our region for the next generation and inspire the Solent to reach its full potential.

Like many coastal communities, the Solent has seen major changes in response to de-industrialisation and globalisation and we are committed to positioning the Solent as the UK's capital of coastal renaissance. We will do this through our ambitious Solent 2050 Strategy - championing key sectors in the Solent, developing a skilled workforce and fostering an environment in which businesses and communities thrive. Our Strategy outlines seven priorities to maximise opportunities and capitalise on our region's strengths; and articulates how we will build on collaborations with partners in the public, private, education and community sector to deliver them.

The Solent LEP is at the centre of the development of the Solent Freeport - one of only eight freeports in England and a critical part of the UK's economic recovery. As the nation's global gateway, the Solent Freeport will play a central role in ensuring that the UK remains competitive on an international stage while providing a once in a generation opportunity to level up our important coastal communities. It will unlock investment, boost productivity, create jobs - not only in the Solent but throughout the country, and support Net Zero ambitions in a global Britain. Promoting a green recovery lies at the heart of the Government's Levelling Up strategy



Rachael Randall, the Solent LEP Chair

and the Solent is well placed to deliver. Our investment focus continues to be on the Solent's green recovery. This includes a coastal defence scheme in Southsea, the University of Portsmouth Centre for Enzyme Innovation to accelerate the commercial exploitation of bio-recycling technologies; environmental innovations such as 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, and investment in green energy infrastructure, such as shore power at the Port of Southampton.

We are also committed to working with partners to accelerate housing delivery to build sustainable communities, such as those at Centenary Quay and North Whiteley; and transport and connectivity infrastructure improvements to support existing communities, such as road and broadband infrastructure for those living in the Waterside area of the New Forest.

We are looking forward this year to moving forward with our newly established representative body - Maritime UK Solent which promotes the Solent's world-leading marine and



Anne-Marie Mountifield, the Solent LEP Chief Executive

maritime business cluster on an international stage, helping to realise the full potential of this significant sector. It will play a key role in the future prosperity of our region and to levelling up through encouraging investment, driving innovation and pioneering green technology while providing skills opportunities and a brighter future for our young people. Recognising the success of this model of developing specific support for key business clusters in the Solent, we will expand this sector specific focus to incorporate other major industries in our region: construction, the visitor economy, health and social care, and advanced manufacturing and engineering, ensuring that businesses have the support and advocacy they need to reach their full potential.

Alongside this, our Growth Hub team is set to help more businesses with intensive and focussed support programmes designed to help them meet the unique challenges and opportunities resulting from the upheaval of the past two years. The Growth Hub is locally driven, locally owned and at the heart of the Government's plan to ensure business

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support is simpler, more joined up and easier to access.

We are committed to continued collaboration with education providers and employers to provide people with ambitious career pathways into high-skilled jobs. We know how improving skills and access to high-quality training

will impact not only on the futures of our young people, but also on the continued success of our business community. One such innovative collaboration - the successful bid led by Solent University to develop an Institute of Technology - will focus on higher technical skills across digital technologies, engineering and maritime, offering the opportunities our communities deserve and a pipeline of skills which employers need for continued success.

As we move on from the pandemic and head towards a brighter future, we will make sure we are in the best possible place to help shape the successful economic recovery of the Solent. We know how critical the continued support of our partners is for these ambitions to be achieved and we look forward to working with you in the year ahead to ensure that, together, we secure prosperity for the future of our communities.



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.

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. This has been recently recognised in the Levelling Up White Paper, with the Solent identified as one of 20 economically significant clusters in the UK, specialising in ports, maritime and trade. With a population of around 1.3 million people and 41,600 enterprises, the region also boasts strengths in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, transport and logistics, digital and computer science, whilst the tourism remains an important contributor to the economy.

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 clean, green growth lies at the heart of the Government's strategy to level-up Britain and fuel economic growth 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 green 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 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 developed an Economic Recovery Plan, informed by our close working relationships with local partners, including local authorities, sector groups, the business community, colleges and universities, that provided a platform to restart and rebuild. But we must now look forward to a world where we live with Covid, and we have published our new, economic strategy for the Solent - Solent 2050. This sets an ambitious plan for the Solent economy to optimise its strengths, take

advantage of new opportunities like Solent Freeport, and pivot our economy so that it is at the vanguard of environmental innovation.

The natural geography of the Solent has created its position as the UK's gateway to the world and ensures that the Solent plays a critical role in the wider UK economy. 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 growth following the Covid-19 pandemic – playing a key role in levelling up prosperity and opportunity.

3.3 Our 2022 strategic objectives in support of Solent 2050

The Solent 2050 Strategy sets out a long-term action plan, aligned to the Levelling Up White Paper, 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 has made £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 secured £15.9m from the GBF for a wide-ranging package of projects that are delivering 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. Other projects delivering outputs for the local economy include 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 managing the financial and output performance monitoring of investments, 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 Centre for Creative and Immersive XR (CCIXR) at the University of Portsmouth. CCIXR has delivered an integrated facility to support innovation in the creative and digital technologies of virtual, augmented and extended realities, which will create opportunities for 500 new learners, 800 business engagements, 130 Research and Development bids and over 100 knowledge exchange outputs over the next 10 years.

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. January 2022 has seen the completion of the concrete frame of the Vantage tower block at Centenary Quay, the tallest building in Southampton offering unrivalled views across the Solent.

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 Solent SAP performs an important role for the area providing advice on skills needs - particularly from the perspective of the employer - and monitors the impact of the LEPs skills and careers work programmes.

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. In addition to this, the LEP is working in partnership with its local authorities to invest a further £176,000 supporting careers activity across the Solent.

Solent Growth Hub

Growth hubs work with local and national, public and private sector partners. The Solent Growth Hub is working with partners - such as the Skills and Apprenticeship Hub, Digital Boost, the Federation of Small Businesses, universities, an Enterprise Zone, and banks, and in partnership with three neighbouring LEPs, to co-ordinate local business support, connecting businesses to the right help for their needs and delivering a range of intensive support programmes. Throughout 2022/23, our Growth Hub will provide critical support to SMEs as the economy grows following the Covid-19 pandemic, providing growth opportunities such as opening the door to public procurement, as well as helping companies face emerging challenges including pressure on energy prices and supply chains. 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 the Solent Freeport following the news that

our 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 early in 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, remains critical to the Solent as we seek to take advantage of growth opportunities, including at our global gateways, following the Covid-19 pandemic and adapting to changing trading relationships.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Maximise the benefit of our global gateways and maritime sector for the Solent	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, including through the newly incorporated Maritime UK Solent	Establish Maritime UK Solent as a financially sustainable cluster by March 2024, including publication of the first Maritime UK Solent Business Plan by summer 2022 and reaching 50% financial sustainability by March 2023
	Through Maritime UK Solent, work with Maritime UK and Government Departments to develop the Solent's Significant Economic Cluster, as identified within the Levelling Up White Paper	Secure publication of a Solent maritime Sector Economic Footprint Study as part of the wider MUK Maritime Sector Economic Study during 2022/23
	Work with the Solent Freeport Consortium to secure a Solent Freeport designation	Complete HM Government approvals process to deliver the Solent Freeport in 2022
Support our cruise industry to deliver low carbon growth	Secure the launch of shore power infrastructure at the Port of Southampton	Launch of shore based power units by the end of 2022 Saving of 8,361kg of CO2 and 105kg of nitrogen oxide emissions per annum from spring 2022

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.

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. This project has been showcased at multiple local and national events and has been awarded the 2021 Big Sustainability awards for Circular Economy Innovation and Public Sector Project of the year.

We will continue to invest in our coastal infrastructure - including investing in Phase 1 of the Southsea Coastal Flood Defence Scheme due for completion in 2022. 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 clean, green growth and support sustainable infrastructure development and decarbonisation of the Solent economy	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 summer 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 to be completed by the end of 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 during 2022 which will restore the historic landscape, providing wildlife rich habitats and removing 3,500 kg of nitrate pollution per annum thereby unlocking the delivery of 5,000 new homes
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 official opening of Hub by May 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 exacerbated and highlighted the challenges they already face in responding to de-industrialisation, changes in tourism and globalisation. It is therefore critical that these communities are able to benefit from the post-pandemic growth opportunities, as well as enhancing resilience to emerging challenges such as increasing energy costs and pressures on supply chains.

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 if they are to benefit from the levelling up of the UK.

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 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 after opening in spring 2022; improvements to the A326 along the Fawley Waterside (due to complete by the end of 2022/23) and the already completed 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 (due to complete in autumn 2022), 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 ►



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 by the end of 2022/23, 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	Continuation of highways infrastructure works which will see a total of 3,500 new homes delivered by the end of the scheme in 2028
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 2022 of a 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 the scheme by the end of 2022/23 will see significant improvements to eight roundabout junctions, reducing congestion and improving journey times on this key link.</p> <p>Installation of 31 km of new ultrafast optical fibre by autumn 2022. 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>

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 have worked with local partners to progress a bid for Southampton to be the City of Culture 2025 and, whilst the bid was ultimately unsuccessful, we remain committed to working with partners to build on the significant momentum during 2022/23, including 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 2023
Support the recovery and growth of the Solent's visitor, creative and cultural economy	Build on the momentum of the Southampton bid for City of Culture 2025 status, bringing together partners to connect the sector across the Solent.	Creative Industries Conference held by summer 2022, with further business engagement sessions to follow. Secure an opportunity for the Solent to participate in the Creative Growth Programme during 2022.



HMS Victory, Portsmouth - part of the Solent's rich maritime history



Southampton 2025 City of Culture bid Ceative Industries conference

5 Develop a world-class talent base

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 Solent to develop a careers outreach programme for the maritime sector. We will collaborate with local authorities to expand the careers and employer engagement activity to deliver a comprehensive package of support for our institutions and be the link between industry and education, mapping local demand with the right supply of skills and people.

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 working with local authority and industry partners.	<p>Establish dedicated resource and expertise to support careers activity across four local authority areas during 2022/23.</p> <p>Develop and deliver 5 industry working groups featured as LEP priorities to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maritime ● Construction ● Visitor economy ● Health and social care ● Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering <p>Utilise existing, established local networks to provide industry insights, engagement and CPD - such as Tech Solent.</p>
	Work with partners to deliver the Solent Skills Action Plan	Through the Solent Skills Advisory Panel monitor and promote the delivery of the Skills Action Plan
	Work with Solent Employer Representative Bodies to secure a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for the Solent	LSIP secured during 2022/23
	Provide strategic leadership on skills activity to support the development of Solent Freeport	Establish dedicated skills forums for Eastleigh, Havant and Southampton Water to support the development of tax sites during 2022/23
	Support the delivery of the Solent Institute of Technology (IoT)	Working with IoT partners, ensure the LEP and Maritime UK Solent provide a conduit for employer engagement with the IoT during 2022/23
	Support the delivery of the Department for Education Strategic Development Fund (SDF) in the Solent	Work with partners throughout 2022/23 to ensure SDF delivery effectively shapes skills provision in the Solent (including within key sectors of marine tech, digital and net zero)
	Working with the Careers & Enterprise Company, deliver an Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) and Careers Hub in the Solent	At least 88 schools and colleges signed up to the EAN during 2022/23, with all achieving at least 2 Gatsby Benchmarks, and all Careers Hub Schools achieving at least 3 Benchmarks by summer 2022

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.

Our Growth Hub is set to provide support through a range of programmes this year to more than 1,000 businesses, helping them to take advantage of the growth opportunities ahead and enhance future resilience.

The Growth hub will lead on co-ordinating business support across the Solent, encouraging local and national collaborations to simplify the access to support for our businesses and entrepreneurs.

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Secure long-term inclusive growth through supporting businesses to expand and build future resilience	Maintain and expand the Solent Growth Hub business support service and 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	Provide support for more than 1,000 businesses during 2022/23, assisting with skills, innovation, Trade and Investment, net zero, inclusive growth and a range of other programmes to support business and recovery. Further develop innovation and trade and investment support through enhanced collaborations with key partners including the Solent Maritime Innovation Gateway and Department for International Trade.
	Provide targeted funding support to local Small and Medium Sized businesses	New SME fund launched by autumn 2022. New Start Up Fund launched by autumn 2022
	Provide strategic leadership on innovation activity to support the development of Solent Freeport	Establish the Solent Maritime Innovation Hub
	Providing place-based economic expertise and insight for the Solent to central and local government	Provide business intelligence to HM Government on economic transition of the Solent economy at a frequency as directed by Government Continuation of the dedicated Solent Business Support Task Force and Solent Connect
Secure long-term inclusive growth through supporting new businesses to locate in the Solent area	Provide strategic leadership on trade and investment activity to include supporting the development of Solent Freeport	Establish Trade and Investment Board for the Solent during 2022/23 Establish Trade and Investment capability for the Solent in partnership with key stakeholders, including Department for International Trade, during 2022/23

7 Put health and wellbeing at the heart of economic success

The Covid-19 pandemic 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 local partners to promote Business Wellbeing 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 the care sector to recruit and train the talent required	Deliver a range of interventions and promotional activities to promote the jobs and careers within the sector	Provide the opportunity for all secondary schools and colleges to attend at least one interactive workshop with an employer from the care sector
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	50 Solent business owners to access the free health and wellbeing support service during 2022/23



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 have brought 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.

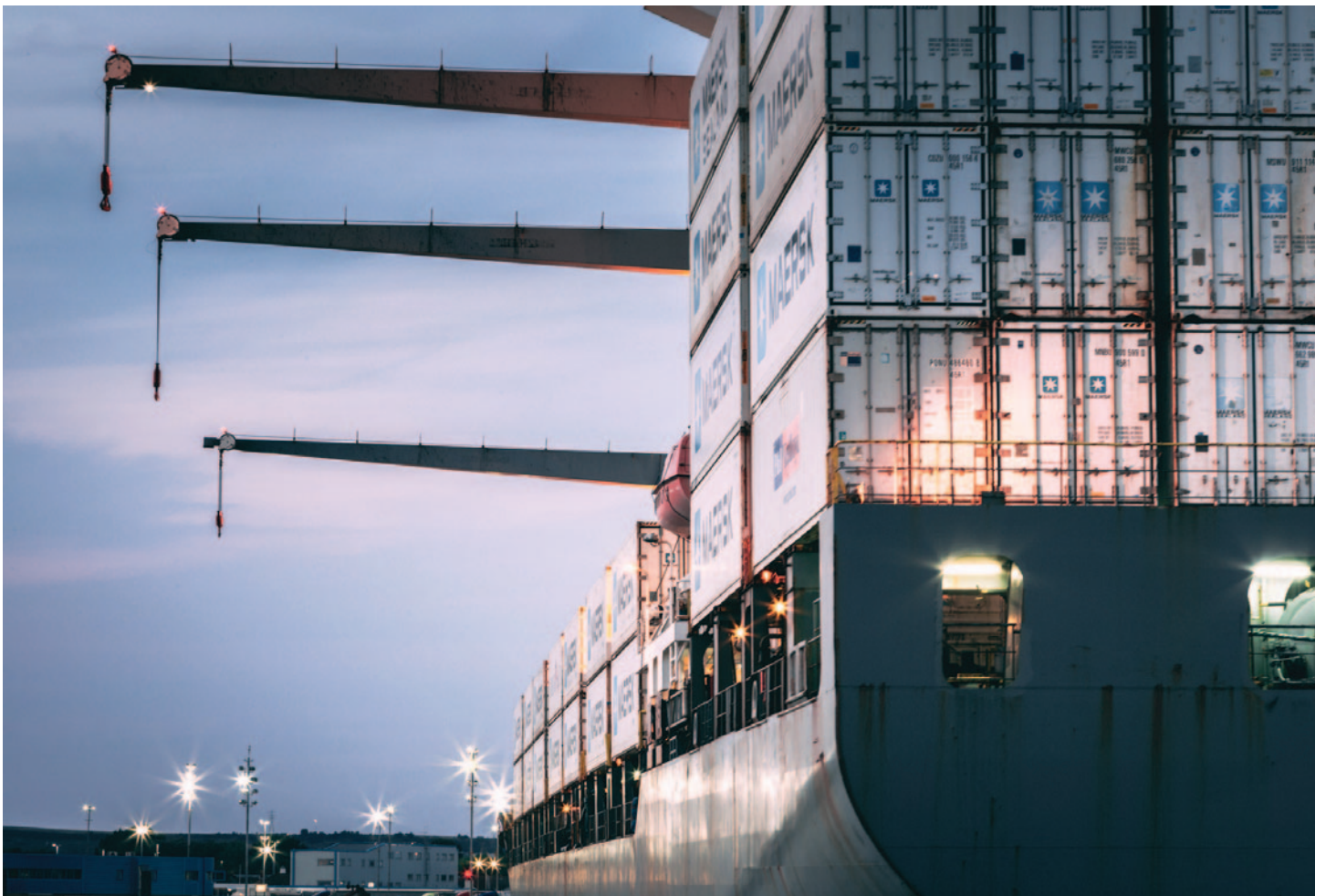
Solent 2050 is a long-term plan, aligned to the UK Industrial Strategy, but designed to the Solent's distinctive strengths, with the potential to power the local economy, increase productivity and support our communities to prosper as we recover from the pandemic.

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.



5.1 Solent 2050

Objective	Activity	Outputs and milestones
Launch a compelling, evidence-based, and ambitious economic Strategy for the Solent	Publication of the Solent 2050 Strategy	Strategy published at the Solent Summit held in summer 2022
Support for the delivery of Solent 2050	Provide executive support to Solent Freeport Consortium Limited to support its set up phase and strategic leadership of key areas throughout the delivery phase including; Trade and Investment, Net Zero, Innovation and Skills	Solent Freeport Full Business Case approval and move to delivery phase of activity during 2022/23
	Support the delivery of the 10 Point Plan for Building Back Greener in the Solent	Implementation plan and targets to be agreed and published during 2022/23



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	One new business director appointed by June 2022 and new LEP Chair to be appointed during 2022/23 (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 Annual General Meeting for all the Solent LEP Members	AGM to be convened by April 2023
	Convene local partners to coordinate a Solent response to Levelling Up the United Kingdom to include supporting local authority partners to develop a devolution deal	Series of business roundtables to be hosted throughout 2022 Strategy session to include convening local authority partners engaged in devolution discussions to be held during 2022
	Renew the Solent LEP website, incorporating the Solent Growth Hub and the Solent Enterprise Adviser activity	Renewed website to be launched by autumn 2022
	Lead the development of Maritime UK Solent to bring together the Solent's maritime strengths and champion the region as a globally significant maritime cluster	Through Maritime UK Solent, work with local businesses and new HMG Levelling Up Directors during 2022/23 to support the development of the Solent's key private sector partnership



Solent LEP Board members (left to right) Paula Swain, Rachael Randall and Alison Wilson

6. Funding and Finance

6.1. Financial Forecasts 2022/23 and 2023/24

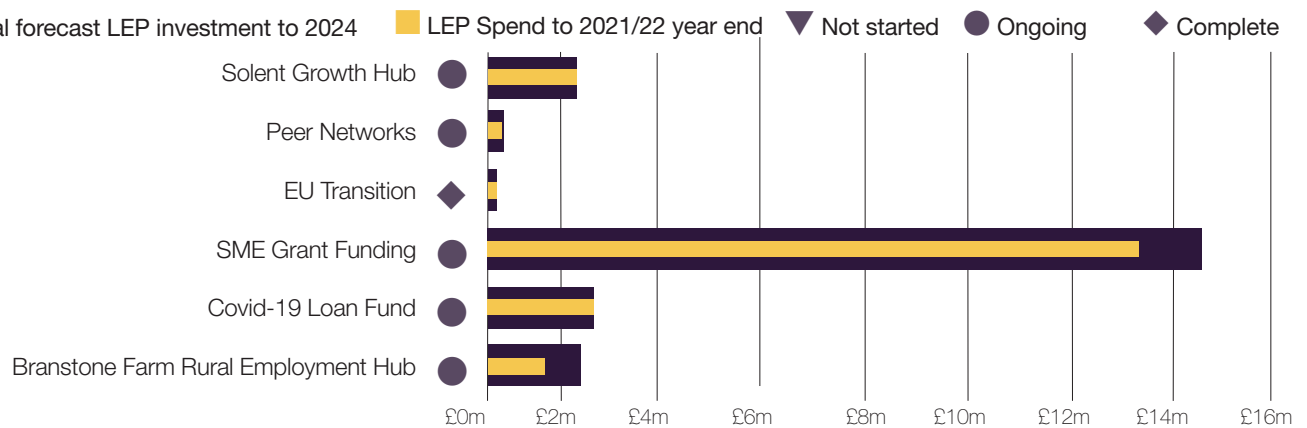
Forecast budgets	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Total Forecast Budget 2022/23 to 2023/24 £
Business Support	1,252,475	200,000	1,452,475
Infrastructure	26,551,926	2,935,000	29,486,926
Skills	991,869	180,000	1,171,869
Innovation	1,000,000	0	1,000,000
Strategic Sectors	0	0	0
Other	1,954,857	1,679,854	3,634,711
Total	31,751,127	4,994,854	36,745,981

Sources of funding

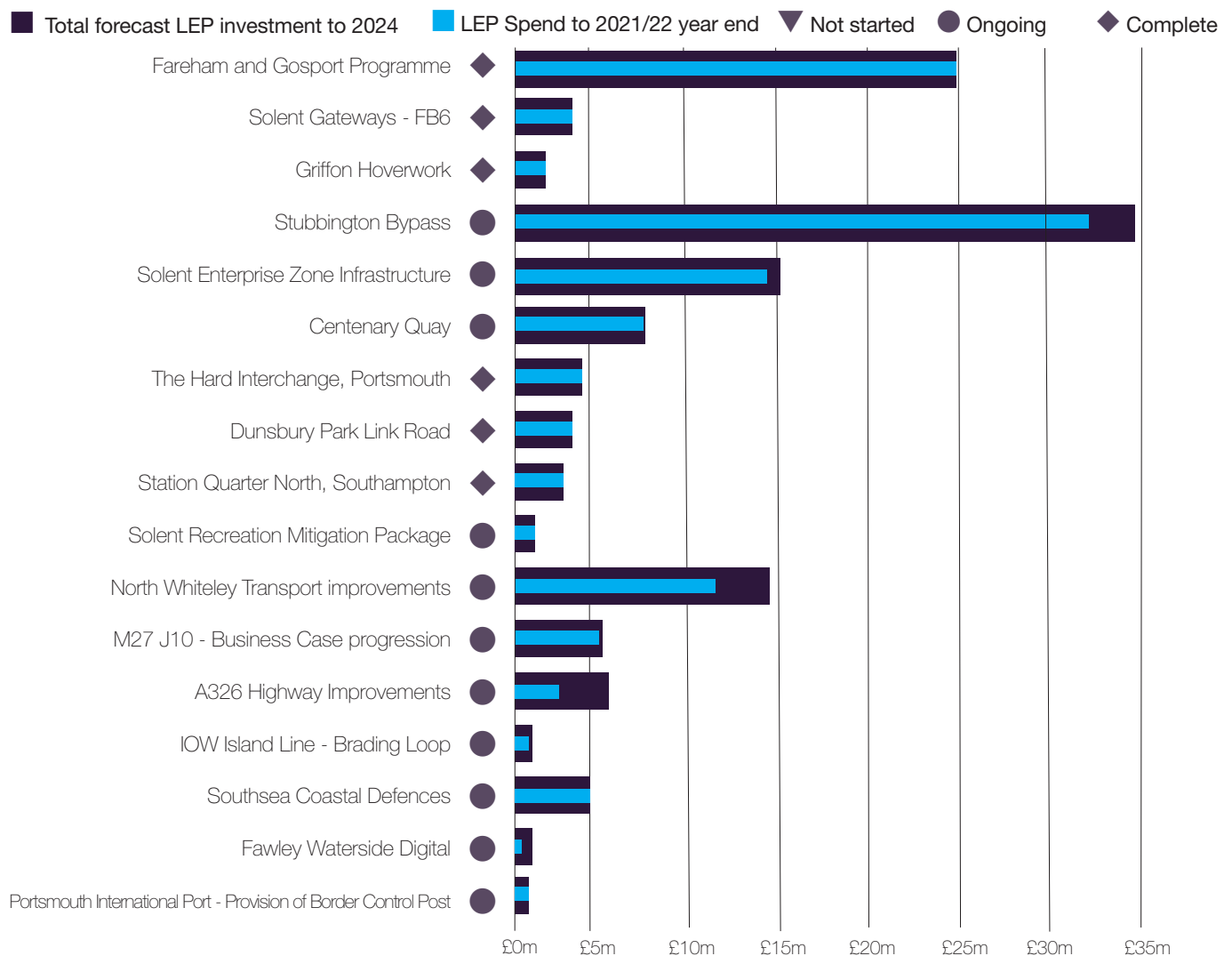
Sources of Funding	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Total Forecast Budget 2022/23 to 2023/24 £
Other Government Funding Programmes	741,289	0	741,289
Solent Growth Deal	15,409,128	685,000	16,094,128
Solent Growing Places Fund	11,701,187	3,066,361	14,767,548
Central Government Funding	723,832	150,000	873,832
Other	170,848	593,493	764,341
Getting Building Fund	3,004,843	500,000*	3,504,843
Total	31,751,127	4,994,854	36,745,981

* Funding from a repaid loan provided under the initial Getting Building Fund allocation which is being recycled to fund further activity

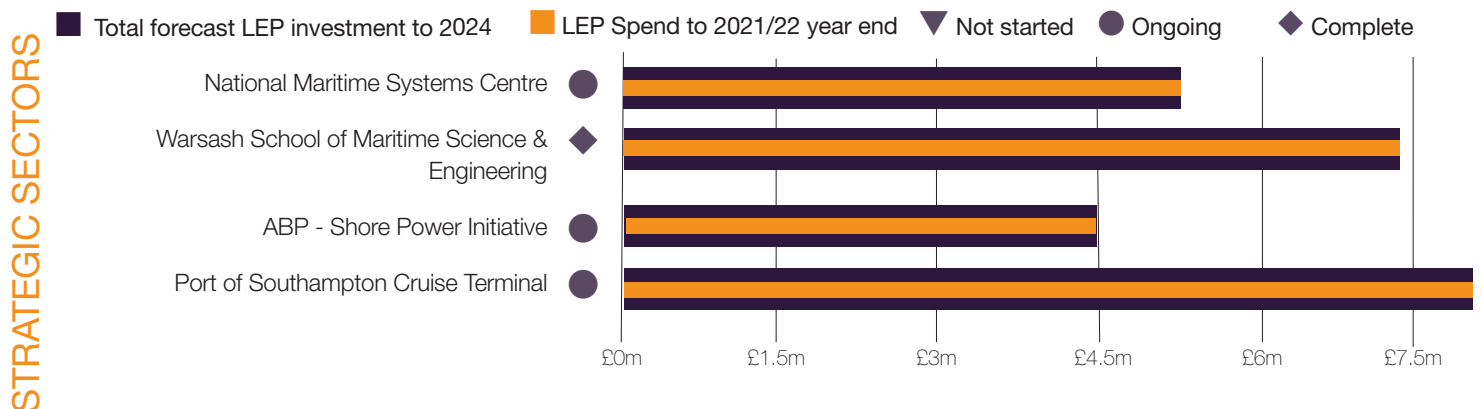
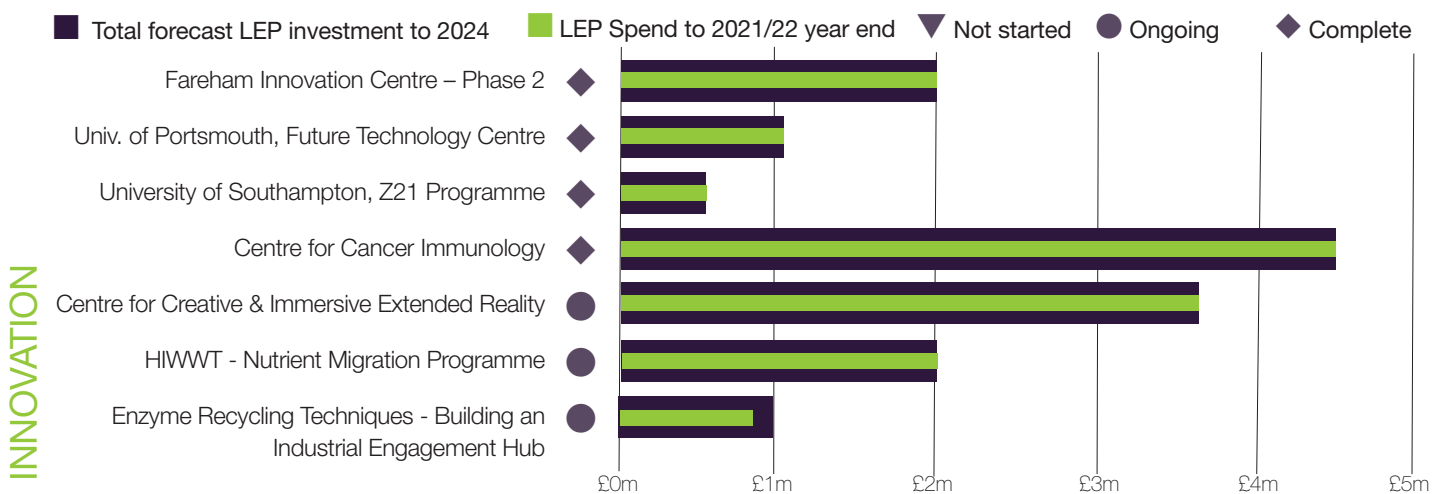
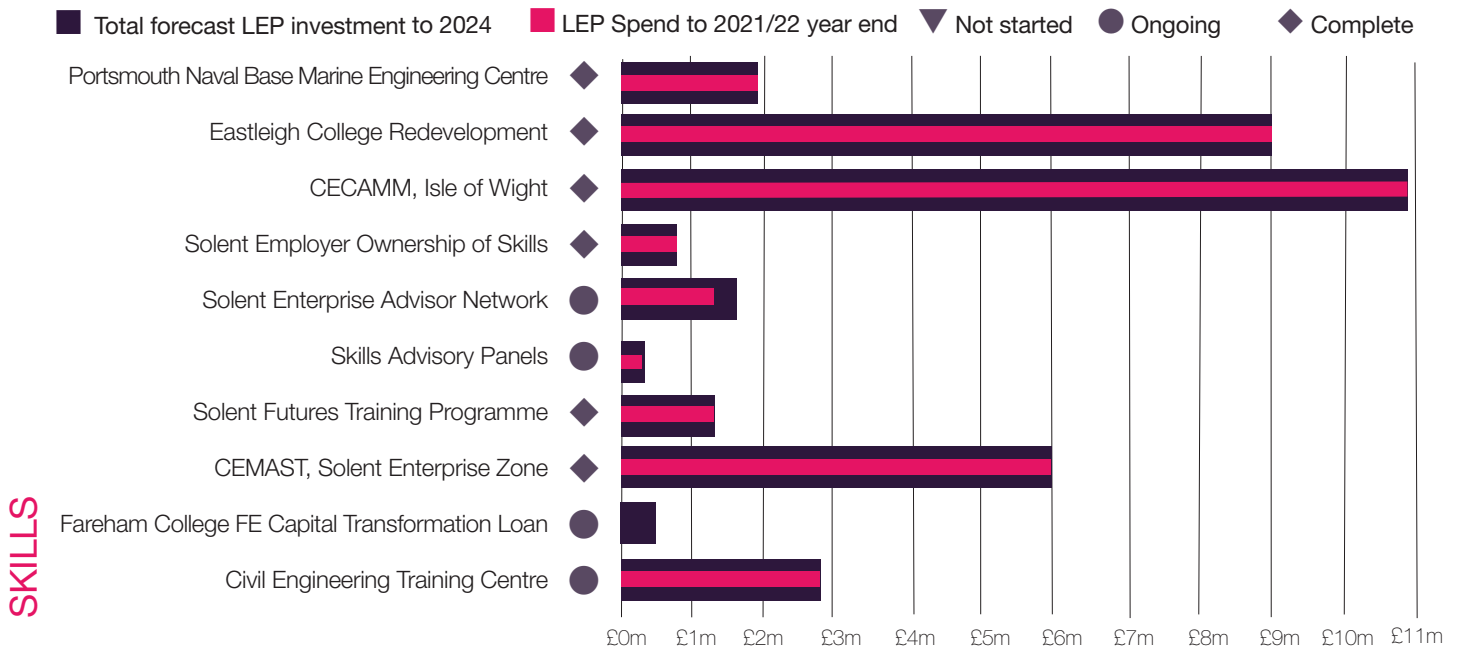
BUSINESS SUPPORT



INFRASTRUCTURE



6.2. The Solent LEP – 2021/22 Project Dashboard





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t: [023 9268 8924](tel:02392688924)

e: info@solentlep.org.uk

w: solentlep.org.uk



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