

WE LEP UPDATE

April 2015

Update from WE LEP chief executive

We recently launched our 'West of England Home of Knowledge, Innovation and Quality of Life' booklet and map, highlighting our strengths, our successes and our potential to continue to deliver economic growth across our area. The LEP Board travelled to Westminster to showcase the document with our MPs and other key stakeholders. Copies of the booklet are available in the main LEP office at the Engine Shed.

We are pleased that the West of England tops the list in terms of pounds received per head and is third overall across a range of indicators for Local Growth Fund allocations, according to Research carried out by Regeneris, the economics research and analysis company.

<http://regeneris.co.uk/latest/blog/entry/local-growth-fund-analysis-of-round-2>

We have also just announced that we will be recruiting new business members onto the LEP board. All business members, including Colin Skellett, have decided that the general election provides a good opportunity to refresh the existing membership and we have therefore gone out to the business community to encourage new applicants to come forward. It is however hoped that there will be some continuity as some individuals may wish to continue their role and put themselves forward for re-election. For more information, please see our website.

As you will see from this update there are many exciting initiatives across all our teams and as always your support is much appreciated.

All the best

Barbara

INVEST BRISTOL AND BATH

Successes

Invest Bristol & Bath (IBB) has attracted a further 200 jobs to the region in March including 100 jobs in IBEX, a US based outsource provider to global high value clients.

IBB continues to grow the pipeline of enquiries which is expected to generate a further 1,500 jobs within the next 12 to 18 months, over 400 of which are expected to land in the next three months including:

- A Spanish insurance company creating a UK HQ in the region generating 250 jobs
- UK aerospace company developing an R&D centre generating 120 jobs
- World renowned architecture firm generating 50 jobs

Marketing and Promoting the Economy

IBB have developed a series of campaigns around aerospace & advanced engineering, high tech, creative & digital, low carbon technologies and financial & professional services with the aim of raising the profile of the region and attracting investment.

Activities for March included:

- A French Press delegation, which included eight journalists from prestigious publications including Le Figaro, visited the region to understand the digital sector and meet some of the area's leading companies
- As part of the Mexican President's visit to the UK in March, IBB hosted a Mexican delegation of gaming and animation companies who visited the region to understand the investment and business opportunities
- IBB supported SouthWestVR conference on 24 February which attracted over 260 delegates from around the world to Bristol to understand the region's role as a gaming and virtual reality capital

- IBB supported Bath Ruby which brought over 500 delegates to Bath, showcasing the region's strengths in software coding
- Working alongside partners at Bristol 2015, IBB are leading on Venturefest Bristol & Bath that will showcase some of the region's leading technologies and capabilities. The event will consist of an Innovation Showcase, Thought Leadership, Start-up Village and Investor Showcase. Further information can be found at www.venturefestbristolandbath.com
- A campaign is progressing to promote the region's strengths in Financial and Professional Services in partnership with the region's developers, landowners and agents

WEST OF ENGLAND GROWTH FUND

The West of England Growth Fund team recently announced that they have supported 222 companies with over £10m of funds creating over 800 new jobs to date.

The funds enable a whole range of businesses with job creation, capital investment, training and research & development.

The WEGF, which is supported by the Government's Regional Growth Fund, is set to create 2,200 new jobs for the region and lever an additional £110m of private sector investment that would otherwise not have happened. Applications for up to £1million were able to be made by businesses planning to grow and create new jobs .

SKILLS

Work with Government and National Bodies:

- Agreeing LEP area KPIs for local delivery of National Careers Service programmes
- Strategic co-ordination of engagement and delivery of National Creative & Digital Skills strategies - addressing diversity and recruitment issues in the region- campaign launched during Digital Bristol Week 2015 #Create50in15.
- Co-ordinating local delivery of National Initiatives - ongoing management of Creative Employment Programme; creating entry level positions for creative industries. Diversity Bursaries – Creative Skillset; working with sector skills council to ensure distribution of bursaries and training opportunities in the region.
- Skills for Health presented to LEP Skills Group to discuss skills challenges of the sector and future skills needs.

Work with Business:

- Promotion of the "Annual Skills Survey" to business – **significant push required for businesses to complete survey** [here](#) (or via URL <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/welepskills2015>)
- Convening a major infrastructure forum of major employers and contracts (e.g. EDF, Network Rail, Bristol Airport, Bristol Port) to adopt strategic approach to local preparedness with reference to skills and workforce needs
- Delivered events during National Apprenticeship Week in March 2015
- Low Carbon / Construction Immersion Roundtable delivered by City of Bristol College on March 23rd at Bordeaux Quay; large construction businesses including Britannia, Midas Energy & Skanska discussed sustainability skills within the sector and agreed an action plan led by the college through our work with the FE Skills Pilot.

Work with Education:

- Provision mapping underway for mapping provision delivered by providers in the WE.
 - Pathways to Professions event – 26 March covering nuclear, low carbon and construction held in North Somerset.
 - ‘Skills Support for the Workforce’ capacity building with training providers and engaging business to undertake World Host training.
 - Working with the “Your Green Future” Group to deliver a successful Interactive event for schools in May 2015 to include a focus on Apprenticeships.
 - Continued delivery of the Skills Funding Incentive Pilot.
 - Supporting delivery of two World Skills events.
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METROBUS

The third and final section of the MetroBus Network, running from the North Fringe to Hengrove, has received Full Approval. This completes the scheme development process for the 50 km MetroBus network that will provide a new reliable public transport service from Long Ashton Park and Ride to Bristol city centre via Temple Meads, with an alternative route via Hengrove and Bedminster, and a direct service through the city centre to UWE and Parkway station on to Cribbs Causeway, or Emersons Green, where a new Park and Ride is already waiting.

MetroBus - a smarter way to travel

- Direct routes to key destinations - enabling hundreds more people to access key employment, education and leisure destinations,
 - Faster than existing bus services
 - Removes the need to change buses in Bristol city centre for many passengers
 - New Green vehicle fleet with reduced emissions
 - Improved local links for cyclists and pedestrians.
 - More people travel to work by bus than by all other forms of public transport combined.
 - If motorists used buses for just one in 25 of their local car trips, in three years government carbon emission targets would be exceeded by 50%
 - 43% of regular bus users do not have access to a car
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PROFILE

LEP E-newsletter

March issue can be viewed here: <http://eepurl.com/bhj9gT>

The April issue is due to be released on Thursday 23 April - deadline for stories is Monday 20 April please.

Sign up to the newsletter here: www.westofenglandlep.co.uk/newsletter.

Suggestions for potential stories can be emailed to rachel.hodge@westofengland.org

LEP Blog

Read our latest blog “Increase growth, productivity and future innovation in your business”: <http://bit.ly/1BM2dyu>

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