2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership

1ST

Strongest growth in higher level workforce skills

Of all LEPs between 2010-2014

2ND

Highest growth in productivity

Of all LEPs between 2009-2014

3RD

Highest growth in prosperity

Of all LEPs between 2010-2014

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Our vision

To build a connected, creative, dynamic economy that delivers increased prosperity for all those who choose to live, work, visit and invest in Worcestershire.

Remit

The Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP), one of 38 in England, is responsible for creating and delivering economic growth and jobs in the County. This is achieved through a partnership approach with business, local government, the third sector and higher and further education working together with a common, shared purpose.

The WLEP is responsible for developing and delivering Worcestershire's 10-year Strategic Economic Plan which was agreed by all partner organisations and submitted to Government in March 2014. The WLEP is, therefore, working to create 25,000 jobs, increase Gross Value Added (GVA) by £2.9bn and contribute towards the delivery of 21,500 new homes by 2025.

A total of **£54.2m of Growth Deal funding** is available between 2015 and 2021 for agreed economic projects to ensure that Worcestershire is a world class place to work, visit, invest and do business. This includes a range of schemes, for example, to improve: skills, rail connectivity, access to key employment sites and Superfast Broadband.

The WLEP is also responsible for a **€68m EU programme** which contributes to delivery of all parts of the Strategic Economic Plan and provides specific grant funding to support business expansion and training with a focus on moving individuals into work.

The WLEP continues to work across the National LEP Network to explore shared best practice and innovations which underpin local-to-national business growth. Worcestershire has established alliances across LEP regions, as well as the Midlands LEPs, to consolidate wider opportunities around the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect for a connected road, rail and air infrastructure network.

UPDATES

Be kept updated by signing up for the WLEP monthly e-newsletter at www.wlep.co.uk

Follow @WorcsLEP and join the conversation #WorldClassWorcs

Join the 'Worcestershire LEP' LinkedIn group

"By successfully implementing the current £54.2m Growth Deal as well as the €68m European Structural and Investment Funds programme, Worcestershire has achieved remarkable growth in key areas such as skills, employment and productivity."

MP for Bromsgrove
RT. HON SAJID JAVID MP

"This Government is committed to developing an economy that works for everyone and Local Enterprise Partnerships have a vital role to play in achieving this ambition. Since penning my introduction to last year's Annual Report, I am proud to say that Worcestershire has continued to bolster its reputation as one of the fastest-growing economies in the country.

Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership plays a crucial role in leading the drive for continued sustainable economic growth in our County. By successfully implementing the current £54.2m Growth Deal as well as the €68m European Structural and Investment Funds programme, Worcestershire has achieved remarkable growth in key areas such as skills, employment and productivity.

In demonstrating a best in class commitment to engaging with businesses throughout, confidence can be taken in the fact that the initiatives outlined in this report, will have a genuine and lasting benefit. In Worcestershire Business Central, we have one of the first Growth Hubs established in England which is going from strength to strength in ensuring that businesses have access to the right advice and support at the time they need it most.

The County also has a huge role to play in delivering the ambitions of the Midlands Engine by working in partnership with 10 other Local Enterprise Partnerships to bring even greater opportunity to Worcestershire and beyond.

Worcestershire is a County close to my heart and it is an absolute pleasure to introduce this Annual Report for 2016."

Rt. Hon Sajid Javid
MP for Bromsgrove

"In demonstrating a best in class commitment to engaging with businesses throughout, confidence can be taken in the fact that the initiatives outlined in this report, will have a genuine and lasting benefit."

Chair
MARK STANSFELD

"Worcestershire has a clear and exciting vision of building a connected, creative, dynamic economy that delivers increased prosperity for all those who live, work and invest here and I am pleased to say – we are seeing the results.

In recent years, the County has been recognised at the top of the tables for economic growth:

- 1st strongest growth in higher level workforce skills
- 2nd highest growth in productivity
- 3rd highest growth in prosperity.

Worcestershire continues to climb the league tables due to our performance and is well on track to exceed our target to increase GVA by £2.9bn, enable over 21,500 new homes and create an additional 25,000 jobs all by 2025.

Why is this the case? Quite simply we have a single vision and plan, which has been agreed and signed up to by all stakeholders - public, private and third sectors. Our place, our people and our businesses are, therefore, all aligned for further growth and we act as one team to ensure that all activity across the partnership supports delivery of our vision.

We should be proud of our achievements to date, however, the County has an ambitious 10-year Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), which still stands true, and success will only truly be achieved when we have delivered this in full - this is no time to be complacent.

We are continuing to build on our successful track record to secure further private and public investment and help Worcestershire's economy grow at an even faster rate. We are building a future, not fixing the past: working together to forge solid foundations for further growth by focusing on infrastructure, skills, innovation, enterprise, productivity, inclusive growth and enhancing our County's reputation.

We are outward looking and are committed to playing a significant role in the regional and national priorities. Particularly with the Midlands Engine for Growth, to ensure that we are a key part of the area's future economic success and Government's emerging new Industrial Strategy that will shape the UK's economy for future generations.

Thank you for everyone's hard work and achievements which are recognised in this report. I would encourage you to become more involved in the partnership and let's work together to deliver this exciting vision and ensure the long-term prosperity for Worcestershire."

Mark Stansfeld
Chair of Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership

"We are building a future, not fixing the past: working together to forge solid foundations for further growth by focusing on infrastructure, skills, innovation, enterprise, productivity, inclusive growth and enhancing our County's reputation."

"It is with great pride that the Partnership can look back over the last twelve months and reflect on the delivery of projects and programmes which contribute to the execution of our overall vision for Worcestershire."

Chief Executive
GARY WOODMAN

"It is with great pride that the Partnership can look back over the last twelve months and reflect on the delivery of projects and programmes which contribute to the execution of our overall vision for Worcestershire. The partnership is developing a track record and reputation of achievements and results set out in the 10-year Strategic Economic Plan. This remains the guiding light behind all we do and highlights how each of the individual partners can contribute to the whole plan. The Partnership is nothing without these individual contributions.

As I explained at last year's Conference, it is creating the opportunity for my daughters and family to prosper in Worcestershire that drives me, personally. Physical changes to the County matched with a growing aspiration to live and work in the area is making a real contribution economically and socially. I am, therefore, pleased to report our significant progress in this Annual Report against our ambitious targets. This report provides some of the highlights of what has been achieved around:

- **Planning, Infrastructure and Development**
- **Employment and Skills**
- **Business Growth**
- **Profiling and Promotion.**

The focus on delivery continues as we work to secure additional Growth Deal funding, with the total funding to date in October 2016 standing at £54.2m. We are seeing the real impact these schemes are making with the opening of the new Hoobrook Link Road, the completion of the works on Pershore Lane alongside Worcester Six, the opening of the Midlands Group Training Services Engineering Centre of Excellence in Redditch and the expansion of Malvern Hills Science Park.

Many other schemes are in progress that will also have long lasting benefits to the economy, bringing additional jobs and homes to the County as well as further improving skills locally.

Evidence that the plan is working was identified in the independent Joseph Rowntree report which highlighted Worcestershire as having the highest growth in workforce skills between 2010-14. The report also identified the County as having the 3rd highest growth in prosperity of all of the LEPs in the same period. We have maintained our level of apprenticeship growth, with Higher Apprenticeships growing at over 237%. We continue to make a real impact in the local economy and through measures of business investment and growth, and by everyone playing their part, we are making a real difference."

Gary Woodman
Chief Executive of the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership

Planning, Infrastructure & Development

Our focus for the County during 2016 was to:

Increase the quantity and quality of commercial floorspace across the County

Develop transport infrastructure and accelerate housing development

Improve digital connectivity to allow businesses to grow

Increase the housing stock to support business growth

THIS WAS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

Completing the construction of the re-aligned Pershore Lane to allow access to the Worcester Six development site facilitating the granting of planning permission to Liberty Property Trust and Stoford Developments for units of 160,000 sq ft and 45,000 sq ft, which will be the first to be built at Worcester Six.

Completing the construction of Hoobrook Link Road, Kidderminster providing access to South Kidderminster Enterprise Park and over 400 new homes.

We are working with Worcestershire County Council and BT, who are the lead partners of the multi-million pound Superfast Worcestershire Programme, to ensure that high speed fibre broadband will be available for 95% of Worcestershire's businesses and households by Autumn 2017.

GROWTH DEALS

Growth Deal programmes are expected to enable 12,500 housing units over the next 3 years.

Ongoing improvement works to the Southern Link Road (A4440)

Constructing a new access road at Vale Park, Evesham in partnership with Wychavon District Council which has already resulted in new developments by Primafruit, processors and suppliers of fresh fruit to Waitrose, and Robert Welch Design, an internationally renowned brand.

Working with Malvern Hills District Council to acquire Park Farm, thereby enabling the relocation of Malvern Rugby Club and releasing 10 acres of land for commercial development at Spring Lane, Malvern.

Completing Heat Mapping for potential Heat Networks in Worcestershire and assessing the geothermal potential in Offenham and Bromsgrove.

Investing £1,000,000 in flood alleviation works at several sites across the County including Powick Hams to reduce the economic impact of flood events.

Commencing construction on the 16,000 sq ft Phase 5 development at Malvern Hills Science Park to support the growth of high value businesses.

Supporting the redevelopment of Cathedral Square, Worcester by investing £500,000 in the new road layout adjacent to the statue of Sir Edward Elgar.

Looking forward…

During 2017, we will continue to:

Build on the momentum generated during 2016 by progressing the Full Business Case for the Pershore **Northern Link Road** providing access to over…
600 new homes and
9.5ha of commercial land.

Preparing a **joint vision** and **Masterplan** for approximately **300 new homes** and **4.5ha of commercial land** agreed with QinetiQ, Malvern Hills District Council and Worcestershire County Council.

Completing the Full Business Case for investment in the A38 Corridor through Bromsgrove.

Developing the Full Business Case for significant Government investment in the widening of Carrington Bridge (A4440) to complete the redevelopment of the Southern Link Road and support the creation of the Worcester West Urban Extension.

Investing in the redevelopment of Kidderminster Station providing improved access for rail users.

Working with Redditch Borough Council and Stoford Developments to secure planning approval for the development of the Redditch Eastern Gateway site which when complete, will provide up to 1,000,000 sq ft of commercial space and create up to 2500 jobs.

Having secured planning consent for Worcestershire Parkway Station, construction is planned to start early in 2017.

REDUCED TRAVEL TIME… …WORCESTER TO LONDON

Working with GWR, businesses, politicians and other partners, we will continue to make the case for the re-doubling of the North Cotswold Rail Line between Worcester and Oxford resulting in reduced travel times to and from Worcestershire and London.

Employment and Skills

Our focus for addressing the Employment and Skills needs for the Worcestershire economy during 2016 was to:

Improve skill levels with a focus on STEM, Cyber, IT and Agri-tech skills

Provide businesses with the skills they need through better connections with education

Increase the number of opportunities with a focus on disadvantaged groups

THIS WAS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

£350,000 investment

An investment of £350,000, with a further £350,000 from Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership was made in a new Engineering Centre of Excellence in Arrow Road, Redditch run by specialist training provider, Midland Group Training Services.

Opened in November 2016, the Centre will provide a dedicated local facility to ensure that young people within the area can be trained to provide the engineering skills that local companies require.

New Engineering Centre of Excellence, Redditch

£950,000 investment with a further £70,000 from Worcester City Council was made in a new Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) which will develop a new specialist facility to support engineering apprenticeships in partnership with the Worcester Group Training Association.

£950,000 investment

Investment at Pershore College

A total of £500,000 invested in new equipment to support the implementation of a new Agri-tech study programme at Pershore College, part of the Warwickshire Group of Colleges.

Agri-tech

£500,000 investment

IN NEW EQUIPMENT

A bid for a University Technical College (UTC) was made to the Department for Education in May for a Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Centre of Excellence. Subject to the Department for Education's clearance, the UTC is planned to open in September 2018.

THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

The Careers and Enterprise Company initiative was launched in Worcestershire in January 2016.

To date, 25 local schools are committed to the initiative and 22 employer mentors are working with schools. The scheme is on target to achieve 100% coverage by Summer term 2017.

The Careers and Enterprise Company's Worcestershire Skills Show 2016 was well supported with more than **1,800 young people** participating.

Over 60 employers exhibited at the event and a Careers Advisor quoted the show as being **"a great event" that "really helped demonstrate the variety of industries in Worcestershire".**

WA WORCESTERSHIRE APPRENTICESHIPS

Continued commitment to The Apprenticeship Clearing Hub, launched in September 2015, which currently engages with over **2700 young people** and over **260 employers** and has created over **260 apprenticeships.**

Hosting the Worcestershire Apprenticeship Awards, now in their third year, which recognises excellence in apprentices, apprentice employers, schools and training providers.

Five Worcestershire-based Apprentices and Apprentice employers were recognised at the West Midlands Apprenticeship Awards.
ISO Quality Services won Small Employer of the Year and in addition to Kathleen Sandford's win, Green Lighting Ltd, Bethany Griffin of Sanctuary Housing Association and Ryan Shemwell of Green Lighting Ltd all received commendations.

Kathleen Sandford, learning and development administrator with the Community Housing Group in Kidderminster, won the Intermediate Apprentice of the Year at the National Apprenticeship Awards for 2016.

Inclusive Growth

Launched in September 2016, 'Into Work Worcestershire', created by Fusion Partnership, will deliver two **Building Better Opportunities Projects** sponsored by the Big Lottery Fund. These initiatives will provide tailored support to help socially and economically excluded people develop lifelong skills and overcome individual barriers to employment.

New Building Better Opportunities Project

University of Worcester

Elsewhere, the University of Worcester was shortlisted as the Times Higher Education University of the Year for 2016 and became one of a handful of organisations to gain Centre of Excellence status from the Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs for its delivery of enterprise skills development.

Looking forward…

Plans are in place to further increase the number of apprenticeships in Worcestershire, with over 10,000 apprenticeships currently active in the County. This will include the formation of an Apprenticeship Training Academy with the Heart of Worcestershire College of Further Education.

We will work with the University of Worcester to create an International Centre for Inclusive Sport, Physical Activity and Health. The project will set a global benchmark in inclusive sport, benefiting from internationally-renowned expertise.

In partnership with Heart of Worcestershire College, we will invest in equipment and improved facilities in Worcester and Redditch to support the skills needs of students with Special Educational Needs. We will also support the College in developing its engineering capacity in Worcester.

A further £18m of ESF funding will be used to consolidate Inclusive Growth through a range of more employment and skills initiatives offering accessible, tailored support around lifelong learning, traineeships, apprenticeships and employment, particularly for people remote from the labour market.

European Union
European Social Fund

Business Growth

Our focus for supporting Business Growth across the County during 2016 was to:

Help businesses to grow through providing the right support, access to finance and reducing regulatory burden

Develop an environment where innovation can flourish with a focus on agi-tech, cyber, IT and STEM

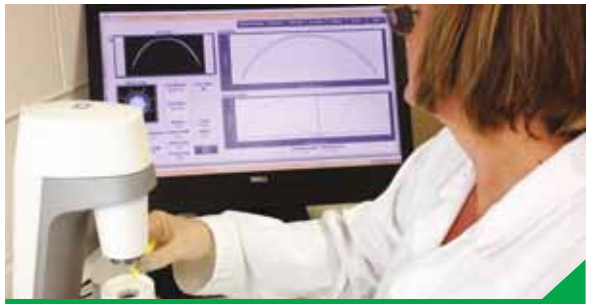
THIS IS BEING ACHIEVED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

Investing over £800,000 in 12 Worcestershire businesses via the Worcestershire Growth Fund which will result in the creation of 150 new jobs in the County and private sector leverage of over £2.7m.

OPTIMEC CASE STUDY

Optimec is a world-leader in the provision of inspection and measurement instruments for the contact lens industry. The business has supplied instruments worldwide and developed a reputation for the highest standards of quality and service. Optimec's talent for technical innovation and dynamic approach to research and development has enabled the business to meet the technical needs of the customer.

Investment of over £40,000 from the Worcestershire Growth Fund allowed Optimec to make available a number of test instruments to satisfy the global requirements for demonstration and evaluation of contact lens products, enabling a speedier roll out of the instruments to a global market.



Colin Richards, Director of Optimec Ltd, said:
"I am very pleased that Worcestershire Growth Fund was able to match our investment and allow our business to realise its ambitions and invest in the latest machinery. This enabled us to modernise our business processes, create jobs and ultimately strengthen our competitive advantage in the international market."

'Better Business For All': Worcester Regulatory Services won the first National Better Business for All Innovation Award for its Asian Seminar Programme supporting the food industry across the County.

£13m of ERDF funding was approved for a range of business support programmes promoted to aid SME business competitiveness. These include:

Worcestershire Proof of Concept

A Proof of Concept grant funding programme to support SMEs to investigate, advance, commercialise and protect early stage innovative business ideas, through a partnership with the Central Technology Belt.

Business Energy Efficiency Programme

The Business Energy Efficiency Programme offers free energy efficiency assessments which could lead to grants for businesses who wish to use their energy more efficiently, thereby reducing costs and improving environmental credentials.

Worcestershire's Growing Cyber scheme is a new support service providing expert advice and dedicated cyber security expertise to the County's SMEs who want to become 'Cyber Safe' and support for cyber businesses in Worcestershire looking to grow, providing free training and follow-on matched funding for business growth.

The Enterprising Worcestershire Programme is supporting the growth of start-up businesses, while Worcestershire Business Central is providing advice to a large number of high growth and scale up businesses.

WINN Worcestershire Innovation

Worcestershire Innovation (WINN), a new collaboration between the leading innovators in the County and beyond was launched aimed at consolidating innovation support activities and creating a community of innovators. Details at **www.winn-hub.com.**

European Union
European Structural and Investment Funds

£530,000 of EU EAFRD funding has been invested in five projects directly supporting horticulture, food processing, business expansion and increased productivity in rural areas.

It has been agreed to invest £250,000 in a new Inclusive Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Growth in partnership with the University of Worcester.

All business support programmes are being routed through Worcestershire Business Central, our Growth Hub which has gone from strength to strength during 2016 and will continue to engage with businesses across the County to ensure that the most appropriate form of support is made available.

WORCESTERSHIRE BUSINESS CENTRAL
Part of the national growth hub network

University of Worcester

Elsewhere, The University of Worcester has launched a new BA (Hons) Degree in Entrepreneurship which started in September 2016. The degree provides a series of modules which support the creation, development, sustainability and growth of a business and it is likely that some 'potential or existing' entrepreneurs may be interested in attending modules on a part-time basis.

Looking forward…

During 2017, we will continue to implement the initiatives developed during 2016. In addition to which, we will:

Work with partners to utilise the new £250m Midlands Engine Investment Fund with the first investments likely in early 2017. Utilising £5.6m of EU funds, this is a partnership between the WLEP and all LEPs in the West and East Midlands working with British Business Bank, to establish a "fund of funds" which provides affordable finance to SMEs in the form of equity and loans and, ultimately, create a sizeable legacy for future area reinvestment.

Issue further calls for £8m ERDF funded projects to support businesses with innovation, targeted sector support, low carbon and green/blue infrastructure schemes which protect and promote environmental resource efficiency.

Invest a further £1.6m of EAFRD funds to provide direct support to growing rural businesses, horticulture and food processing enterprises as well as tourism projects.

Finally, congratulations to our award winning businesses who gained accolades in the last year.

Five Worcestershire businesses received a Queen's Award for Enterprise during 2016.

Bromsgrove-based **Winsted, Orchard Valley Foods** in Tenbury Wells and **Kudos Blends Ltd** in Cleobury Mortimer won the Queen's Award for International Trade with Worcester companies, **Green Lighting Ltd** and **PCA Predict** winning the Queen's Award for Innovation.

Vision Labs Limited winners of the commitment to people development award

Malvern-based, **Deep Secure,** has been recognised in the prestigious Cyber Security 500 listing with a placing ranking it as one of the top 300 cyber companies in the world.

Having been Britain's first accountancy firm to win the "Investors in People" accreditation and an "outstanding" accreditation for "Investors in Customers", **Bishop Fleming** has now secured a place in the Sunday Times "Top 100 Best Companies to Work For" after being awarded an "outstanding" rating.

Opening Doors & Venues, a North Worcestershire based specialist conference and event Management Company, are celebrating being voted as winners of Best Agency Conference Organiser at The ABPCO Excellence Awards.

The Wonderful Worcestershire Women awards (April 2016) celebrated some of the County's most successful females in business. Worcestershire LEP sponsored the Female Employee of the Year award and over 300 business people attended the awards ceremony.

HomeXperts won the Gold award for Best Estate Agency Franchise at The Sunday Times Estate Agency Awards 2015. **HomeXperts** scooped both the Gold for the Sunday Times' Best Estate Agency Franchise and the Bronze for The Sunday Times' Best Letting Agency Franchise.

Grant Thornton recognised Worcester-based **PCA Predict's** Managing Director, Guy Mucklow, in a national list of 100 public and private sector leaders who are 'shaping a vibrant economy'.

Five Worcestershire businesses are representing the West Midlands at the finals of the British Chamber of Commerce Business Awards for 2016.

- **Bee Lighting Ltd** was awarded the West Midlands Small Business of the Year Award
- **Gemporia** won the Award for the Best Use of Technology
- **Vision Labs Limited** won the Commitment to People Development Award
- **RGS Worcester** became the regional winner in the Education and Business Partnership category
- **Waste Spectrum Environmental Limited** took home the award for Exporter of the Year.

Bromsgrove District Housing Trust won the 'Employer of the Year' award at the BusinessDesk's 2016 awards for the West Midlands. **Heather and John Penn from Redditch-based SSE Audio Group** won the Entrepreneur of the Year 2016 Midlands Award for Business Services and Products and will now progress through to the national final.

The **Broadway Hotel, Green Farm B and B, Stanbrook Abbey Hotel, Cotford Hotel, Clives Fruit Farm, Canvas and Clover, Pershore Plum Festival** and the **RHS Malvern Spring Festival** were all winners at the Worcestershire Tourism Awards.

Profiling and Promotion

Our focus for raising the profile of the County during 2016 was to…

Promote Worcestershire as a World Class place to invest and run a business

Raise the profile of the County regionally, nationally and internationally

Support partners to promote Worcestershire as an excellent place to live and visit

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Worcestershire has some excellent companies with many others recognising the opportunities available. The Department of International Trade's (DIT's) latest figures show that a total of 1,178 jobs were created or secured in Worcestershire as a result of Foreign Direct Investment in the County during 2015/16.

Cyber-Mission to Baltimore, Maryland

Alongside partners, Worcestershire LEP played a key part in the Midlands Engine mission to Baltimore, Maryland in October 2016. Cyber-security is a priority growth sector for the County and a number of local cyber-security companies, as well as businesses and universities from across the region showcased what Worcestershire and the wider area has to offer. This has established a mutually beneficial and lasting relationship with US firms and a return visit for Maryland businesses is planned for 2017.

Cyber-mission to Baltimore, Maryland in October 2016

DELEGATIONS

Worcestershire LEP continues to support the Midlands Engine delegations which include visits to and from; the US, Canada, China and India as well as continuing to take the World Class Worcestershire message overseas at every opportunity.

For example, Board Member, Chris Walklett presented the benefits of investing in Worcestershire as an extension to a business trip to Kreston in Italy.

SPECIALIST EVENTS

Worcestershire was represented at AutoMechanika the UK's leading exhibition for the automotive supply chain in 2016, as part of the Drive West Midlands exhibition. The event promoted Worcestershire and the wider region's strong automotive business community to an audience of 2,000 businesses and investors.

INVESTMENT EVENTS

The County was profiled for the third year at the international investment showcase, MIPIM UK, in London which attracted international property professionals. Worcestershire LEP is also leading the County's presence at MIPIM Cannes in March 2017, in the bid to secure additional investment.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

WLEP continues to work alongside regional, national and international media. For example, with US media during the cyber mission to Baltimore, Maryland, profiling World Class Worcestershire in James Caan's 'Your Business' publication and working with the Guardian for their Small Business Saturday feature which resulted in National coverage for the County and a number of local independent small businesses.

TOURISM SPEND

Tourism in Worcestershire continues to grow year on year.

The latest figures show that during 2015, the **total visitor spend was estimated at £645m** and when looking at the total value of tourism, which includes other factors such as the spend in the supply-chain, this total rises to £866m. Between 2013 and 2015, the overall tourism economy has increased by an additional £51m from £815m to £866m and the average spend for each day trip has grown, increasing by 10% in this timeframe.

INCLUSIVE SPORT

Last year, the European Wheelchair Basketball Championships, the Paralympic qualifiers, were held at the University of Worcester Arena. In the Summer of 2016, the Rio Paralympics themselves saw a number of University of Worcester students participate in the games as part of Team GB.

REPUTATION AS A SPORTING COUNTY

A record number of over 3,000 competitors took part in the Worcester City Run-Bike-Run event. The 2016 event, founded by Steve Cram, saw well-renowned participants including Team GB's Jenny Meadows and BBC Breakfast TV presenter, Louise Minchin.

OFFICIAL SPORTIVE OF THE TOUR OF BRITAIN

The Worcestershire Tour Ride returned on 9 October 2016, attracting approximately 850 cyclists. The event saw cycling enthusiasts participate in their choice of three routes of up to 100 miles that travel throughout Worcestershire. The Tour Series also successfully returned to Redditch earlier in the year.

WORLD CLASS

In June 2016, the World Class Worcestershire website (**www.worldclassworcestershire.com**) was launched to provide a digital presence for local people to celebrate the County as an exceptional location to live and visit as well as work and invest.

world class worcestershire

PRIDE OF PLACE

Black Pear Tree Award
Celebrating what is best about Worcestershire

Local people are being encouraged to be proud of the County, for example, through adopting Land of Hope and Glory as the County's song and celebrating the achievements of local people through the 'Black Pear Tree Awards'.

AWARD WINNING

Pershore-based Styling Homes and Gardens received a Silver Award for its 'Hidden Gems of Worcestershire' Festival Garden at the RHS Malvern Spring Festival which received 90,000 visitors and coverage on BBC2's Gardeners' World. The garden, which visually showcased both the cutting-edge technology and heritage of the County, was sponsored by Worcestershire LEP and named the People's Choice.

Looking forward...

Partner organisations will continue to work together to profile the County as a world class place to live, visit, invest and do business. Some highlights include:

- The Worcestershire LEP will drive opportunities to secure additional investment and target key opportunities, both within the UK and abroad, to broker lasting trade opportunities to benefit the County and local companies.
- **Worcestershire is set to develop its reputation for being a world class location for sport. A new International Centre for Inclusive Sport, Physical Activity and Health is planned with investment from the University of Worcester and a bid for funding from the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership through the Government's Growth Deal. A new £10.5m competition-standard swimming pool will also open in Worcester during 2017 due to local investment.**
- Visit Worcestershire will continue to profile the County to both the domestic and international markets and local people will also be encouraged to participate in campaigns to celebrate the County.
- **Worcester will be bidding for official 'Heritage City' status, with the resulting boost in tourism set to have a major impact on the local economy.**

European Union Structural and Investment Funds

European Union
European Structural and Investment Funds

The Worcestershire LEP Area European and Structural Investment Funds Sub Committee is in its second year of operation and is now seeing substantial programmes and projects getting underway through European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and EAFRD (Rural Development) Programme.

Under the leadership of Chris Hallam, the ESIF Committee comprises representatives from voluntary, business and public sectors providing valuable local insights, knowledge and expertise on all potential and approved projects. It is responsible for implementing the €68m of EU funds allocated to Worcestershire.

The Marketing and Communications Plan provides a foundation for co-ordinated promotion and engagement with all relevant initiatives across Worcestershire. This creates a beneficial close working relationship with a number of key partners including Worcestershire Business Central, local authorities, Fusion Partnership and major third sector providers, Local Nature Partnership, LEADER Programme, training and skills providers and business member organisations such as Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, National Farmers Union and the Country Landowners and Business Association.

As part of the programme, Worcestershire County Council has been allocated £460,000 of ERDF and ESF Technical Assistance funding to promote EU programmes and support project development with a range of applicants throughout the County.

The implications of Brexit will be confirmed during the next year. The priority remains the development and implementation of high quality projects utilising EU funds for the benefit of Worcestershire people and businesses.

A total of £13m ERDF funding is being delivered through a range of business support programmes promoted to aid SME business competitiveness. Five EAFRD Projects worth £530,000 in total are directly supporting horticulture, food processing, business expansion and increased productivity in rural areas of Worcestershire and ESF Projects with a total value of £7m have begun to help people across the spectrum in accessing wide ranging support to secure initial or better jobs.

WLEP Area ESIF Sub Committee Members

Looking forward...

- £8m ERDF will support businesses on Innovation, Agri-Food/Agri-Tech, Low Carbon and Green/Blue Infrastructure schemes which protect and promote environmental resource efficiency.
- £18m ESF funding will consolidate Inclusive Growth through a range of more employment and skills development initiatives.
- £1.6m EAFRD will provide more direct support to growing rural businesses, horticulture/food processing enterprises and tourism co-operation infrastructure projects.

This Annual Report outlines delivery of the ESIF Programmes around Business Support (p14) and Skills (p12).

Board Members

The Worcestershire LEP Board is responsible for good governance and decision-making. The Board is tasked with establishing and driving the county's strategic ambition, objectives and priorities and ensuring the delivery of projects funded under the Worcestershire Growth Deal.

Board members are drawn from both the private and public sectors and are leaders, advocates and ambassadors for Worcestershire's economic prosperity.

Business representatives

Mark Stansfeld | Chair

Chairman of giffgaff and Digital Consultant to a number of start ups

Mark Martin | Chair of Business Board

Director and Owner of One Creative Environments Limited

Dr Simon Murphy

Non-Executive Chair Sandwell Local Improvement Finance Trust

Carl Arntzen

Managing Director Worcester Bosch Thermotechnology Ltd

Nick Baldwin
Vice Chair

Chair of Office for Nuclear Regulation and Member of the Health and Safety Committee

Chris Walklett

Business and International Tax Partner Bishop Fleming LLP

Board Members

Higher and Further Education Representatives:

Prof. David Green

Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, University of Worcester

Stuart Laverick

Principal and Chief Executive, Heart of Worcestershire College

Local Authority Representatives:

Cllr. Simon Geraghty
Vice Chair

Leader, Worcestershire County Council

Cllr. Linda Robinson

Leader, Wychavon District Council

Cllr. Karen May

Deputy Leader of Bromsgrove District Council

Resigning Board Members:

Cllr. Margaret Sherrey
WLEP Board Member
(June 2016)

Business Board Members

The Business Board provides a sounding board for advice and feedback to the Board to ensure that the voices of local businesses are heard, as well as being a conduit to facilitate wider engagement with leaders in the business, public and third sector communities.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, STEVE BORWELL-FOX, VICE CHAIR AND MARK MARTIN, CHAIR OF THE WLEP BUSINESS BOARD

Mike Ashton
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce

Michelle Chamberlain
Thursfields Solicitors Ltd

Steve Borwell-Fox (Vice Chair)
Borwell Ltd

Mike Brown
Bromsgrove District Housing Trust

Penelope Brudenell-Pryke
Greenginering Ltd

Ian Priest
Independent Banking

Mike Cook
BT Wholesale and BT West Midlands

Neil France
Altaras International

Paul Hutchens
Eco2Solar Ltd

Mark Martin (Chair)
One Creative Environments

Affy Qadeer
Westgrove

Richard Quallington
Community First

Aidan Stevens
St Andrew's Town Hotel

Rowena Innocent
Malvern Instruments

Ray Hickinbottom
Federation of Small Businesses

Stuart Allen
Founder and Managing Director of #WorcestershireHour (Worcester Enterprise Ltd)

Jennifer Appleton
Operations Director of ISO Quality Services Ltd

Robert Champion
Partner at Halls

James Pritchard
Managing Director of Heartbeat Manufacturing Limited

James Speller
Pre Construction Director at Speller Metcalfe.

Resigning Members (March 2016):

Roy Irish
Financial Partnership and Support Ltd.

Jacqui Bayliss
Harris Lamb

Bob Brown
Institute of Directors

Paul Alekna
eResponse Recruitment

End of Year Report

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee is a formal standing sub-committee of the Worcestershire LEP Board which was established in February 2013. The Committee consists of public and private sector Board members, as well as WLEP's Chief Executive and is chaired by WLEP Board Member and Business and International Tax Partner for Bishop Fleming LLP, Chris Walklett.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for ensuring good governance, providing oversight of financial monitoring, audit and risk management as well as supporting the Board in assessing performance. With Worcestershire County Council being the accountable body for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Committee works with the finance department of the County Council to review actual expenditure against plans as well as financial planning for the year ahead.

Policies and procedures are also made publically available: declarations of interests from each Board member, Board agendas and minutes, and the complaints process as well as other documentation are all available on the LEP's website: **www.wlep.co.uk.**

FINAL YEAR END 31ST MARCH 2016

Income and Expenditure Account

	Actual
Income	**£**
LEP Reserve Balance at 01.04.15 brought forward	354,690
Core Funding	250,000
Growth Plan	250,000
Growth Hub	250,000
Local Government Contribution	150,000
Sponsorship & other income	72,528
Growth Deal	13,400,000
Total Income	**14,727,218**
Expenditure	
Staffing (inc travel and subsistance)	665,851
Growth Plan Project Activity	28,905
External Consultancy Support/Research	82,335
Exhibitions and Events	68,278
Services and Supplies	74,485
Marketing / Promotions	33,745
Training	8,385
Other fees/exp	120,192
WLEP Capital Projects	13,400,000
Total Expenditure	**14,482,176**
LEP Reserve Balance at 31.3.16 carried forward	**245,042**

Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership

STAY CONNECTED:

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Worcester
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Worcestershire LEP

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#WorldClassWorcs

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