

Enterprise M3 and Solent LEP 2023/24 Activities

This paper provides an overview of the key areas of activity undertaken by Enterprise M3 and Solent Local Enterprise Partnerships in 2023/24.

The table below summarises the two LEPs' Delivery Plans:

	Enterprise M3	Solent
Purpose / Vision 2023/24	<p><i>Delivering prosperity through innovation.</i></p> <p>In 2023/24, the overarching Vision for EM3 was <i>to create a low carbon, high growth region driven by innovation and enterprise.</i></p>	<p><i>Solent Partners aspires to be a nationally leading, industry-led partnership that brings Solent leaders together to promote the collective prosperity and sustainability of the Solent economy.</i></p>
Key services and areas of activity 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EM3 Growth Hub • EM3 Careers Hub • Sector/Cluster Development (space; creative industries; life sciences; jet zero; animal health) • EM3 Investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Hub Business Support • Careers and Skills Hub • Green & Sustainable Business Hub • International Trade Hub • Funding Hub • Solent LEP Funding Allocations
Key services and areas of activity 2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and Skills Support • Hampshire Growth Hub • Hampshire Careers Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and Skills Support • Growth Hub Services • Trade & Investment • Strategic Partnerships

The following tables provide more information about key activities from the Enterprise M3 and Solent LEP Delivery Plans for 2023-24, and the current status of those activities in 2024/25. Enterprise M3 activities continuing into 2024/25 are being delivered by Hampshire County Council's Enterprise and Growth Team (the former Enterprise M3 team) to early October, and as part of Hampshire County Council's new Economy and Skills Service from early October, across Hampshire. Activities are grouped into the following thematic areas:

- Skills and careers
- Support for businesses
- Investment and trade
- Sector-specific initiatives
- Decarbonisation

1. Skills and careers

EM3 activities 23/24	Status in 24/25	Solent activities 2023/24	Status in 24/25
<p>Delivery of Careers Hub. The Careers Hub supports schools and colleges to improve their careers programmes and create opportunities for young people.</p>	<p>Continuing - Delivery continues as the Hampshire Careers Hub under the current contract until 31 August 2025.</p>	<p>Lead and manage the Solent Careers Hub, including the Solent Cornerstone employers forum.</p>	<p>Ongoing delivery of the Solent Careers Hub, led by Portsmouth City Council, across the Solent LEP area for the 2023/24 school year, and in Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight for the 2024/25 school year.</p>
<p>Supporting employer-led skills provision. Through the Skills Advisory Panel, convene and support partners to develop and implement a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). LSIPs provide an agreed set of actionable priorities that employers, providers and other stakeholders in a local area can get behind to drive change.</p>	<p>Continuing - LSIP implementation continues.</p>	<p>Work with Hampshire Chamber of Commerce to design and deliver the Solent Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Supporting delivery of Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) projects. LSIF projects are the response to the findings of the LSIP. The projects will offer more training opportunities in priority skills areas identified by local businesses and employers.</p>	<p>Continuing - LSIF support continues.</p>	<p>Lead the work to deliver the Freeport Skills Programme.</p>	<p>TBC - Any continuation / future investment in skills subject to decisions by Solent Freeport.</p>
<p>Providing tailored market analysis to support the work of the Careers Hub.</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>Lead the development of a Digital Skills Partnership strategic plan.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
		<p>Deliver a Solent wide Skills Summit.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
		<p>Work with partners to deliver careers and skills interventions.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
		<p>Work with local employers to deliver Skills Bootcamps in 2023/24.</p>	<p>Continuing</p>

EM3 activities 23/24	Status in 24/25	Solent activities 2023/24	Status in 24/25
		Work with colleges and skills providers to create a 'Business and Skills Accelerator'.	TBC - Any continuation / future investment in business and skills accelerator subject to decisions by Solent Freeport.

2. Support for businesses

EM3 activities 23/24	Status in 24/25	Solent activities 2023/24	Status in 24/25
Delivery of Net Zero service to businesses. Supporting businesses to become net zero by continuing to deliver and promote specialist Net Zero service.	Completed	Deliver a programme of support for SMEs to move to a more sustainable business model and achieve net zero.	Completed
Delivery of Growth Hub. The Growth Hub helps businesses to grow by providing tailored advice and support.	Continuing - Hampshire Growth Hub funded for 24/25.	Delivery of the Solent Growth Hub. Working with partners to develop and fund specific interventions tailored to the local needs of businesses.	Continuing - Delivery model now Hampshire Growth Hub and Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight Growth Hub.
		Provide signposting to support for businesses available both locally and nationally (health and wellbeing hub).	Completed
		Provide targeted funding support to new and start-up innovative businesses.	Continuation is to be confirmed.

3. Investment and trade

EM3 activities 23/24	Status in 24/25	Solent activities 2023/24	Status in 24/25
Development of a venture capital investment ecosystem.	TBC	Work with partners to secure investment and deliver business support activity through UK Shared Prosperity Fund.	Continuing - current partnerships include Gosport BC (concludes March 2025), Havant BC Growth Programme (concludes December 2024).
Strengthen relationship with Department for Business and Trade (DBT) and local authorities, and adopt a multi-partner inward investment service.	Continuing - HCC will continue to strengthen relationship with DBT. TBC - Multi-partner inward investment service.	Establishment of a Solent Investment Hub in partnership with key stakeholders including Solent Freeport and Department for International Trade.	TBC - Any continuation / future investment hub subject to decisions by Solent Freeport.
Delivery of the Fibre Spine project. Aim of the Fibre Spine project was to support gigabit-capable broadband for business and communities.	TBC - Fibre Spine project is on hold, pending decisions by local authority partners.	Continued investment of up to £14m at North Whiteley in order to support the delivery of the housing scheme.	Continuing - Via Accountable Body.
Supporting new capital growth projects via the Future Fund. The Future Fund supports a small number of high-quality projects that will drive business/economic growth.	Completed - Two Future Fund projects will receive funding.	Work with key partners to develop a strategy to invest the retained business rates from the Solent Enterprise Zone to help grow the Solent economy.	Continuing - Fareham BC and Gosport BC to engage with Hampshire County Council on development of investment strategy.
Investing in high potential businesses via the Funding Escalator. The Funding Escalator provided loan and equity funding to enable companies to deliver high-growth and employment opportunities.	Completed – No new Funding Escalator investments will be made.	Continued investment of up to £5.6m into improvements on the A326 along New Forest waterside area.	Completed - final investment of £3.169m transferred to Hampshire County Council.
Delivery of the new Enterprise Zone Implementation Plan. Promoting the benefits of Enterprise Zone to attract high growth companies to the area.	Continuing - Via County and District/Borough councils in Hampshire and Surrey.		
Provide analysis and reports on specialist areas of the economy. Delivery of work focussing on the needs of the rural economy in EM3 area.	TBC		

4. Sector-specific initiatives

EM3 activities 23/24	Status in 24/25	Solent activities 2023/24	Status in 24/25
<p>Develop existing and new sectors/clusters to maximise inward investment and economic growth opportunities.</p> <p>A Cluster forms when specialized businesses group within a particular geographic area.</p> <p>EM3 sector/cluster initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • space and satellite; • creative industries; • life sciences; • jet zero; • animal health. 	<p>Continuing – decisions required regarding priority sectors/clusters in Hampshire.</p>	<p>Develop a South Coast Creative Hub with an industry focus on: tech and digital, design, film, TV, photography, events and festivals, fine arts and crafts.</p>	<p>TBC - pending completion of cultural plan.</p>
		<p>Develop a Solent Cultural Plan in partnership with Arts Council England.</p>	<p>Continuing - final draft plan to be shared with Local Authority partners.</p>
		<p>Work with the local NHS Trusts to connect them into the business support ecosystem.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
		<p>Strengthen opportunities for health care innovations to be commercialised.</p>	<p>Withdrawn</p>
		<p>Establish new Maritime Innovation Hub for the Solent.</p>	<p>Continuing - via Maritime UK Solent.</p>
		<p>Continue to provide sector leadership for the maritime sector through Maritime UK Solent.</p>	<p>Continuing - via Maritime UK Solent.</p>

5. Decarbonisation

EM3 activities 23/24	Status in 24/25	Solent activities 2023/24	Status in 24/25
<p>Support a globally competitive low carbon high growth region. Identify actions needed to support priority sectors, economic growth and labour market needs. Activities in 23/24 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• net zero business support service• jet zero cluster• work on green skills• <i>Green Is Good</i> thought leadership programme	TBC	Establish The Solent Cluster as a major decarbonisation initiative to substantially reduce CO2 emissions from industry, transport and households across the Solent.	Continuing - via The Solent Cluster.