

Levelling up rural communities: the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy and the work of SWLEP

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Today's focus

- The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy
 - Mission
 - Strategic Opportunities
 - Implementation
- The Growth Hub
 - Engagement with rural businesses
 - Peer Networks
 - Recipients of grants
- Growing Places Infrastructure Fund
 - Loans to rural businesses
- Natural Capital
 - Ph.D student at the University of Bath
- The Rural Economy Sector Group
 - Intelligence and networking

SWINDON AND WILTSHIRE LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY 2020-2036

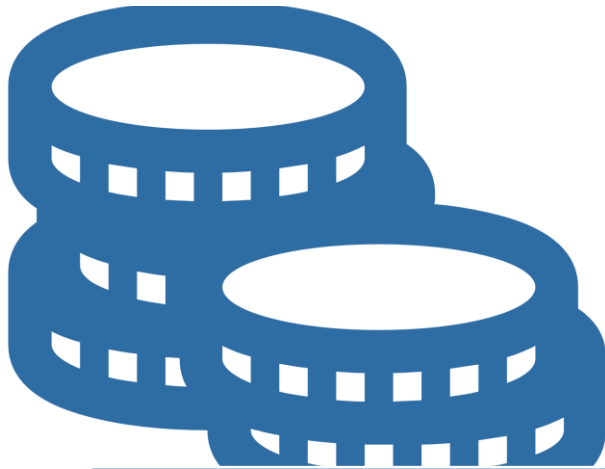


OUR VISION TO 2036:

To ensure all of our communities benefit from inclusive and sustainable growth, making the Swindon and Wiltshire area world-renowned for its convergence of innovation, entrepreneurialism and great quality of life



All of our priorities should drive towards the two main outcomes



Increased productivity

↑
Always

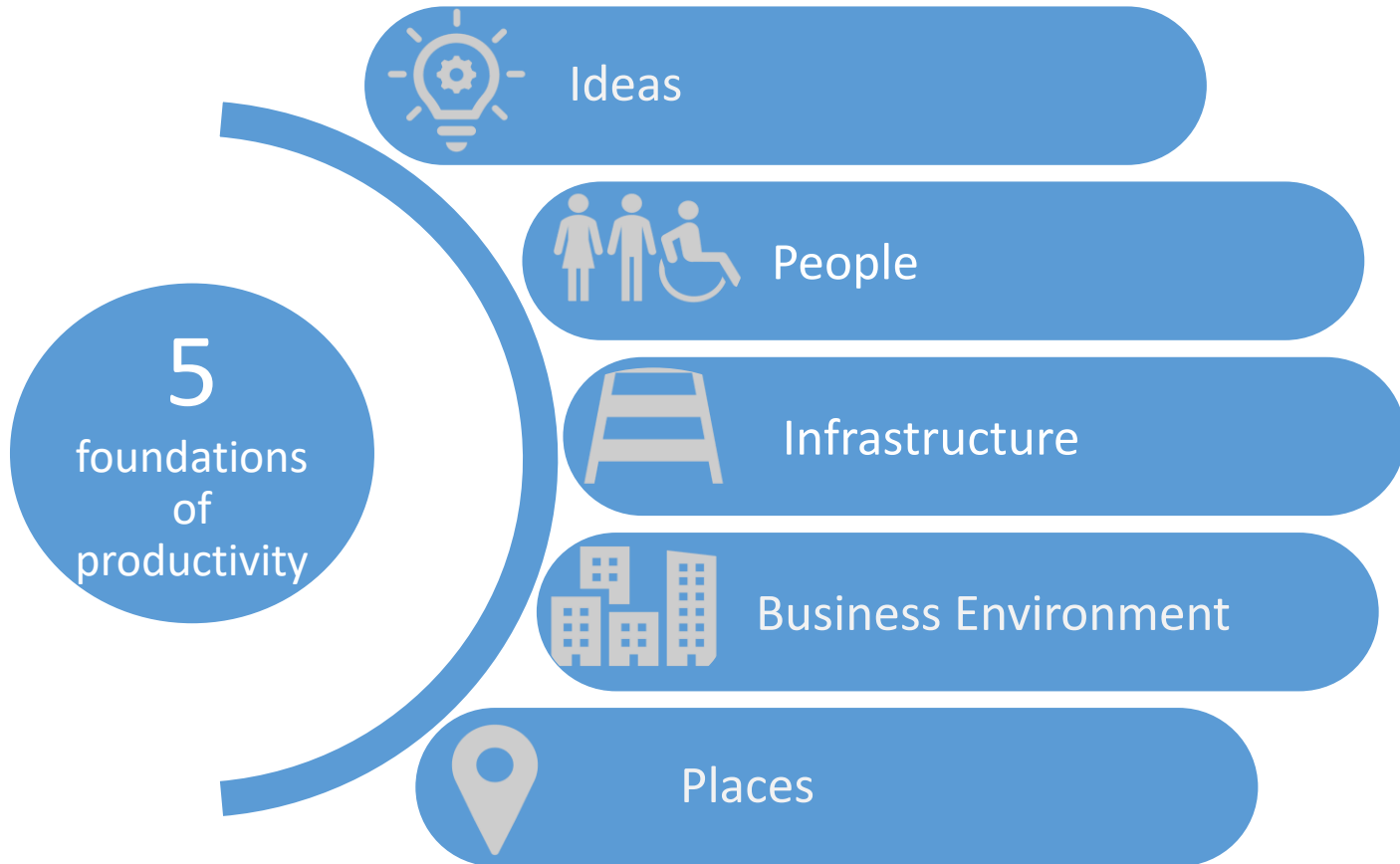


All communities contributing to and benefiting from economic prosperity

↑
Wherever possible



Our LIS is structured around the five foundations of productivity



Our strategic aims

 	<p>Places: develop resilient, agile and inclusive settlements through a more diversified economy, improved cultural and retail offer while conserving and enhancing our natural capital</p>
 	<p>People: address the skills supply / demand imbalance and ensure there is inclusive growth across socio-economic groups</p>
 	<p>Ideas: grow R&D and innovation activity, building on our strengths (advanced engineering, energy / sustainability, agritech, life sciences) and emerging opportunities (cyber resilience and digital technologies)</p>
 	<p>Infrastructure: further improve digital, road and rail connectivity and tackle capacity constraints in energy, water and waste</p>
 	<p>Business Environment: attract investment and enable businesses to reach their potential, building on the Growth Hub successes</p>

Rural priority within the LIS

- Maintaining the appeal of the natural environment
- Attracting good-quality employment
- Digital connectivity
- Innovation in agritech and agricultural practices
- Road and rail connectivity
- Refuelling and recharging new energy vehicles
- Supporting rural scale-up businesses
- National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE)
- APPG for Rural Business and the Rural Powerhouse

Strategic Priority 10: Rural communities: levelling up opportunities

The Swindon and Wiltshire area is predominantly rural, with more than 60% of the population living in areas designated as such by the Office of National Statistics. The appeal to many is the beautiful natural landscape set alongside its agricultural, conservation and tourism activities, which help to preserve the essence of our environment. The benefits of a rural lifestyle are numerous, from fresh air and open spaces to living and working in close-knit communities.

Whilst the advantages of rural communities are very appealing, accessibility, in all its forms, can limit and constrain the extent to which they can contribute to the wider economy.

As part of our strategy, we will aim to preserve the benefits to residents of being immersed in our beautiful natural landscape, but will also seek to level up opportunities for learners, employees and entrepreneurs living in rural areas.

Attracting good-quality employment in rural areas and supporting social and economic inclusion are our cornerstones.



To achieve this, we will continue to invest in **ultrafast broadband and other digital connectivity technologies** including accessing nationally run **rural gigabit broadband and mobile connectivity programmes**. This will enable access to learning, employment and leisure activities, as well as introduce new ways of working across more traditional rural and land-based industries. In addition, we are keen to see innovation take place in **agritech and agricultural practices** to enable the commercial success of the sector.

Furthermore, we will aim to improve road and rail connectivity, as well as encourage greater take-up of new energy vehicles, electric and hydrogen, in an effort to reduce carbon emissions and support our clean growth agenda. As part of this, we will look at ways of ensuring that we have adequate charging and fuelling facilities in our rural areas. Finally, to further help our rural entrepreneurs we will identify and support thriving scale-up businesses through the ERDF funded **SME Competitiveness programme**.



Business Support News Events Member Directory Contact

Growth Hub
Swindon & Wiltshire

Swindon & Wiltshire Growth Hub

Your gateway to business success

Business Support

Get tailored support for your specific business needs. Support our members hubs or request enterprise advice with our experienced team.

Workshops and Events

We feature a wide range of business events, workshops and conferences for you to engage.

Business Community

We feature a wide range of business events, workshops and conferences for you to engage.

Latest News

- Funding for England's Businesses Taking on New Apprentices
- Launch of TikTok #BeYourOwnBoss Entrepreneurship...
- Zurich doubles number of apprenticeships
- Jobless Manley in Deal with Plug Power



Engagement with rural businesses

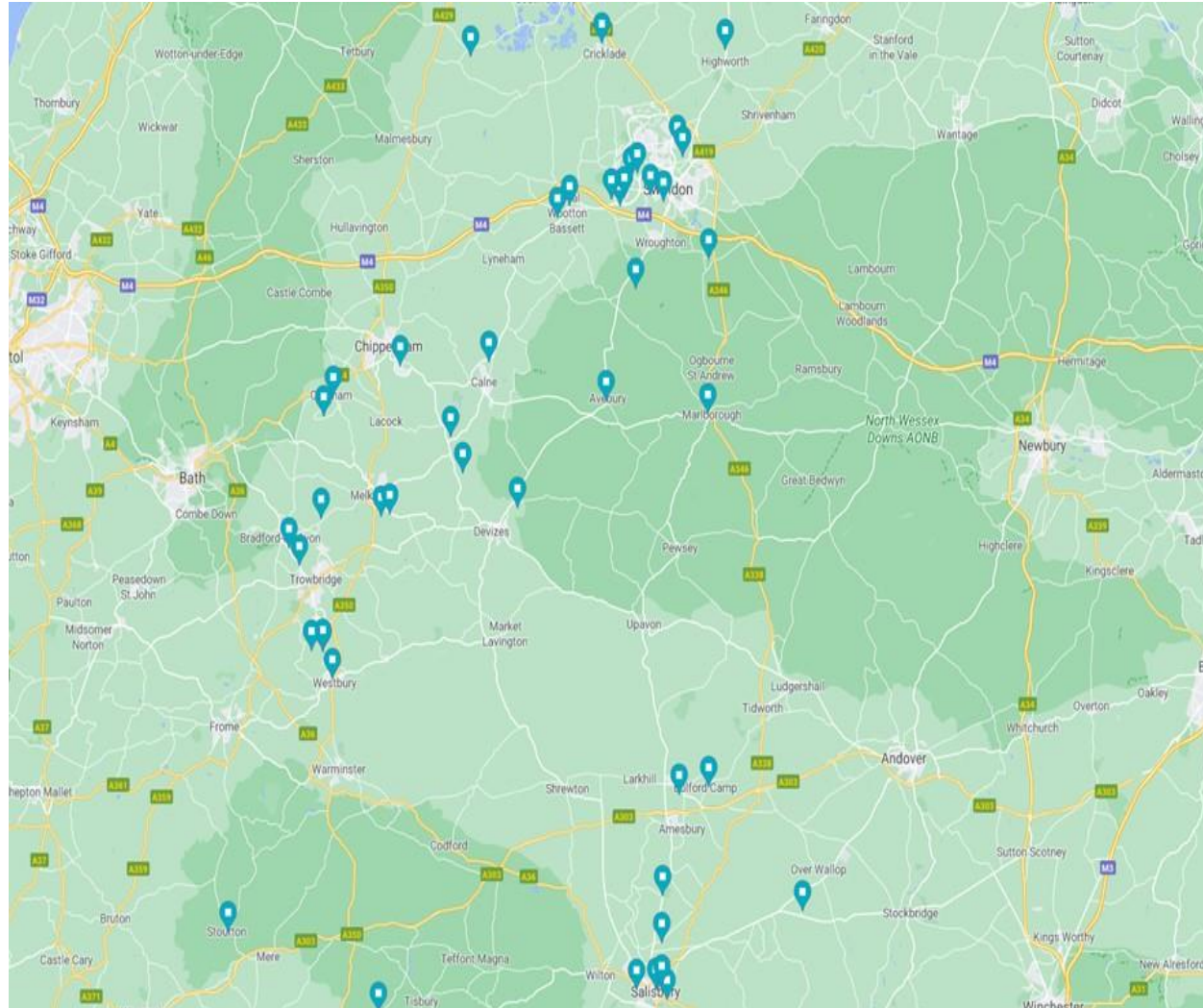
1786 businesses in rural locations have accessed the Growth Hub in the last year – 45% of recorded business

Top ten business sectors from rural areas accessing the Growth Hub

Construction
Retail
Food & Beverages
Leisure, travel & tourism
Hospitality

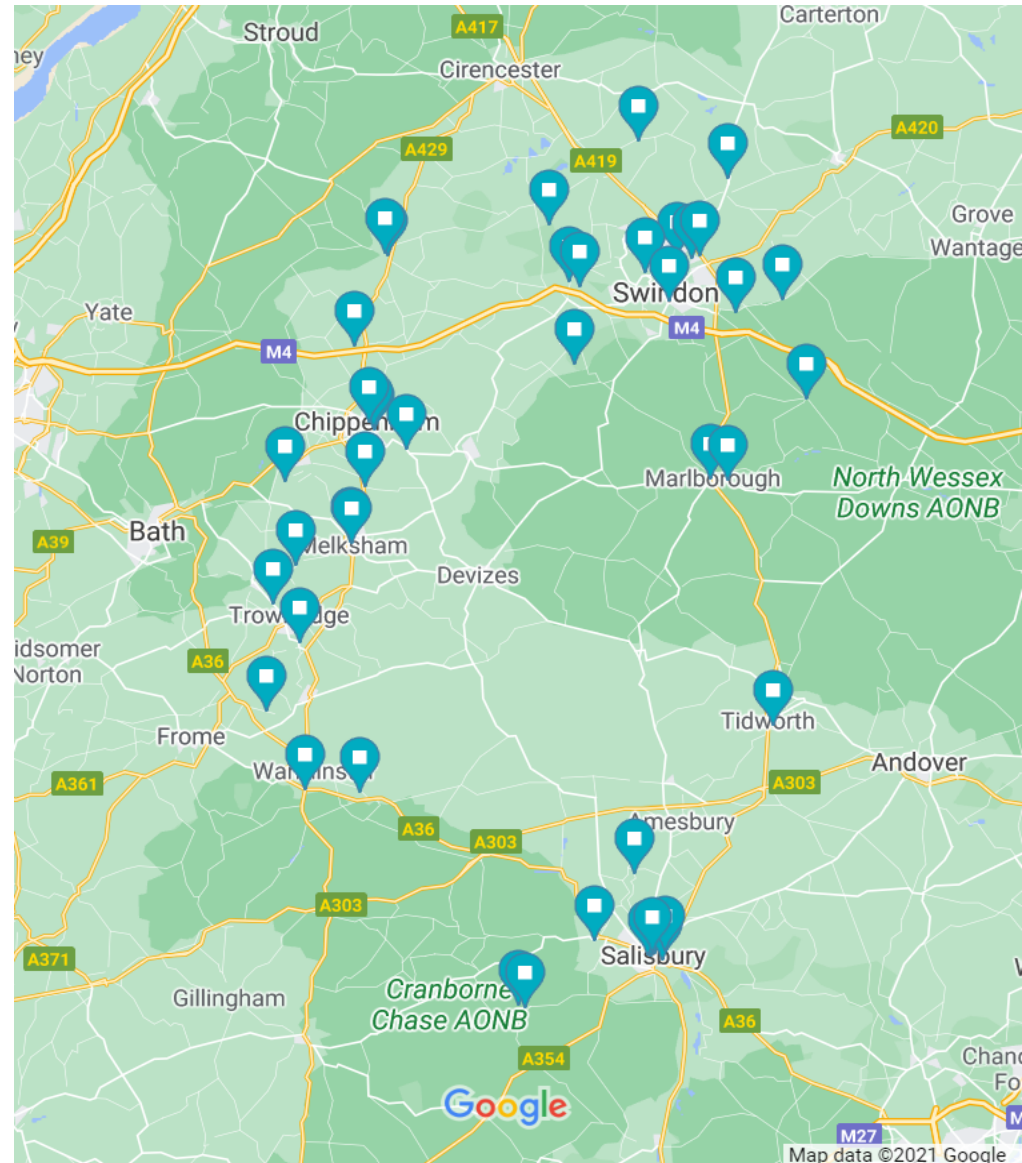
Computer software
Beauty
Food production
Health, wellness and fitness

- The Peer Network creates action learning sets amongst businesses with common interests
- Business experts employed as facilitators
- Year 1 engagement shown on map
- Year 2 focussing on
 - Professional services
 - Food and Drink
 - Retail
 - Hospitality and tourism
 - Sports and Health
 - Cyber
 - Manufacturing
 - Advanced engineering
 - Topic based – acquisitions and mergers, digital marketing

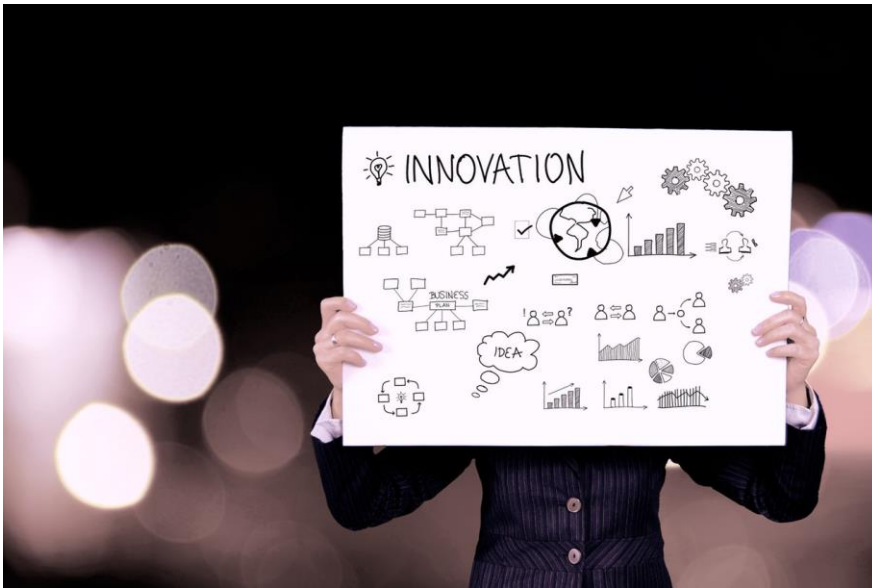


Hospitality and Tourism (Visitor Economy) ERDF grants 2020-21

Location	Total value of grants for location	Number of companies receiving grants in location
Salisbury	£28,591	11
Swindon	£17,545	7
Chippenham	£10,682	5
Marlborough	£5,554	2
Holt	£5,258	2
Warminster	£4,988	2
Wanborough	£4,930	2
Wootton Bassett	£4,692	2
Melksham	£4,365	2
Malmesbury	£4,307	2
Laverstock	£3,000	1
Tidworth	£3,000	1
Dilton Marsh	£3,000	1
Trowbridge	£2,950	1
Barnfield	£2,899	1
Aldbourne	£2,815	1
Broadchalke	£2,700	1
Marson Meysey	£2,392	1
Bishopstone	£1,848	1
Highworth	£1,753	1
Corsham	£1,666	1
Lacock	£1,124	1
Westbury	£458	1
Grand Total	£120,517	50



Growing Places Infrastructure Fund

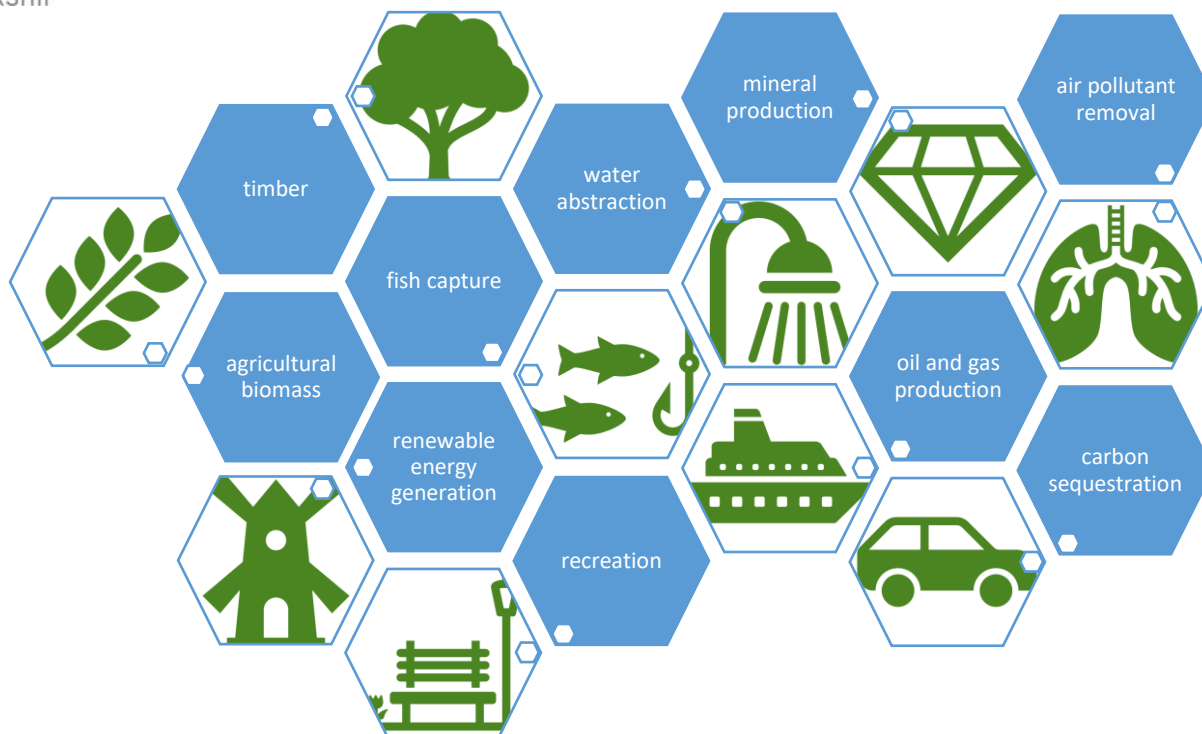


£2,232,840 in loans approved
for 7 businesses in rural
areas.

A further £3,500,000 to 2
businesses going through
final legal stages

Understanding the value of our natural capital is key given SWLEP's largely rural composition

LIS strategic priority
11



Co-sponsoring a part-time Ph.D student placement in the Economy Department at the University of Bath

Proposals

- The Rural Economy Sector Group is not a direct part of the SWLEP's governance structure.
- It is not a decision-making body for the SWLEP but could give advice and intelligence on rural matters.
- Potentially, it could be a network and intelligence group similar to our Business Intelligence Network Group at which there are currently places for the NFU and CLA.
- Focussed presentations at future meetings on issues raised today.