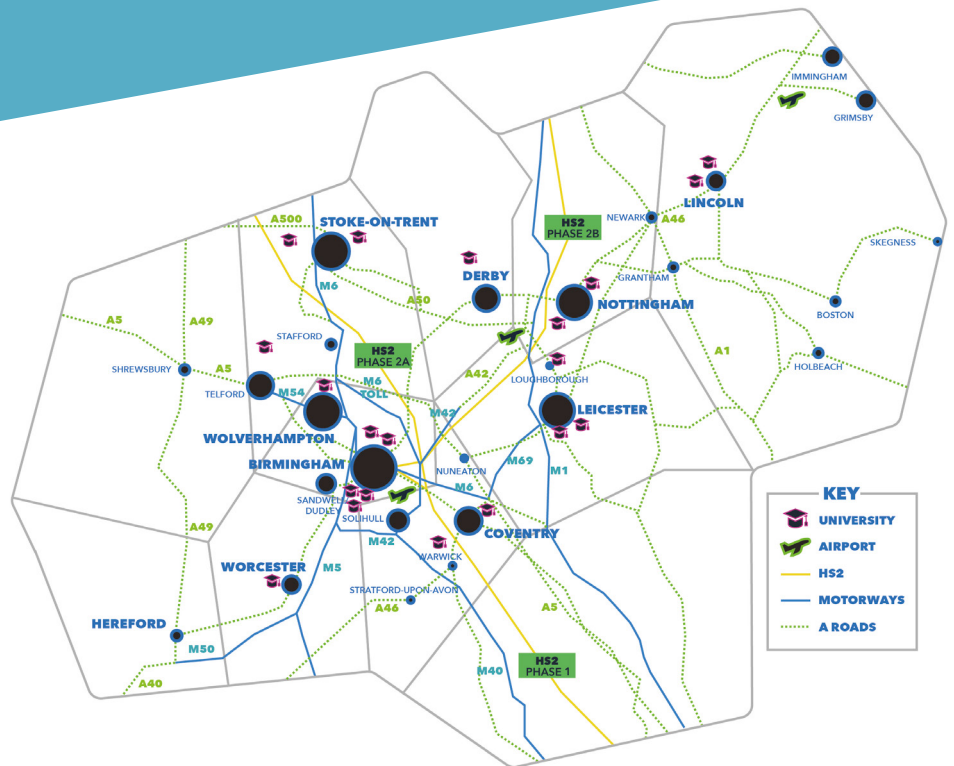


MIDLANDS ENGINE

MIDLANDS MATTERS ISSUE 2

midlandsendengine.org



Welcome to the second 2020 edition of our partnership newsletter, Midlands Matters.

I begin by reflecting on Coronavirus, which will prove to be a huge challenge to our region, both to our businesses and communities, but I am confident that the Midlands spirit will remain strong and we will support each other, and particularly the vulnerable in society, during this period. In fact, I am aware that this support across communities is already happening, not least through sharing of knowledge and practices across healthcare and local government organisations. In terms of the Midlands economy, I am particularly conscious of the effect this situation will have on small business, and was pleased to hear about the recently announced new measure by the Chancellor to further support businesses.

I remain mindful that whilst the epicentre of the virus is now in Europe, a country that has suffered greatly but has begun to get over the worst of the disease is China. China is a country which we in the Midlands have deep and close ties with. On behalf of the partnership, I wrote during February to the Ambassador to convey our support and sympathies to our friends in China, and joined Her Majesty the Queen and the Prime Minister in sending our best wishes to the Chinese people.

The postponement this month of MIPIM 2020 was a disappointment, but not a surprise in current circumstances. The Midlands UK delegation was scheduled to take £12 billion of development opportunities to the March event, and together we'll be refocusing across the partnership to make sure we find new avenues through which to showcase the spectacular opportunities in our region.

I closely followed the recent Budget announcement, which I was delighted to see contained additional funding for a range of projects which will benefit the whole of the Midlands. I was pleased to see the announcement of increased funding for the Department for International Trade to support UK regions, including the establishment of dedicated Midlands trade envoys. Our partnership investment

in our Internationalisation Strategy published last year has paid dividends, and I look forward to close collaboration with the Government to further strengthen the international reach of our businesses, helping them to grow and prosper in every part of the Midlands.

I was also delighted to see the hard work of Midlands Connect and so many of our partners pay off with announcements on infrastructure investments - from £20 million to advance Midlands Rail Hub and funds to develop key road schemes including the A46 Newark bypass improvements, to support for R&D funding which will benefit our region, it was a Budget bringing real benefits for every part of the Midlands. Together, across our partnership, we will now both deliver key projects and continue to advocate for even more investment to drive economic growth in our region.

As we move forward in this rapidly changing period, our partnership efforts together will be increasingly important as we jointly address the challenges ahead. This newsletter contains many good news stories demonstrating the remarkable work and impact of our partners, the like of which I am confident will provide sound bedrock for our region in today's uncertain times.

**With my best wishes,
Sir John Peace, Chairman, Midlands Engine**



TRADING WITH THE WORLD

Budget boost for international trade to level up the whole region



Amongst the Chancellor's Budget announcements was excellent news for the Midlands Engine's international aspirations with the announcement of additional funding to support Midlands firms in reaching overseas markets, the creation of envoys who will champion our Region overseas, and a package to capitalise on the Commonwealth Games. This will supplement existing Department for International Trade funding which has already been allocated to the Midlands for the coming financial year.

The Midlands is contributing £90bn to the national economy through its international activities and is in a strong position to achieve even more. In line with national ambition, we are seeking to capture the economic potential of international activities, increasing their value by 29% to £116bn per annum. In February 2019 we launched the Midlands Engine Internationalisation Strategy which was developed via cross-regional collaboration with over 70 stakeholders.

Simon Hall, DIT Deputy Director Midlands Engine said: "Having worked with the Midlands Engine Partnership to develop an Internationalisation Strategy it's great news that we now have extra funding to implement more of its recommendations. The DIT Midlands Engine Team is looking forward to continuing our work with partners across the region to expand our success in helping firms to grow through exporting, and attracting new investment".

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Read more including a statement from Sir John Peace, Midlands Engine Chairman

INVESTING IN TRANSPORT FOR GROWTH



£20 million in Budget for Midlands Rail Hub

Midlands Connect's flagship Midlands Rail Hub plans have been awarded £20 million in the Chancellor's Budget, taking the £2 billion package of improvements to rail services to the next stage of development, and closer to delivery. The Budget also committed to several major road projects within the region and much needed improvements to bus and cycle infrastructure.

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Maritime Transport - Rail freight interchange officially opened



The new strategic rail freight interchange at SEGRO Logistics Park East Midlands Gateway has been officially opened by Chris Heaton-Harris MP. The 17-acre open-access terminal, capable of handling up to sixteen 775metre-long freight trains daily and providing storage capacity for over 5,000 freight units, is the first to connect to the Castle Donington freight line, providing direct access to the UK's network of rail freight interchanges and all major UK ports.

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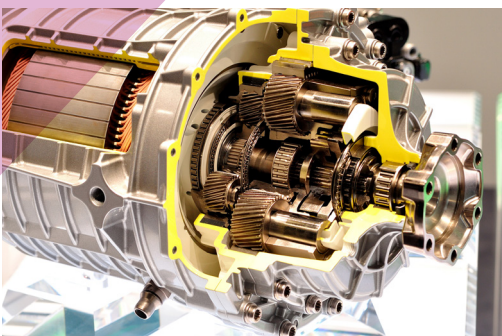
ACCELERATING INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE

Graduate start-up revolutionising prosthetics

A Loughborough University graduate start-up is transforming the manufacture and distribution of prosthetic limbs, making them more accessible to the millions of people who need them. Kate Walker's venture ExpHand Prosthetics was launched as part of her postgraduate dissertation, using a 3D printed prosthetic arm which can adjust to fit children aged three to ten years old.



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£37 million boost for cleaner technology

A targeted Government investment of £37 million will help design, test and manufacture electric machines in some of the UK's most polluting industries. Four new cutting-edge centres of excellence are being created, the great news for the Midlands is that one of these will be based in Nottingham. Here, climate change pioneers will research and develop green electric machines including planes, ships and cars.

Science Minister visits Midlands Innovation

New Science Minister Amanda Solloway MP made her first official visit to meet with scientists, technicians and entrepreneurs from the Midlands Innovation partnership.

She visited the University of Nottingham, where she met with Professor Alec Cameron, Chair of the Midlands Innovation partnership, and other representatives from Midlands' universities, to learn about the world-class research and innovation work taking place across eight of our region's universities.



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Delivering largest-ever investment in technicians

A new project led by the consortium of Midlands Innovation universities and industry partners is to shine a light on the expertise of their technical community by delivering a package of measures to support their career advancement and development.

Midlands Innovation's £4.99million TALENT programme is the largest-ever investment into technicians in higher education, whose specialist skills often go unrecognised despite the crucial role they play in the success of universities and the growth of the UK economy.

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POWERING AN ULTRA-CONNECTED REGION

Maximising the potential of the HS2 station at Toton

Momentum is building behind a collaboration of businesses, universities and local and national Government, working together to maximise the opportunities that will be made possible by the HS2 station at Toton. The work focuses on three strategic sites, including land around the proposed HS2 station at Toton, East Midlands Airport and Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station.



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British Steel takeover is good news for the Midlands Engine



The new Chair of the [Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership](#) has welcomed the news that the future of British Steel has been secured following a buy-out by the Chinese Jingye Group. The LEP has been working to support British Steel and its workers as part of a taskforce ever since the company was placed into compulsory liquidation in May last year.

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**AMPLIFYING
THE VOICE
OF OUR REGION**

State-of-the-Art Business School and Smart Innovation Hub launched at Keele University

The new state-of-the-art building which houses Keele University's Business School together with a "Smart Innovation Hub" and collaborative workspace has now been officially opened. The centre provides business accommodation, incubation and support to SMEs, as well as being co-located with the University's Business School.



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The Midlands Engine is a coalition of Councils, Combined Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP), Universities and businesses across the region, actively working with Government to build a collective identity, to enable us to present the Midlands as a competitive and compelling offer that is attractive at home and overseas. Copyright ©2020 The Midlands Engine, All rights reserved.

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