

THE REGIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR SEEDA - JULY 2002

Consultation process nears closing date

SEEDA is keen to encourage wide involvement in the Review of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and copies of the Consultation Document are available in electronic formats via the website - [www.seeda.co.uk/res](http://www.seeda.co.uk/res).

If you would like to receive a hard copy of the document, please call SEEDA on 01483 484 233 or email [RES@seeda.co.uk](mailto:RES@seeda.co.uk).

If you would like to submit any additional comments as part of the Consultation process, please visit the SEEDA website

[www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk) where you will find an online form to complete. A summary of the key points from the Consultation events is also available on the site.

The Consultation period closes on July 17 and the new RES will be available in October.

● SEEDA has a statutory duty to produce and revise the Strategy, to inform not only SEEDA's investments but also those of all public sector bodies whose activities influence the economic well-being of the region.

# Medway - The Future unveiled

**A conference promoting the opportunities available to businesses and the ambitious development projects planned for the Medway area has been hosted at Chatham Maritime.**

Chaired by SEEDA Chairman, Allan Willett CMG, the day was a joint venture between Medway Council, SEEDA, BAE Systems, Kent Institute of Art and Design, Locate in Kent, the University of Kent at Medway and the University of Greenwich.

High profile guests included Minister for Housing, Planning and Regeneration, Lord Jeff Rooker, 'local boy' Sir David Frost and Alfonso Martinez Cearra, the Director-General of Bilbao Metropoli-30.

Speakers also included Medway Council's Leader Cllr Rodney Chambers and Chief Executive Judith Armit; SEEDA's Chairman Allan Willett CMG and Chief Executive Anthony Dunnett and Managing Director, BAE Systems Avionic Systems, Sue Wood.

Cllr Rodney Chambers opened the conference by stressing the key qualities the area had to offer: good access to Europe and London, a skilled and motivated workforce and a growing economy.

Cllr Chambers said: "We have much to offer. I am proud of our rich heritage, but today we unveil Medway - the future."

During his speech, Lord Rooker promised to come back to the area, which now comes

under his remit following the recent Cabinet reshuffle.

He also promised to bring Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott with him, saying that the Thames Gateway - including Medway - was a top priority for the Government.

Lord Rooker added that other areas of the UK were starting to recognise the impor-



*Chief Executive of Medway Council, Judith Armit speaking at 'Medway - The Future Unveiled' conference*

tance of the South East and the Thames Gateway corridor, as not only being the gateway to Europe, but to the rest of the UK as well.

Sir David Frost told the delegates that he was delighted to be back in Medway, where he grew up. "I am here really to congratulate Medway for the achievements so far. I am proud of what you are planning to do in the future," he said.

● Continues on page 8

# Broadband impact on rural communities under the microscope

SEEDA has launched the first phase of a £300,000 Satellite Broadband Pilot aimed at communities where current transport infrastructure and lack of Broadband access threatens to undermine the future prosperity of the area.

Some 300 business organisations and other agencies can now apply for grants, which are worth up to £1,066 each, for one year's for Broadband access via satellite.

The Satellite Broadband Pilot is one

recognised Satellite Broadband service provider and are intended to bring the cost of satellite service more in line with ADSL landline. The grant will be for installation and first year running costs for a single PC.

SEEDA has designed the pilot so participants provide feedback on the relevance, applicability and benefits of a fast, affordable, always-on, Broadband service. These results will help in driving the wider regional programme for stimulating Broad-

band demand in a part of the UK that is critical to the country's future growth. The initiative was announced at SEEDA's Broadband Open Evening held on the Pier at Hastings and well attended by business leaders, public sector, Higher Education officers and mem-

Targeted users will be primarily Small and Medium Enterprises, but public sector organisations (eg schools, clinics) will also be eligible. SEEDA may extend the initiative region-wide, depending on the success of the pilot.

Anthony Dunnett said: "We want to support smaller organisations in the take-up of Broadband as they tend to get overlooked by the major providers. Of the 250,000 companies based in the South East, more than 95 per cent employ less than 10 people. These are the people who really need our support in terms of realising the benefits of Broadband."

Owing to the wider regeneration programme being led by the Hastings and Bexhill Task Force, Hastings and Rother has been designated as a 'pilot within a pilot' for Broadband where ADSL access is not currently available. Early applications for this area have already been received and evaluated and installation is underway. The other pilots in the Isle of Wight, rural Kent, Winchester and rural Oxfordshire are scheduled for implementation July through December 2002.

Wired Sussex has been appointed to provide consultancy and management for the Hastings and Rother phase of the SEEDA Satellite Broadband Pilot. Companies wishing to apply for grants can obtain application forms from Wired Sussex on (01273) 666830 or [www.wiredsussex.com](http://www.wiredsussex.com). As part of their application, businesses will supply a brief business case, explaining the need and potential benefit to their organisation and agree to provide full feedback on the experience and value of using Broadband.

Applicants who meet the criteria will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis. However, if more than 100 eligible applications are received, unsuccessful applicants may be eligible for a later phase of the grant programme, if funding allows.



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*Delegates at SEEDA's Broadband Open Evening*

of several SEEDA Broadband initiatives aimed at creating a world class digital infrastructure for the region. They are designed to promote the take-up of Broadband and provide insights into its effectiveness as a catalyst for sustainable development, particularly in areas targeted for regeneration.

SEEDA Chief Executive Anthony Dunnett said: "We believe that Satellite Broadband can be a major catalyst for regeneration, linking communities with major business centres. These grants give 300 regional business organisations the means to try Broadband at affordable prices and give SEEDA the chance to study how to get the best out of Satellite Broadband to help achieve sustainable development."

The SEEDA Broadband Satellite Pilot will provide low-cost access to Broadband services in rural parts of the South East region where ADSL or cable modem services are not available. The grants will apply to any

members of the public.

Broadband companies were invited to exhibit and talk to potential customers about their products and services.

SEEDA Wired Region Project Manager, Dr Peter Waller, said: "The companies attending and supporting the event ranged from the large such as Astra and Isonetric to small local providers like Mistral. Feedback from them was positive with the general opinion being that taking the Broadband message to potential users in this manner is a much needed and effective way forward.

The providers' offer of further support were most welcome and we are already planning to roll this model out into other parts of the region over the summer."

The selected areas for the Satellite Broadband Pilot, and approximate number of targeted users, will be: Hastings and Rother (100), Isle of Wight (50), Thanet (50), Winchester (10), Oxfordshire (100).

# Formula One Centre puts South East in pole position!

A new training facility has been opened in Oxfordshire for engineering students aspiring to careers in the motorsport and automotive industries.

The centre is a fully equipped working plant for the production of carbon fibre bodywork. Set next to the engineering workshop at Rycotewood College in Thame, Oxfordshire, students will be able to gain qualifications in state of the art advanced composite manufacturing techniques.

Funded by SEEDA, the college has worked closely with the Formula One industry in the development of a specialist training environment. This is in response to the trend in the motorsport sector moving towards the strong, lightweight body parts and components that carbon fibre provides.

SEEDA Head of Learning & Skills, Kathy Slack, said: "This has been an exciting project that has resulted in a world class training facility for an industry which plays an increasingly important role in the economic success of the region. We are all delighted with the centre and the way in which the Motorsport Industry Association (MIA) and individuals within the industry have supported the development."

The new Advanced Composites Training Centre has a fully-equipped working environment, complete with a 1.5 metre diameter x 3.5 metre long Autoclave.

Courses available will range from Advanced Modern Apprenticeships and Level 3 NVQs through to industry-specific, tailor-made courses, including special short programmes



*SEEDA Head of Learning and Skills, Kathy Slack, (right) joins TWR Arrows Chairman, Tom Walkinshaw (centre) and College Principal Judith McIntyre (left) to formally open Rycotewood College's Advanced Composites Training Centre*

to meet company requirements.

Rycotewood College Principal Judith McIntyre said: "We have been working for some time with Formula One companies, providing comprehensive training for their apprentices. Originally the training requirements involved fabrication and welding of metals.

"However, as the industry moved towards the use of lightweight carbon fibre for both the car body and components, it became clear to all concerned that there was an urgent need for more high quality training for

technicians and engineers in the area of composites."

The facility will support a range of composite material production techniques, giving students a mix of classroom instruction and all the necessary practical experience.

In addition to training, the college will offer prototype or one-off manufacture for small companies that do not have such capabilities.



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## Changes drive skilling demands

Continued growth in new forms of manufacturing is nowhere better reflected than in the fast moving Composite Materials Sector.

The industry has been the focus of combined public, private and higher education organisations resulting in the South East England Composites Project (SEECOM).

SEECOM embraces the use of strong yet lightweight carbon fibre in manufacturing processes ranging from Formula One racing car body-work to proto-type engineering.

Funded by the SEEDA and managed by Oxford Innovation, SEECOM has helped accelerate the development of new manufacturing opportunities for the region.

SEEDA Senior Learning & Skills Manager, Gilly Bartrip, believes "The success of SEECOM, is in driving growth in skilled employment opportunities in the region delivering specialist skills training and this was high on the agenda at the SEECOM seminar held with QinetiQ at Farnborough International this month."

Speakers at the seminar - The Changing Shape of the

Composite Materials Industry - included QinetiQ Senior Project Engineer Chris Wheatley and Chief Operating Officer John Ward.

Mr Wheatley said: "An industry can only grow in proportion to the skilled labour base and without continual growth of that base the industry's own evolution is slowed.

"Industries like Formula One are benefiting in the region from the new Advanced Composite Training Centre in Rycotewood College. This industry is still labour intensive, requiring a skilled workforce and so a strong training base is essential and, hopefully, SEECOM will deliver that for the industry."

Mr Ward said: "The theme of this seminar is about the changing shape of the composites industry and QinetiQ is changing its shape to meet the needs of a broadening client base."

It is through communication partnerships that the industry can meet the developing needs of its market."



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# Grit, determination and driving skill

It was foot to the floor at this year's Formula Schools 'grande finale' with 1,000 students from more than 60 schools taking their places at Silverstone racetrack.

This SEEDA funded scheme is rapidly establishing itself as one of the most enjoyable ways to involve youngsters in engineering and attracts participants from across the country.

The top prize awaiting winners, Ash Manor School, on the podium at Silverstone was an invitation to take part in a Grand Prix karting event, while a range of other prizes included vouchers for IT equipment and tickets to race meetings.

Formula Schools 2002 is a competition where pupils design, build and race their

own radio-controlled vehicles. It is supported by SEEDA and the Learning and Skills Council to encourage schools to work with local companies to develop young people's engineering skills.

Apart from designing and engineering a competitive car, Formula Schools gives young people the opportunity to organise themselves as a team and become involved in associated activities such as arranging sponsorship and producing a financial model of their activities.

Getting young people involved in engineering is going to become increasingly important over the next few years. Government research predicts that by 2010 we will be facing a 'skills shortage'

with a distinct lack of engineers, including managerial and technician level.

Formula Schools Co-ordinator, Rob Austin, said: "Formula Schools is a tour-de-force for kick starting and then maintaining a credible engineering experience, both within and outside the curriculum.

"Alongside traditional engineering skills and knowledge, it introduces students to the worlds of opto-electronics, systems engineering and composite materials at a standard never normally associated with this age and stage."



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## SEEDA staff has fun learning

SEEDA participated in the fifth annual Learning at Work Day as part of the National Adult Learners Week.

Employees were given the opportunity to attend workshops in Mind Mapping, Assertiveness at Work, Time Management and Pilates, activities based around SEEDA's chosen holistic theme for the day. The programme focused on mind, body, spirit and co-ordination.

SEEDA's Head of Personnel Helen Mead said: "SEEDA is committed to encouraging learning at work. If we are to meet our challenging business objectives,

it is essential to harness the abilities and skills of all our staff, release their potential and maximise the opportunity for their development.

"The Learn at Work Day is a fun day which allows staff to try new skills and think about their wider learning needs."

The event, which is run nationally by Campaign for Learning as part of Adult Learners Week, raises awareness of the important role the workplace plays in personal development and encourages employers to provide fun learning opportunities for all levels of staff.



Campaign for Learning's Regional Director, Linda Siegle, said: "The aim of Learning at Work Day is to highlight to employers the many business benefits of embedding all sorts of learning opportunities in the workplace. For the employee, Learning at Work Day is an opportunity to develop new talents, share existing skills with colleagues, and build on confidence and motivation at work."



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*Pilates trainer Brenda Dilks (left) from The Spectrum sports centre, Guildford, with SEEDA staff members Laura Ede (foreground) and Jemma Brodie*

# Setting the standard

SEEDA has been awarded accreditation as an Investor in People - the national standard setting a level of good practice for staff training and development.

The Investors in People (IiP) programme aims to improve the performance and success rate of organisations by helping them to harness the true potential of their employees - their most valuable asset.

The four principles underpinning the IiP standard are:

- **Commitment - to develop employees to achieve business goals and targets**
- **Planning - to review training and development in the context of business needs**
- **Action - assuring that relevant steps are taken to meet training and development needs**
- **Evaluation - measuring the outcomes of training and development for individuals and the organisation.**

The IiP scheme is recognised by the CBI, the Institute of Directors and the TUC as an effective way to promote a business's investment in and commitment to its employees.

According to national statistics, 80 per cent of businesses that have achieved IiP accreditation have reported 'increased customer satisfaction' and 70 per cent have 'improved competitive edge and productivity'. Job satisfaction among employees of IiP accredited organisations is 94 per cent compared to just 37 per cent in non-IiP organisations.

## Leading best practice

Achieving IiP accreditation is a further demonstration of SEEDA's commitment to developing the knowledge and skills of its own staff and positioning itself as an 'exemplar' for other businesses and organisations in the South East, thereby aiding the region's continued growth as a world class business

## SEEDA earns Investors in People accreditation

location.

Last year SEEDA became the first Regional Development Agency to sign the e-skills Employers' Charter - an initiative by the e-Skills National Training Organisation that has responsibility for the IT and telecommunications industries and IT-related skills in other sectors. SEEDA is working to actively promote IT awareness and training among both its own 140 employees and others in the region.

In addition, SEEDA has become involved in the Prime Minister's Active Communities Challenge, a national programme that encourages employers to give their staff a day's paid time to undertake voluntary or community work.

SEEDA employees are themselves given opportunities to participate in this scheme and the Agency is encouraging other organisations in the region to sign up to the Challenge.

SEEDA Chief Executive, Anthony Dunnett, said: "At SEEDA we are fully committed to promoting the personal development and skills of each and every one of our employees. I am therefore delighted that our commitment to our staff has earned us the Investors in People accreditation."



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*Committed to high standards. - SEEDA is a signatory of the e-Skills Charter - held by SEEDA Board Member Professor Clive Booth (far left) and SEEDA Head of Personnel*

*Helen Mead, Chair of the Surrey Learning and Skills Council, Rob Douglas (middle left) and SEEDA Chief Executive, Anthony Dunnett, holding The Investors in People*

*Award. The Active Communities Charter Commitment is held by SEEDA Board Member Liz Brighthouse and SEEDA Enterprise Hub Project Officer Sarah Roach*

# Learning Partnerships move forward with SEEDA

The 18 Learning Partnerships (LPs) in the South East held a seminar to develop an understanding of their role in local regeneration following the recent National Review of Learning Partnerships, announced by Minister for Lifelong Learning, Margaret Hodge.

SEEDA funded the event that was organised by Kent Learning Partnership who, with their colleagues around the region, SEEDA sees as key partners in the delivery of the Learning and Skills priorities identified in the Regional Economic Strategy.

The seminar had four key priorities:

- To gain further understanding of the regeneration agenda, nationally, regionally and locally
- To identify the unique role of LPs to engage and add value
- To share good practice
- To contribute to the national protocols for

LP involvement in regeneration

Key speakers from SEEDA, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and Government Office for the South East (GOSE) outlined the national and regional priorities, along with a number of successful examples of regeneration practice from around the region.

As a result of the seminar, LPs have a greater understanding of their future role in regeneration and have identified the critical success factors for future collaborative work at a local and regional level. The outcomes will feed into the ongoing work of the DfES National Transition Group that will produce a National Framework for Learning Partnerships to maximise the contribution of learning to local regeneration.



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## Context - workplace initiative promoting essential skills

Basingstoke College of Technology, together with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, co-hosted a conference to publicise and expand the successful, SEEDA-funded Context Programme currently gaining a reputation for excellence around the town.

In its second year, the Context Programme involves 13 local companies, from which around 250 employees benefit from training in IT, Communications, Calculations and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

All training is free at the point of delivery and involves tailor-made courses delivered to small groups within company premises.

The Context Programme has an

appeal to anyone who feels held back by lack of confidence in any of the areas covered and because it is offered in working hours, the best results can be achieved with the positive support of enlightened employers.

It was evident from the contributions at the conference that employers regard the Programme as a means of developing the potential of their employees and achieving a responsive and confident workforce. All of this was made possible by funding of £100,000 last financial year from SEEDA.

SEEDA Learning & Skills Project Manager, Barbara Bicknell, was a key speaker at the conference together with AWE Training Manager, Ian

West, who spoke on the needs of the employer. Also speaking was Boots Distribution Depot employee, Graham Bengel, who has gained qualifications and confidence through the Context Programme.

Other founding partners in the Programme include Boots Distribution Depot, North Hampshire Hospital NHS Trust, Oxoid Ltd, Albright Engineering, Safeway Stores, USDAW, The Hampshire Clinic and AWE. More partner companies continue to join the scheme and Jane Mossman, Context Programme Manager at BCOT, can be contacted on 07788 710342.



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*The Isle of Wight: one of five pilot AIF studies*



# Beyond the SRB

During 2002/3, SEEDA is administrating 64 Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) schemes run by 52 partnerships under rounds one - six that between them handle over 1,200 projects, with a total spend of around £50m.

There will be no more rounds of SRB, but SEEDA will meet existing commitments through to the end of the SRB programme in 2005.

SEEDA has now started to think through how community regeneration will be handled across the region as the SRB programme comes to an end. Crucial to this are Area Investment Frameworks (AIFs).

AIFs are a SEEDA funded initiative, set out in the World-Class Communities and Renaissance chapter of the Regional Economic Strategy (1999). Their purpose is to focus funding in an integrated way over a five to 10-year period, ensuring that individual investment streams in a locality work together with shared objectives, priorities and commitment to maximise the benefits to local communities.

AIFs have been prepared by partnerships - such as the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership for North Kent - in five pilot areas with close involvement and support from SEEDA. The pilot studies have been undertaken to test the techniques in different circumstances, locations and scales and cover Thames Gateway in Kent, North East Kent, Southampton, Hastings and Bexhill, East Sussex coastal strip, and Isle of Wight.

Work in these areas is reaching its conclusion, from which the main lessons will be drawn out into a Guidance Note, covering:

- The experience so far
- To inform the further development of Phase 1 of the initiative

## ● To guide Phase 2 that should commence in 2002/03

The Guidance will also reflect changes since the original concept - most notably the agreement of Tier 2/3 targets for the Agency, the introduction of Local Strategic Partnerships and the commissioning of sub-regional economic strategies by SEEDA.

The North Kent AIF, the largest and most complex so far, was launched at an event attended by the then Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Planning, Lord Falconer.

The AIF covers Dartford, Gravesend, Medway and Swale and sets a vision for the area to 2021. The next stage will be to develop an Implementation Strategy.

SEEDA Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration, Paul Hudson, said: "The launch of this AIF report is an important milestone for the region. As we stated in the Regional Economic Strategy, SEEDA is supporting the production of AIFs in several areas that we regard as priorities for regeneration. This will be an important part of the way SEEDA distributes the future funding, and relates to local partners in the future."

Further information is available in the consultation paper issued by SEEDA, *Delivering In Partnership In Priority Regeneration Areas*. Copies are available from Suleen Syn at Guildford (01483 484258) and on SEEDA's website ([www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)).

Meetings across the region to discuss the way forward for partnerships have been conducted, with high attendance.



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*Lord Falconer speaking at the North Kent AIF conference*





● **Continued from page 1**

Snr Cearra outlined how Bilbao had responded to the “strategic challenge” of the 1980s when fear was one of the great motivating forces behind change. The city had to face the challenge to improve infrastructure and accessibility.

He reminded everyone that it was people who made cities not buildings. “A city changes when the people change,” he said.



Medway is a place to be reckoned with, according to SEEDA Chief Executive, Anthony Dunnett, “Where only developments of the highest quality will be encouraged.”

Mr Dunnett highlighted the fact that Medway - the ‘city’ of the Thames Gateway - was so vital that £140m of Government funding had been spent on Chatham Maritime over the past three and a half years to turn it into the flagship project that it is today.

“Like Bilbao, this part of the region has pulled itself up by its bootstraps from the position it was in 15 years ago. It has gone from dejection and implosion to a successful business community.

“Quality should be uppermost in the minds of any company looking for inward investment in Medway, in terms of housing and businesses. These are the facts. Good design and excellent building quality makes money,” added Mr Dunnett.



*Top photo - Guest speakers at ‘Medway - The Future Unveiled’*

*Above: SEEDA Chief Executive Anthony Dunnett, outlines Medway in the context of the South East*

*Below: Guests at the conference took a high speed boat trip along the Medway to see the area’s potential*

*Above left: Lord Rooker speaking at the conference on the Government’s commitment to the Thames Gateway area*

*Below Left: Snr Alfonso Cearra speaks on the Bilbao experience*



# Chatham Maritime named as BTeLocation



*The Colonial Building, Chatham Maritime, one of the office premises that will benefit from BTeLocation status*

BTeLocations, the inward investment division of BT, has named Chatham Maritime as a flagship BTeLocation site.

The announcement was made at the Conference, Medway - The Future Unveiled, held in Chatham Maritime, and is a further incentive for businesses considering relocating to Medway.

A BTeLocation site offers the most advanced telecommunications infrastructure for high bandwidth enabling secure and speedy communications.

In becoming a BTeLocation, Chatham Maritime will provide maximum flexibility for business development, allowing companies to expand with minimum disruption to their business and staff.

The site will also offer advice on issues such as tax concessions, support services and redevelopment needs essential for any company to move.

BT's Regional Director for the South East, Trish Jones, said: "BT is delighted to be a strategic economic partner, working with so many people and organisations who are embracing the exciting future vision for Medway.

"The BTeLocations programme is an innovative project. Medway already has major advantages in attracting new office development - such as a pool of skilled and flexible people eager and willing to take on new challenges, as well as excellent communications links to other parts of the UK.

"Now BT is adding a crucial new dimension - ready access to the new electronic communications services on which businesses depend if they are to exploit the Internet and e-business to the full."

SEEDA's Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration, Paul Hudson, said: "Chatham Maritime is an excellent business location - with more than 80,000 sq m of first class office accommodation alongside ground-breaking housing developments, an award winning marina and a wonderful sense of place and history.

"For the potential investor, this, combined with advanced communication facilities, makes Chatham Maritime an exciting place to be."

BTeLocations has selected 50 of the UK's premier, international business locations as part of a

five-year £50m programme to enable each site with the latest in communications technology.

The selection process is determined on how attractive they are to investing businesses - location, access to skilled workforce, availability of incentives and previous investment history.

BT has recognised the importance of Kent as an investment region by awarding BTeLocations status to more sites than any other UK county.

The Chatham Maritime announcement follows on from BTeLocations at Cheriton Parc, Folkestone; EuroKent, Ramsgate; Kings Hill, West Malling and Crossways at Dartford.

Medway Council's Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Renewal, Cllr Jane Chitty, said: "Chatham Maritime will possess all the facilities demanded by big business with the added advantage of a superb, picturesque location."



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# Chatham Maritime - at the heart of Thames Gateway

As most regular readers of SE View will know, Chatham Maritime is SEEDA's largest development project. More than £400 million of public and private sector funding has been invested to date, with the area now transformed into a thriving residential, leisure, business and retail location.

The Fishing Village is perhaps the most visually striking development at St Mary's Island - the main residential area of Chatham Maritime - and has once again been winning awards. The judges of the 2002 Evening Standard New Homes Awards awarded the Fishing Village on St Mary's Island highly com-

mended status in the Best New Development category, whilst The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) has included it in their "best of" competition submission entries publication. The development is made up of more than 150 properties, with varied rooflines and staggered frontages helping to reflect the spirit of a traditional Kentish fishing village.

Countryside Maritime Ltd (CML), a joint venture company between Countryside Properties Plc and SEEDA, controls house building on the Island. Keen to offer young people their first step on the career ladder and support the local community,

CML has established a training centre on St Mary's Island in Chatham, Kent. Promoted by SEEDA, the programme is supported by CML and the North Kent Gateway Partnership. Designed by training providers Shakka to provide on the job experience alongside attendance at Mid-Kent College's Building Crafts Department, the course offers an ideal, high quality apprenticeship into the building trade and the opportunity to make contacts with local firms. One of the students, who has yet to complete the course, has already been offered a job for when he graduates.

Project Manager of Chatham Maritime for SEEDA, Jonathan Sadler, said: "Using local people for local work is an excellent way of ensuring that the benefits of investing in an area are retained by the local people. SEEDA is pleased to be leading the way with its partners in this field."

Chatham Maritime has also seen itself home to a variety of leisure activities recently too. HRH Princess Anne attended the KM Chatham Navy Days during the Jubilee Weekend. The annual event attracted more than 40,000 visitors. Ships and aeroplanes from across the country and throughout history gathered in this annual celebration in the Historic Dockyard and Chatham Maritime basins.

Courtesy of Marine Developments Ltd and SEEDA, a full scale and authentic replica of a frigate of the Georgian Navy, The Grand Turk, visited the basins at Chatham Maritime. The ship is more recognisable as its alta ego HMS Papillon, from the TV series 'Hornblower'.



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Picture courtesy of the Historic Dockyard



*HRH Princess Anne is escorted to see HMS Exeter at this year's KM Navy Days*

# Celebrating progress at Newhaven

The people of Newhaven celebrated as the regeneration of their area took another step forward. A community festival organised by Lewes District Council marked the next stage of the prestigious £11m West Quay development.

The project has seen the area transformed from one of dereliction to an exciting mix of uses, including the high quality open space that was home to the festival.

Local children took part in a fancy dress competition (mermaids, pirates and fishermen), while 'Dr Bike' was on hand to repair bikes. To help the children be safe whilst cycling, security tagging of bikes and a cycling proficiency course were also available. Throughout the event the Newhaven Marching Band kept everyone entertained.

First promoted in the early 1980s, the development of West Quay has been identified by Lewes District Council as a key part of the regeneration of Newhaven as a whole, which was strongly supported by SEEDA. It links in with the development of the Denton Island Training and Business Centre and the Newhaven Fort tourist attraction on the west bank of the river.

In April, the community celebrated the opening of the riverside walkway and cycleway, public open space, public car park and new state-of-the-art fishermen's facilities.

These improvements were supported through an investment by SEEDA of more than £2m, along with the residential element of the scheme (66 houses and flats), which will be completed later this year.

Other supporters of the scheme include PESCA, Maff

Harbour grant, INTERREG and Sustrans as well as private funding from Sea Containers (the landowner and developer of the site) and the Newhaven (Sussex) Fish and Flake Ice Society.

The formal opening closed with a balloon race and balloons were received as far away as France which is quite appropriate as Ville De Dieppe is the Council's partner for the INTERREG part of the scheme.



**Contact: Phil Dibsdales,**  
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*Newhaven Festival balloon launch*

## Cultural front-runners

Three of the 13 major towns and cities that are bidding to become the European Capital of Culture are in the South East.

Oxford, Canterbury and Brighton and Hove are all competing to win the prestigious title for 2008.

SEEDA wishes all three the

best of luck with their bids.

SEEDA Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration, Paul Hudson, said: "In all three areas, it is the process that is as important as the eventual outcome - though it would be marvellous for the region if one of the bids is successful.

"They all demonstrate enor-

mous resourcefulness of local partnerships and the strengths of the urban areas we have in the South East."



**Contact:**  
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*Oxford*



*Canterbury*



*Brighton*

# South East can rival Hollywood and Silicon Valley

The South East can learn from Hollywood, the world's leading business cluster. That was the message from SEEDA during a series of seminars and networking events for businesses across the region to promote the idea of clustering.

Hollywood, with its high concentration of film and television-related businesses, and nearby Silicon Valley, global centre of the IT industry, are classic examples of how businesses in similar sectors can group together in clusters and become world leaders in their industries. SEEDA is actively promoting high-performance business clusters, 'where companies come together locally to grow globally.'

Clusters can have a powerful impact on the regional and national economy and SEEDA staged a 'Cluster Week' to encourage companies in the region to see the many benefits of working collaboratively with like-minded businesses. SEEDA is now seeking business champions from the private sector to lead and support cluster development.

Director of SEEDA's Business & International Division, Marianne Neville-Rolfe, explained that SEEDA would act as the catalyst for the development of these clusters but would be looking to the South East's most dynamic entrepreneurs and business leaders - business champions - to drive forward their development.

Clusters, she said, are recognised as being "an important mechanism for increasing innovation, quality, skills, business growth and international competitive advantage." They enhance networking (at the highest levels of industry), provide opportunities for collaborative working, and improve each company's access to market intelligence.

The week long programme of activities, was facilitated by Ifor Ffowcs-Williams, one of the world's leading cluster gurus and current President of the International Competitiveness Institute. The week focused on the development of practical strategies



*Ifor Ffowcs-Williams working with delegates on cluster action plans*

to support clusters and culminated in a business breakfast attended by 90 delegates.

Mr Ffowcs-Williams emphasised that the new economy is about speed, quality, flexibility, innovation, networks and building critical mass. This new style of doing business demands a team approach to building critical mass at a local level.

Clustering is already an accepted tool in economic development strategies for more than 40 countries, contributing significantly to the acceleration of their competitiveness.

Mr Ffowcs-Williams cited many examples including Wichita, Kansas, which has become the "small aircraft capital of the world, manufacturing more than half of the world's small aircraft."

Companies in that industry have grouped together successfully in the Wichita area, co-operating on R&D, benefiting from better market intelligence, identifying and prioritising issues that affected their marketplace, and building themselves into a powerful global force.

However, to succeed, these companies had to be willing to share. "Building a collaborative culture between firms is essential," Mr

Ffowcs-Williams emphasised.

SEEDA will initially focus cluster development on key sectors in the region, including Marine industries concentrated in the Solent area and the regional cluster grouping in the Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology and Healthcare sectors.

The South East's Pharmaceutical, Biotechnology and Healthcare businesses form a world class industry grouping that crosses regional boundaries.

The "global cluster" runs southwards from an Oxford-Cambridge axis to the south coast and contains global or European headquarters for most of the world's pharmaceutical companies, be they British, American or Japanese. It also hosts major international commercial R&D centres, the leading academic and research institutions funded by the Wellcome Trust and the Research Councils, internationally renowned teaching hospitals and many sources of specialist regulatory, legal and financial skills.

Dr Brian Lever, a member of the SEEDA South East England Healthcare Technology Group, said: "In the region, we have the scale and mix of academic, commercial and clinical resources to be a major international powerhouse, to convert the

promise of the human genome project into therapies for patients and wealth for communities.”

Opportunities for identifying business champions, encouraging more collaboration between companies in particular sectors and identifying early ‘wins’ will be identified by SEEDA Cluster Managers and via the Enterprise Hubs, which have a key role in cluster support as well as business networks.

SEEDA Head of Sectors and Clusters, Peter Taylor, said: “SEEDA’s approach will be steady and long term. We will be putting considerable resources into mapping the particular sectors funding key regional networks and into developing our own capabilities to support clusters. SEEDA will focus on strategies to encourage and facilitate effective industry collaboration which will provide positive benefits to the business community.”

During the Cluster Week, Chief Executive of the Motorsport Industry Association, and former sportscar race driver and team owner, Chris Aylett, highlighted the power and uniqueness of the Motorsports Cluster.

This major cluster crosses several regional boundaries and is centred on an arc from the West Midlands,

Northampton, Banbury and south to Surrey and beyond where TAG McLaren are located. This world class, £5bn cluster is constantly ‘spinning off’ new technological developments often linked to other sectors such as Marine (composite development) and Aerospace and Defence (Advanced Electronic Systems).

The Motorsport Cluster, he said, showed how companies could group together successfully, collaborating on R&D, with spin-offs into other industry sectors, ranging from tourism to aerospace.

Motorsport Valley, Mr Aylett explained, contained more than 2,000 companies, employing some 38,000 people, two thirds of who



*Chris Aylett, Chief Executive, Motorsports Industry Association*

were in engineering and manufacturing. In conjunction with local training providers, Motorsport Valley had established a series of motorsport-based engineering courses, which were already oversubscribed.



**Contact:**

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# MAS offers free hands-on support

## Accessing info on funding and best practice

A key aim of the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) is to promote existing initiatives and to provide manufacturers with access to available funding. A key strand in achieving these goals is the Manufacturing Network.

Join the Manufacturing Network for free and receive via email:

- Details of funding opportunities for manufacturing
- Access to best practice activities and visits
- Hands-on help to implement improvements
- Training materials to develop new manufacturing skills

If you are interested in joining the Manufacturing Network email network@mas-se.org.uk or contact the helpline on 0845-609-2121.

The South East Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS), funded by SEEDA and the DTI, is looking to offer 18 companies based in the South East up to 15 days of free, hands-on support.

This free support will enable the selected companies to implement ‘Lean Manufacturing’ through Step Change. The only commitment from the companies involved is to allow SEEDA and the MAS to write up the achievements into a case study and to allow two visits to the site.

### Capacity

Eligibility includes having less than 100 employees. The returns include improvements in productivity, reduction in lead-times, improved capacity and reduced failure rates.

Outcomes from introducing ‘Lean Manufacturing’ in companies assisted by the Engineering Employers Federation (EEF) during a

SEEDA funded pilot project included:

- 83 per cent reduction in lead times
- 57 per cent improvement in productivity
- 54 per cent reduction in set-up times
- 45 per cent more capacity
- 67 per cent reduction in space requirements
- 38 per cent reduction in supply chain costs

EEF South, the Regional Centre of Manufacturing Excellence, has been appointed to run the MAS in the South East. EEF South is the regional arm of the EEF, an organisation involved in supporting Engineering and Manufacturing companies. EEF South has been heavily involved in the implementation of ‘Lean Manufacturing’ and the related topics of ‘Supply Chain Excellence’ and ‘Best Practice in Product Development’, for eight years through their World Class Performance Unit.

# Investor Development

SEEDA has revolutionised the way it works with its regional partners to comprehensively tackle Investor Development across the South East.

Investor Development, or Aftercare, is the process of getting closer to strategic companies to understand their businesses in order to better attract, retain and add value to their organisations in the South East.

Strategic companies are those in a critically important location or sector, who have a large number of employees, a group Head Quarters within the South East or are locally important.

SEEDA has recruited seven Investor Development Managers who will be working alongside our sub regional partners to ensure that we deliver a comprehensive service to companies in their area. This new approach builds on the very significant work already delivered by local partners and other partnership organisations, and provides some additional resource to concentrate efforts and provide an equal coverage across the region.

The Investor Development Managers will provide

assistance to strategic companies to foster their growth, provide an early warning system for any potential difficulties and feed into regional and national policy making.

The Investor Development Managers will each be responsible for account managing a minimum of 50 strategic companies and will work with sub regional partners to build on and develop the existing networks.

Each Investor Development Manager will be based out in the sub-region for which they have responsibility.

Managing the Investor Developers is SEEDA's Head of Regional Investor Development, Liz McSheehy.

Liz headed up the national Investor Development Programme at Invest UK where she became enthused about working with existing investors both indigenous and foreign owned.

DTI has seconded Liz to SEEDA to manage Investor Development in the South East where she also has responsibility for Regional Selective Assistance.



**Phil Clement**  
01908 660007  
email: philclement@seeda.co.uk

Phil Clement will be based in West Berkshire working with local investment teams in these areas.

Working alongside the local partners with Invest UK and local partners, the main objectives will be to understand and support businesses in his sub-region.

Phil has wide-ranging experience in promoting business growth and has held the posts of Assistant Director at Aberconway Borough Council, Development Officer at Invest UK. His recent post was as Business Development Officer at Invest East of England where he worked with SMEs, with a particular emphasis on

**Martin Clements**  
01753 502015  
email: martincléments@seeda.co.uk



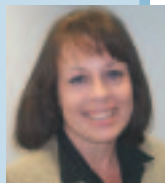
Martin Clements will be based in the Thames Valley working directly with the Thames Valley Economic Partnership. Martin will be establishing and developing relationships with 50 key companies in the Thames Valley including assisting in investment and re-investment activities, encouraging growth and understanding the issues affecting the area's leading businesses.

Martin has 20 years international marketing and business management experience in the telecomm, IT and electronics sectors; he has worked in large corporations, emerging enterprises and organisations supporting economic development. Past employers include Logica, Samsung, Motorola and DeLaRue.

Martin has a strong track record in business, product and process innovation and his career is focused on the commercial application of 'new' technologies including: electronic commerce; wireless communication; electronic payment systems; optical data storage and data.



**Lynne Halliday**  
01962 845489  
email: lynnehalliday@seeda.co.uk



Lynne Halliday will be working with Hampshire Economic Partnership and the Isle of Wight Economic Partnership to identify the area's strategic companies and support Hampshire and Isle of Wight's leading businesses.

A significant proportion of Lynne's career has been spent in the marketing area of several different industry sectors including manufacturing, professional and media. In 1994, Lynne was approached to manage a partnership of local authorities, academia and the private sector, to promote the South Coast of England on the international stage. Working predominantly in the US, the organisation identified joint ventures and trading opportunities for companies in this area through research, development of government contacts and the organisation of incoming and outgoing trade missions.

**Christopher Chapman**  
01273 441588  
email: christopherchapman@seeda.co.uk

Christopher Chapman will be based in West Berkshire to develop an understanding of key local and regional issues.

Christopher brings to his new role a breadth of experience from the City where he ran banking, brokerage and funds departments.

More recently, he led two particularly challenging projects in Madagascar for agencies sponsored by the DFID. Christopher is a member of the new Financial Services

sed in Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and g directly with the Economic Partner-

local economic partnerships, SEEDA, organisations, one of Phil's prime erstand the issues affecting compa-

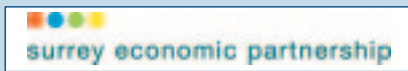
perience in local government pro- and economic development from istant Economic Development Officer Council in North Wales and Business Luton Borough Council. His most ess Development Manager in Invest managed a portfolio of 45 compa- nphasis in the automotive sector.



**Julia Owen**  
020 8541 7150  
email: [juliaowen@seeda.co.uk](mailto:juliaowen@seeda.co.uk)

Julia Owen will be working with Surrey Economic Partnership to support Surrey's leading businesses and develop an understanding of key local and regional issues, as they affect the Surrey business community.

Julia has spent the last eight years working in a variety of inward investment roles, most recently as Senior Project Manager in Invest UK's America team and has also worked as part of a project management team dealing with European companies. Julia was given the opportunity to undertake two short-term postings in the States, which included running the North of England's Atlanta office for five months. One part of Julia's main objectives in this role was researching and contacting existing investors in the North of England, which she says, got her 'really interested in Aftercare.'



**Ian Muat**  
01732 520716  
email: [ianmuat@seeda.co.uk](mailto:ianmuat@seeda.co.uk)

Ian Muat will be operating directly with the Locate in Kent team, to develop an understanding of key local and regional issues, as they affect the Kent business community and the specific challenges faced by the area's companies in improving their global competitiveness.

Ian has a wealth of experience in sales and marketing management with companies ranging from Citicorp to Unilever and Scottish Widows and has had extensive general, sales and marketing management experience within the fast moving consumer goods and financial services industries both within the UK, Europe and Middle East.

Companies that Ian has worked with include Unilever, Pepsico, Citicorp, NHL, AIG and Scottish Widows where he recently built an offshore investment company based in Jersey.



**Rob Nolan**  
01273 291091  
email: [robnolan@seeda.co.uk](mailto:robnolan@seeda.co.uk)

With wide-ranging experience in inward investment, managing the North American/ICT project management team based at SEEDA. Rob Nolan's new role is to work with leading Brighton & Hove and East Sussex businesses. Rob's prime objective will be to understand the issues affecting companies in the sub-region, encouraging growth and development to help companies fulfil their business potential. Mr Nolan will be based at Brighton & Hove City Council.

Prior to working at SEEDA, Rob spent a number of years working in the inward investment field, his first role as an Inward Investment Assistant at the British Consulate General in Toronto, while in the UK, Rob has worked as an Inward Investment Manager at West London Inward.

He has a post graduate degree in Industrial and Economic Development and is currently studying for a Diploma in Management Studies from the University of Kingston Business School.



sssex working directly with the West Sussex Investment team to nal issues, as they affect the West Sussex business community. experience, he previously worked in Financial Services in the management subsidiaries for UK, French and US owners. ng projects in crisis and change management in Russia and Services Tribunal.

# Region's best are honoured



## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Abbott Laboratories Ltd**  
**Queenborough, Kent ME11 5EL**  
**Employees: 1258**  
**Managing Director: Mr M Haywood**  
**Ultimate Parent: Abbott Laboratories - USA**

Abbott Laboratories Ltd manufactures a range of pharmaceutical products including inhalation anaesthetics, anti-infective cardiovascular and urological products and fine chemicals for use in pharmaceutical products manufacture. It was established in the UK in 1937. The company is winning an Award for the second time, on the basis of continuous achievement over six years. Its previous success was in 1994. During the six years, its large overseas earnings increased by more than 130 per cent and represented nearly 60 per cent of total sales. It sells worldwide in 75 countries, with EU countries as the principal markets. It competes for business with other Abbott manufacturing facilities around the world and has just been recognised by the corporation as Abbott's premier international manufacturing plant.

**AIRCOM International**  
**Grosvenor House, 65-71 London Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1LQ**  
**Employees: 162**  
**Managing Director: Dr S Mockford**

AIRCOM International was established in 1995 and wins the Award for the second year running. It supplies a PC-based software tools solution called Enterprise, which is used for planning, configuring and testing wireless cellular networks. In the year since its last Award, the company has more than doubled its overseas earnings - this now amounts to £11m per annum - and almost doubled its workforce. Since July 2000, it has established

seven overseas offices to supplement its wide network of agencies. All customers are provided with full after sales service, and offered expert training and consultancy services. The company continues to develop markets in Europe, Asia, Africa, India and Australasia.

**Award (TP) International Limited**  
**Viking House, Cliftonville Avenue, Cliftonville, Kent CT9 2AQ**  
**Employees: 16**  
**Company Secretary: Mr T Searles**

Award (TP) International has been trading since 1996. It works mainly with global blue chip companies to develop merchandise and travel incentives. The company has been granted preferred supplier status by Pepsi Cola Beverages International (PBI) for its European and African markets and also develops ideas for its global promotions with PepsiCo in the USA. Projects for 2002 include the management of all hospitality and travel itineraries for PBI's 7UP/Williams F1 sponsorship and supplying World Cup premiums to more than 20 international markets. Other international clients include Axa, Hornby Hobbies, BskyB, Exxon Mobil, Universal International Pictures, Walt Disney Corporation and Buena Vista International. In the past three years its overseas earnings have trebled, with 2002 seeing business develop in the Middle East and South America. 2002 also saw Award accredited with ISO 9001.

**Cognitive Drug Research Ltd**  
**CDR House, 24 Portman Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 1EA**  
**Employees: 29**  
**Chief Executive: Professor K A Wesnes**

Cognitive Drug Research, a research company established in

1986, specialises in measuring the effects of new medicines on the mental efficiency of volunteers and patients in clinical trials. It has pioneered and developed its own computer-based system over the last 15 years. The company has more than 50 clients based in Europe (including Eastern Europe), North America and Japan. It works in a highly competitive field and, over the past three years, has nearly trebled its overseas earnings.

**DRS Data & Research Services plc**  
**Sunrise Parkway, Linford Wood, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK14 6LR**  
**Employees: 133**

**Managing Director: Mr A C J Lee**  
 DRS Data & Research Services plc, which is winning its first Award, manufacture document scanners and scannable printed forms and booklets. It has traded since 1969. Exports have increased by some 150 per cent during the three years covered by the application. The main markets are Nigeria that takes 25 per cent of exports and Bosnia with 19 per cent. The company has an impressive range of marketing activities including participation in trade fairs and overseas missions, the provision of after sales service and technical advice to customers and language and export practice training for staff.

**Intec Telecom Systems PLC**  
**Unit 2, Wells Court, Albert Drive, Woking, Surrey GU21 5UB**  
**Employees: 153**

**Executive Chairman: Mr M Frayne**  
 Established in 1997, Intec Telecom Systems Plc has developed and marketed operations support systems software for telecommunications companies. It is winning the Award for the first time for its outstanding achievement in increasing its overseas earnings by 377 per

cent over three years to nearly £34m per annum and almost quadrupling its workforce over the same period. The company identifies countries where deregulation is underway, seeks a major customer to act as a reference point and, by dint of dynamic endeavour, expands into the market. This strategy has enabled it to become the world's leading supplier, by market share, of intercarrier billing systems, numbering among its customers France Telecom, Telecom Italia, Swisscom, Telstra, and Vodafone.

**ipTEST Limited**  
**15 The Pines, Broad Street, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3BH**  
**Employees: 42**

**Managing Director: Mr D Newth**  
ipTEST Limited was established in 1987 and wins the Award for the second time. It manufactures production line test systems for power semiconductors and targets the world's largest producers of appropriate semiconductor devices in China, Europe, USA, Japan and South East Asia. An aggressive marketing programme has produced impressive results, with overseas sales increasing by 142 per cent over three years to reach over £6.5m per annum and to account for virtually all the company's production.

**Mabey and Johnson Limited**  
**Floral Mile, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9SQ**  
**Employees: 261**  
**Managing Director: Mr R C E Forsyth**  
**Ultimate Parent: Mabey Holdings Ltd**

Mabey and Johnson Limited are winning an Award for the sixth time, the last being in 1998. It designs and manufactures prefabricated steel bridges that can be quickly erected by unskilled labour. Dealing mainly with the public works departments of developing countries, the company develops innovative products that provide rapid solutions to infrastructure requirements. Exports increased by some £72m over the three years covered by the application. The main market in the final year was the Philippines.

**MediSense UK Ltd**  
**14/15 Eyston Way, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 1TR**  
**Employees: 1192**  
**Managing Director: Mr N Carter**  
**Ultimate Parent: Abbott Laboratories - USA**

MediSense UK Ltd, in American ownership, was established in 1990

and is winning the Award for the first time on the basis of continuous achievement. It manufactures biosensor products and its export sales consist of blood glucose monitoring meters and single use disposable test strips. The meters are used primarily by diabetics for self-testing blood glucose levels. Over six years, overseas earnings have increased by an outstanding 140 per cent to nearly £150m a year, with more than 90 per cent of production going overseas. Sales are made through affiliates and agents in more than 50 countries, the most important of which are Germany, the USA, Canada and Australia. During this period, employment has more than trebled.

**Point Source Ltd**  
**Mitchell Point, Ensign Way, Hamble, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 4RF**  
**Employees: 56**

**Managing Director: Dr D Pointer**  
Point Source Ltd was established in 1991 and is winning the Award for the first time. It manufactures fibre optic systems to deliver precision light beams that semiconductor equipment manufacturers have successfully integrated into programs for deep UV lithography, laser-scanning defect inspection and thin film analysis. In three years, overseas sales have increased by 172 per cent to more than £6m per annum and employment has doubled; exports now account for 87 per cent of total sales. More than half of all sales are made to the Netherlands, but other significant markets are Germany and the USA.

**SEOS Limited**  
**Edward Way, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 9UE**  
**Employees: 128**  
**Managing Director: Mr O J Wynn**  
**Ultimate Parent: SEOS Group Limited**

This is the SEOS Limited's fourth Queen's Award. Previous achievements were in 1995 for Export and 1998 for both Export and Technology. SEOS manufactures visual display systems to present outside scenes in aircraft and other simulators. Founded in 1984, the company has become the world's foremost supplier in its field. The main market in the year of application was North America, followed by Europe. Export marketing for North America is handled through the SEOS branch office in Florida where the CEO has based himself for three years to develop this most important market. Market research

is handled in-house at the company's Burgess Hill HQ. Particular emphasis is placed on worldwide after sales support and technical advice.

**Scientific Update**  
**Maycroft Place, Stone Cross, Mayfield, East Sussex TN20 6EW**  
**Employees: 7**  
**Director: Dr T Laird**

Scientific Update, established in 1989, provides services for the pharmaceutical, agrochemical and speciality chemical industries. These services comprise the organisation of conferences, training and education and consultancy. The company operates from a small business unit in a country village and, in view of the fact that it has the equivalent of only seven full-time employees, arranges events in 25 international venues on an astonishing range of scientific subjects with delegates from a large number of countries - 36 worldwide. It keeps ahead of the competition by ensuring that its conferences are better organised, exceptional in their scientific content and give better value by also including exhibitions. The company's overseas earnings have more than doubled over the past three years.

**Sophos PLC**  
**The Pentagon, Abingdon Science Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3YP**  
**Employees: 210**  
**Joint Chief Executive Officer: Dr P Lammer**

Sophos PLC, which was established as a partnership in 1985 and incorporated in 1987, is winning the Award for the first time. It develops and supplies global software solutions to detect, isolate and eliminate computer viruses for its corporate clients. The Award recognises its outstanding achievement in increasing its overseas earnings by 168 per cent to more than £11m per annum over three years. The company focuses on the larger IT economies and, during this period, it has established subsidiary companies in the USA, Germany, Australia, France, Japan, Singapore and Italy.

**A J Walter Aviation Limited**  
**Viscount House, Partridge Green, West Sussex RH13 8RA**  
**Employees: 90**  
**Managing Director: Mr C Whiteside**

A J Walter Aviation Limited was established in 1932, incorporated in 1961 and is winning the Award for the first time. It supplies, maintains and repairs aircraft spares,



has an inventory of 310,000 parts for all aircraft types, and provides a 24-hours, seven-days a week service. In the three years, it has increased its overseas earnings by 66 per cent to more than £24m per annum, raised the proportion of its exports to 74 per cent of total sales and more than doubled the number of employees. It has sold to markets worldwide, operating through a network of supply and repair centres. A vigorous purchasing policy, long term business partnerships and a rigorous quality control programme have been pursued to ensure effectiveness.

## INNOVATION

**Architectural Plants**  
**Cooks Farm, Nuthurst, Horsham,**  
**West Sussex RH13 6LH**  
**Employees: 15**  
**Owner: Mr A White**

Architectural Plants has gained the Award for pioneering new techniques in both growing and marketing a previously unavailable range of garden plants. These plants have a great emphasis on their strong shapes, textures and year round contribution to the garden and have supplied, to many, a welcome alternative to the traditional herbaceous border. The rarity of many of these plants had previously been due to difficulty in propagation but, since the company started in 1990, it has experimented and succeeded with various new techniques to produce these plants in significant numbers. A highly individual approach to presentation and marketing has resulted in considerable commercial success and the company is still carrying out a policy of rapid expansion in an attempt to cater for the ever-increasing demand for their plants.

**BAE SYSTEMS Avionics Limited,**  
**Avionic Systems**  
**Airport Works, Marconi Way,**  
**Rochester, Kent ME1 2XX**  
**Employees: 3,060**  
**Managing Director: Mrs S Wood**  
**Ultimate Parent: BAE SYSTEMS plc**

BAE SYSTEMS Avionics Ltd, Avionic Systems wins the Award for the development of helmet-mounted systems to display information to pilots. The system projects information needed by pilots onto the visor of their helmets so that they

can stay focused on the outside world with no need to look at the other cockpit instruments. The helmet system tracks the pilot's head position such that the display can provide the correct information for that direction, which is particularly important for take-off, landing and weapon aiming. A complete visual system has been incorporated in a helmet with innovative solutions but without in any way prejudicing the vital life-support function of the helmet. The helmets can be applied to military or civil aircraft to make the pilot more effective and reduce the workload.

**Vacuum and Exhaust Management Division, BOC Edwards**  
**Manor Royal, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 2LW**  
**Employees: 1,226**  
**Managing Director: Mr D Wong**  
**Ultimate Parent: The BOC Group plc**

Vacuum and Exhaust Management Division of BOC Edwards gains an Award for developing a novel vacuum pump used in the semi-conductor industry. Prior to this development the manufacturing process, which requires a 'clean room', used two vacuum pumps, which were located outside the clean room. The new 'IPX Dry Technology Pump' can be located in the clean room itself as it operates without any detriment to the clean room environment. There were many challenges to this development including design of the blades and channels, the high precision aerodynamic shaping, and close running tolerances, as well as the different pumping mechanisms that needed to be accommodated into one unit.

**Beardow & Adams (Adhesives) Limited**  
**32 Blundells Road, Bradville, Milton Keynes MK13 7HF**  
**Employees: 65**  
**Chairman and Managing Director: Mr R E Adams**

Beardow & Adams, founded in 1977, receives an Award for its BAMFutura high performance industrial adhesives that overcome problems inherent in food packaging. The company has successfully created an adhesive which has several advantages including being white, rather than yellow, producing no odour to ensure that deli-

cate foodstuffs are not tainted, and using ingredients all approved for direct food contact. Following its launch in 1999, major food manufacturers around the world have adopted the product and found that, as BAMFutura is able to bond so many different types of packaging, they no longer need to purchase several different adhesives.

**BioInteractions Ltd**  
**University of Reading Science & Technology Centre, Earley Gate,**  
**Whiteknights Road, Reading, Berkshire RG6 6BZ**  
**Employees: 8**

**Managing Director: Dr A K Luthra**

The Award to BioInteractions Limited recognises its development of a novel biocompatible coating for medical devices that come into contact with living tissue and blood. Produced as a long-term development of fundamental research, the Trillium Biopassive Surface™ is a coating designed to minimise the harmful blood rejection process that can occur when cardiopulmonary products are exposed to blood during by-pass surgery.

\*Trillium Biopassive Surface™ is a Trade Mark of Medtronic Inc.

**Elekta Oncology Systems Ltd**  
**Linac House, Fleming Way, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 9RR**  
**Employees: 354**  
**President and Chief Executive Officer: Mr V Stieber**  
**Ultimate Parent: Elekta AB - Sweden**

Elekta Oncology Systems Ltd has been granted the Queen's Award for the development of its Precise Table, designed for patients being treated using radiotherapy. Clinicians are striving for evermore-precise treatment and delivery to improve the quality of patient care. Precise Table plays a key role in delivering this precision via digital controls that provide the flexibility and efficiency to allow exceptional accuracy through a seamless performance and near silent movement. A specially patented mechanism controls height, whilst the ergonomic table design provides ease of access to the patient and an unrestricted approach to the treatment area. Part of Elekta's cost-effective upgrade path, Precise Table is available as a replacement to previous models thus allowing all existing customers to benefit



from Elekta's developments.

**Gifford and Partners**  
**Carlton House, Ringwood Road,**  
**Woodlands, Southampton SO40**  
**7HT**  
**Employees: 241**  
**Senior Partner: Mr E Hollinghurst**

Three companies, Gifford and Partners (consulting engineers), Cintec International Limited (design and manufacture), and Rockfield Software Limited (software design for predicting bridge behaviour), jointly gain the Award for their joint work on the Archtec, a unique method for the reinforcement of masonry bridges. A recent EC directive requires that all trunk road bridges be capable of carrying vehicles of 40 tonnes. There are some 40,000 masonry bridges in the UK many of which, being very old, are not strong enough to cope with the new load requirements. The Archtec system provided the solution whereby stainless steel reinforcing bars are inserted and grouted into the bridge at precise points. The method does not alter the outward appearance of the bridge and has gained the approval of English Heritage and other heritage authorities.

**Penlon Limited**  
**Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxford-**  
**shire OX14 3PH**  
**Employees: 265**  
**Chief Executive: Mr P H Tudor**

Penlon Limited's Award recognises the company's success in designing a novel vaporiser - an important component of anaesthetic systems. Penlon's thorough redesign led to the use of anodised aluminium instead of cast iron for the vaporiser. Aluminium's superior heat transfer properties improve the device's responsiveness to changes in gas flow rate. In addition to improved performance, the new design also costs less to manufacture whilst requiring reduced maintenance and having a longer service life.

**Point Source Ltd**  
**Mitchell Point, Ensign Way, Ham-**  
**ble, Southampton SO31 4RF**  
**Employees: 56**  
**Managing Director: Dr D Pointer**

Point Source Ltd receives the Innovation Award for the development of an innovative diode laser system. Laser diodes are small and consume little power, but the quality of light they deliver is often

inappropriate for applications. The company overcame this disadvantage by attaching a single mode fibre optic to the diode. In combination, they deliver a quality of light far superior to that straight from the laser. The fibre optic also allows for the remote siting of the laser from the point of application. It also receives the Award for International Trade.

**Sophos PLC**  
**The Pentagon, Abingdon Science**  
**Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire**  
**OX14 3YP**  
**Employees: 210**  
**Joint Chief Executive Officer: Dr P**  
**Lammer**

Medium-sized company Sophos PLC's Innovation Award recognises its achievement in continuously developing and up-dating anti-virus software, which is successful in the competitive large company, market. The software is designed specifically for use on networks: its patented technology minimises degradation of network performance. A unique virus description language enables the software to be updated for new viruses without the need to change the core code. It also receives the Award for International Trade.

**Toolroom Technology Limited**  
**(TTL)**  
**Broadfields, Bicester Road, Ayles-**  
**bury, Buckinghamshire HP19 8BU**  
**Employees: 28**  
**Managing Director: Mr P Walton**

Toolroom Technology Ltd receives the Award for producing an innovative software-based solution to a complex manufacturing problem in the gas turbine industry. Gas turbine blades are manufactured from difficult to machine materials in complex shapes to high degrees of accuracy. Refurbishing them after wear involves complex machining, which, hitherto, has had to be carried out by hand, exposing operators to the danger of contracting vibration white finger. Toolroom Technology Ltd has automated the process by capturing surface data and subjecting it to complex multi-axis calculations, which generate programmes for five-axis machine tools. This produces better results, higher productivity and avoids the danger of vibration white finger.

**Andrew Wilkes & Associates Limited**  
**Efford Park, Milford Road,**  
**Lymington, Hampshire SO41 0JD**  
**Employees: 53**

**Managing Director: Mr A Wilkes**

The Award to Andrew Wilkes & Associates Ltd is in recognition of the comprehensive service it has developed for mobile telephone operators covering all aspects of establishing network base stations. The service covers site acquisition, planning approval, design and build. The company has responded to the public concern about the proliferation and impact of base stations by innovations in design, both technical and aesthetic, rendering them smaller and less intrusive. In towns, 'microcell' installations have been developed: these can be camouflaged as parts of buildings or as street furniture such as lamp standards. The service is very successful, having raised success in planning applications from 70 per cent in 1995 to 92 per cent in 2000 and being used by all five UK operators.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Yell Ltd**  
**Queens Walk, Oxford Road, Read-**  
**ing, Berkshire RG1 7PT**  
**Employees: 3,156**  
**Chief Executive Officer: John Con-**  
**dron**

Yell wins the Award for its integrated approach to sustainable development. Sustainable development is clearly integrated within the company's mission and management values and the allocation of responsibility and championing within the company are well managed. The company has made considerable progress and implemented a large number of initiatives involving employees, local communities and suppliers. It has detailed targets, objectives and internal reviews to ensure that these are working well, and has combined three widely recognised management systems: for environment (ISO 14001), health and safety (OHSAS 18001) and quality (ISO 9001), operating these as a single management system. Yell has demonstrated year-on-year improvements in its environmental and social performance and has worked in partnership with councils, schools and individuals to increase the recycling of Yellow Pages.

# Enterprise Hubs and Business Links join forces in aiding start-ups

ENTERPRISE HUBS



Peter Newton



Tony Buddin



David Nicholas

The added value that SEEDA delivers to the existing business support infrastructure of the South East is demonstrated by the increasing co-operation between Business Links and SEEDA's Enterprise Hub network. Many Hubs are successfully collaborating with their local Business Links on projects to aid the success of hi-tech business start-ups in the region.

At the Southampton Enterprise Hub, David Nicholas from Business Link Wessex is on the Hub Steering Group and provides a vital link between the two organisations.

## Easy access

Hub Director Steve Davis has taken advantage of this support by introducing resident company Active Systems Design (ASD) to Mike Stevenson from Business Link Wessex. The company's directors now meet Mike once a month for general business advice and to learn how they can grow their business.

ASD Managing Director Mark Watson describes the service as "extremely useful" and providing easy access to additional knowledge. "Mike Stevenson is both helpful and friendly - a great asset," he explained.

Steve Davis also initiated the relationship between Business Link Wessex and Tony Raven, Director of Southampton University's Centre for Enterprise & Innovation, a particularly useful connection as the University's new 'business hatchery' will be launched in the autumn.

Steve's intention in making the link is that Business Link's High Growth Start-Up Programme may go some way to meeting the need for high quality, early stage strategic advice for the hi-tech based university spin-outs in the hatchery.

## Young entrepreneurs

It is this type of company, heavily focused on the development of technically innovative ideas, that are the 'seeds' for the business start-ups that the Hub programme itself is designed to pick up and incubate.

Tony Buddin, Business Link representative for the Enterprise Hubs in Kent, has

been a key support to the two Kent Hubs, where a series of events were run over the past year. The Sittingbourne and East Malling Hubs joined forces with Life Sciences for Businesses in Kent - a Business Link sector group - to run an innovation conference. The audience comprised of young entrepreneurs as well as regional university staff and students interested in networking with dynamic entrepreneurs and new business start-ups.

As a direct consequence of the conference, a new company - Cirrus Labs - Pharmaceutical Sector - has decided to locate at Sittingbourne Hub. Business Link Kent finance expert Ian Netherton and his colleagues have helped the Hub Director Dr John Dodd in advising this new business on company finance and structure.

John Dodd said: "This is a good example of the collaborative potential of Enterprise Hubs and Business Links working together to help the evolution of technology start-ups."

East Malling Hub Director Dr David Parry hosted a Life Sciences 4 Business morning with Kent Business Link. This event included presentations on how a business incubator can support business start-ups and growth, from both the Hub and tenant's points of view.

ProGenCo, East Malling's first tenant and potential world leading producer of cancer fighting proteins, was among the companies used as a case study of Hub success.

## Business planning

The Isle of Wight Partnership - operators of the Isle of Wight Enterprise Hub and Innovation Centre - and Business Link Wessex (Isle of Wight team) have a long history of working together, having been based in the same offices for a number of years.

All tenants arriving at the Innovation Centre, new inward investments and Enterprise Hub companies are directed, as a matter of course, to Business Link Advisors for assistance with business planning, funding, grants and market-

**Continues on opposite page**

# Hub of activity on the Island

## CASE STUDY

### SEAWARD MARINE LTD - A BOAT-BUILDING FIRM WORKING WITH COMPOSITE MATERIALS

Seaward Marine is a recent inward investment to the Island, relocating to the Isle of Wight from Guernsey in February 2002. Seaward produces a number of designs for traditional offshore motorboats, incorporating the latest composite technology, with traditional craftsmanship and high quality finishing.

The company moved to the Island to overcome high costs of workspace, labour and housing in Guernsey and to tap into the skilled Isle of Wight workforce, particularly in the marine/composite sector.

Seaward Marine contacted the Isle of Wight Partner-

ship directly, though coincidentally, they had also contacted SEEDA for potential sites in the South East and came through as a SEEDA inward investment enquiry, ensuring a team approach to their relocation.

The Isle of Wight Enterprise Hub called in one of the Business Link Wessex advisors to assist in accessing a substantial Enterprise Grant and with their support, the grant application was successful.

The sum granted represented approximately 15 per cent of the total investment required and enabled Seaward Marine to equip its new premises in Cowes with the latest technology to allow increased efficiency in production.

Seaward is initially employing 11 people at its new 23,000 sq ft premises in Cowes but plans to continue recruitment over the coming months to complement its core staff.

The firm anticipates employing around 30 people by the end of the year and up to 50 as business develops.

From opposite page  
ing.

The Isle of Wight Innovation Centre holds regular coffee mornings to encourage tenants to network, exchange ideas and generate more business. Business Link Advisors are invited to attend these informal get togethers to chat to tenants, provide preliminary advice and provide further assistance as required.

Enterprise Hub Director Mike King said: "Our aim is to ensure businesses get the best support available, in terms of help, advice and access to funding

where possible.

"We have worked in partnership with Business Link Wessex (Isle of Wight team) for several years with many businesses. This work has been a major factor in the success of many local companies and Business Link have helped access a number of substantial enterprise grants to assist businesses with capital purchases."



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## Investment readiness

**Business Link Surrey and its partner Oxford Innovation have just won a bid to roll-out a regional business support programme across SEEDA's Enterprise Hub network.**

**This programme will deliver a number of benefits, but its main purpose is to raise the investment-readiness of tenant companies within the Hubs with a view to attracting the right sort of funding at the critical time in the company's development.**

**The Hub Directors will all receive financial training, regular workshops on funding will be held and regional events are planned with topics of interest to business start-ups.**

**Peter Newton of Business Link Surrey said: "We are delighted to be working with SEEDA on such an important initiative, which will significantly boost the prospects of high-tech entrepreneurial companies within the Enterprise Hubs. Expect some world beaters to come out of this programme!"**

## Broadband

As part of the launch of its new Broadband service for business, Newbury Enterprise Hub and Business Link Berkshire and Wiltshire recently held a Broadband workshop that explained the practical business benefits of Broadband.

The sessions covered issues such as bandwidth, contention and security in some detail and six tenant companies are now utilising the Hub's Broadband service. Dave Vodden, the Professional Services Director at one of those companies - Speed Trap Ltd - said: "The new Enterprise Hub Broadband service speeds up data transfer and the downloading of files resulting in significant cost savings on our telephone bills as well as enabling us to provide a more efficient service to our clients."

Newbury has also had a couple of new tenants referred by Business Link and the Business Link team is involved in assisting several SMART award applications that came out of another seminar the Newbury Hub ran with Oxford Innovation.

## Future opportunities

**Reviewing future opportunities, SEEDA's Director of Business and International Division, Marianne Neville-Rolfe, said: "Whilst we are still building the relationship with the Business Links across the South East, I have already had the opportunity to witness, some very positive developments.**

**"As the Enterprise Hub Directors are focused on delivering the best and most appropriate business support to the hi-tech companies they are incubating, it is natural that they should look to the Business Links as a valuable resource that we can plug companies into. The developing partnership between SEEDA's Hubs and their local Business Links bodes well for the future."**

# Enterprise Hub will boost start-ups in Reading

The University of Reading has been chosen by SEEDA as a prime location for a new Enterprise Hub, providing vital support infrastructure and R&D links for new high-tech business start-ups.

The vision of Reading's new Hub is to become a centre of excellence for fledgling companies in the fields of Environmental Technologies & Services, where the University's research strengths lie. The Hub will also create business clusters focused on ICT (Information Communication Technology), Materials Science (e.g. intelligent materials) and Life Sciences.

Led by the University of Reading and championed by BG Group's Head of Environment Margaret Mogford, the Hub partnership involves some of the key private and public sector decision makers in the Thames Valley: Syngenta, Johnson Matthey, TV Energy, Thames Valley Technology, Reading Borough Council, Wokingham District Council, Business Link Berkshire & Wiltshire and Berkshire Learning & Skills Council.

Business Champion of the Reading Hub Margaret Mogford said: "I am delighted to be able to be part of this exciting project and I am confident that it will be a success.

"The environmental technology and services sector is growing rapidly and the Enterprise Hub will build on the undoubted expertise in this field in the Reading area. We aim to provide all the support necessary to allow new businesses to thrive, generating high quality employment and bringing wealth to the region."

The university is starting the refurbishment of buildings at Earley Gate part of the Whiteknights campus, with the aim of opening the Enterprise Hub in September 2002.

The Hub will provide office accommodation divided into around 20 units, all of which will have Broadband Internet access. As a business support environment for new small and micro companies, the Hub will provide space, advice and information as well as offering communal facilities such as meeting rooms. It will provide improved access to early stage finance and links to Business Angel networks.

A director will be appointed during the summer, who will lead the contribution of the Reading Hub in supporting sustainable growth in the local region.

The Hub will be a key part of the expanding network of Enter-

prise Hubs across the South East established by SEEDA.

The University of Reading will build on its existing strong links with local companies and on its experience in providing support for young businesses through its Science and Technology Centre, based on the University campus.

Vice-Chancellor at the University of Reading, Professor Roger Williams, said: We believe that the hub will perform a key role in the economic development of the Thames Valley region by supporting the transfer of technology between researchers as entrepreneurs. It will provide a way to fulfil the commercial potential highlighted through work and research here at the University."

Chief Executive of Wokingham District Council, Jane Earl, said: "The council is pleased to be part of this project, which will create and expand the area's skilled workforce and we expect that it will also act as a catalyst for the further development of relationships between the University, business and the wider community."



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## Setting the European standard

SEEDA's Enterprise Hub concept has come top of a European Benchmarking Project, having been independently judged to exhibit a case of Best Practice in its Enterprise Hub scheme. This recognition comes from Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) around Europe following this year's Benchmarking Exercise.

The project, run by the European Association of Regional Development Agencies (EURADA) with support from the European Union (EU), brought together regions from 11 different countries around Europe to compare their business support ideas.

Regions were invited to put forward what they felt were their most innovative support schemes. A panel of experts from RDAs around Europe compared the schemes to identify the most transferable and innovative ideas in the RDA community.

SEEDA's Enterprise Hubs concept achieved a score of more than 80 per cent, beating Scotland Enterprise at 77 per cent and Storstrøms (Denmark), which was awarded 73 per cent.

The aim of the Benchmarking Project is two-fold. As well as identifying the top schemes in Europe, the exercise helps regions to compare themselves with each other and to learn more about effective techniques to support economic growth.

When the European RDAs met earlier this year, to hear the results of the Benchmarking study, SEEDA's Enterprise Hub team member Sarah Roach gave a key presentation, as did the European Commission and its consultants leading the EU wide Benchmarking study on trends in innovation.

The event gave SEEDA staff the opportunity to talk about their own work, and find out about other initiatives in Europe in the field of business support. At the same time, they made contacts with potential partners for future projects, in particular ideas that are suitable for replication in the South East.



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Successful entrepreneurs operating in the harsh climate of the South East's inner cities, now have a chance to gain recognition for their progress.

Inner City 100, launched by the Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown MP, is aimed at changing perceptions about the economic importance of the UK's inner cities, both as locations for investment and as a breeding ground for new business ideas.

SEEDA is backing Inner City 100 as a primary tool to uncover the hidden wealth and talent of inner city areas in order to:

- Encourage and nurture investment in Britain's inner cities,
- Showcase the new talent of inner city entrepreneurs as role models in their ability to create employment, wealth creation, and opportunities and stimulate local economies.

Companies in Brighton & Hove, Southampton and Thanet will be eligible for nominations for the 2002 Awards.

Inner City areas are deemed those that have significant levels of deprivation, or are highly (100,000+ people) and densely-populated (1000+ people per square mile). The project is run nationally by the New Economics Foundation and supported by the Royal Bank of Scotland and NatWest.

SEEDA is sponsoring the 2002 awards and the research project that investigates outstanding companies and examples of inner city renewal and sustainable growth to find out the reasons for their success. SEEDA will be involved in recruiting nominees and attending regional nomination events as well as the Inner City 100 Conference in November at which the winners will be announced.

Inner City 100 reveals exceptional companies with an average five-year sales growth rate (1996 - 2000) of 274 per cent

# Inner City 100 to recognise Business talent in South East Cities

and an average turnover for 2000 of £5m. These companies are responsible for creating close to 3,500 jobs over the past five years. Nominated companies come from all sectors, with over half from the service sector and one third from manufacturing.

The Governor of the Bank of England, Sir Edward George, said: "There is no doubting the pressing social need for the regeneration of many of our inner city areas. However, that should not obscure the commercial investment opportunities that already exist in those areas.

"The Inner City 100 project, by drawing attention to those opportunities and encouraging others to take advantage of them, can make an important contribution to urban regeneration, and has the Bank's strong support."



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## Visit leads the way for tourism marketing

SEEDA has been working with the Southern Tourist Board and the South East England Tourist Board to develop an IT support programme to help the tourism industry in the South East to maximise its marketing opportunities and compete in the increasingly competitive tourism marketplace.

The VISIT ICT programme includes the roll-out of the VISIT Online Tourism Marketing and Management System to the region's 114 Tourist Information Centres (TICs) enabling them to access information technology to support local tourism marketing.

VISIT is a powerful, business-led system that offers a range of online services to their local customers and businesses. This innovative service uses the latest technology to transform and strengthen marketing, management, membership services and sales of local tourism services and products enhancing the impact of tourism for the local economy.

Through VISIT, TICs, bed and breakfast owners, hoteliers and tourist attractions can feed details of their services - including up to the minute information about vacancies, prices and special offers - into the central VISIT database. This same information is then instantly distributed to tourist information centres, the Internet and onto 24-hour kiosks and web TV.

The VISIT project will assist prospective tourists and local residents alike to access swiftly and easily - at the touch of a button and right across local authority boundaries in the South East - information about places to stay, things to see and do, events, places to eat and drink, local shops and more.

Through the VISIT project, TICs will be able to link seamlessly with each other for business purposes; and software and systems are being developed to connect other online tourism systems with VISIT, giving an integrated marketing service through a regional service hub. This will provide the base for the South East to



*Romsey Tourist Information Centre in Test Valley Borough Council connects up to the SEEDA funded VISIT Service*

link to EnglandNet, the national project being undertaken by the English Tourism Council and the 10 Regional Tourist Boards to improve tourism marketing and data distribution both nationally and internationally.

Already VISIT has been used to promote a local festival by bringing together - in one 'hit' - information about special offers from the many tourism businesses across a number of destinations who are participating in the festival.

The VISIT service was developed in Hampshire County Council and has been operational since July 2000. SEEDA is contributing £268,000 to support the work of the two Regional Tourist Boards in rolling out the VISIT online tourism marketing services and in creating 'connectivity' between the VISIT Service and other supplier systems currently operating in the South East.



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# Forum highlights successes

The South East Sustainable Business Partnership (SESBP) held its first annual forum at Dorking Halls, Surrey.

The SESBP brings together the South East's Business Environment Fora and Sustainable Business Partnerships, as well as other key players. Its work is to improve environmental good management in business, including more efficient use of energy, water and other natural resources.

The Forum outlined the achievements of 2001-2002, with each of the region's six Sustainable Business Partnership reporting on activities in their area. The event also launched [www.egeneration.co.uk](http://www.egeneration.co.uk), the web resource developed to support the activities of each local Sustainable Business Partnership.

Issues discussed at the Forum included the increasing 'eco-taxes' on landfill, carbon, fuel and packaging, and initiatives carried out by the Forum to promote sustainable business.

Speakers included Head of Management Resources at Hampshire County Council Bob Lisney, Director of EcoSys Rob Graham and Director of Biffa Waste Services Ltd Peter Jones. Presentations

covered regional issues such as Natural Resource Management and Social Responsibility in Business.

Kit Oliver, Chair of the SESBP and SEEDA Board Member with responsibility for sustainable development, said: "The development of the SESBP over the last year has been exciting. It has brought new vigour to the important work of spreading knowledge and take-up of good environmental management.

"All those involved should be congratulated and I am glad that SEEDA has been able to help. The first Annual Forum was a milestone, particularly as it saw the launch of the impressive egeneration website."

The Forum highlighted the major achievements of the SESBP in its first year of operation. In 2001-2, successes included:

- **Approximately 18,000 businesses contacted**
- **£2,636,600 raised**
- **Launch of the egeneration website - [www.egeneration.co.uk](http://www.egeneration.co.uk)**
- **Events attended by 2000 companies**
- **588 site visits**
- **253 companies trained**
- **11,000 companies engaged in mean-**

## ingful dialogue

### ● 145 case studies produced

The new egeneration website - [www.egeneration.co.uk](http://www.egeneration.co.uk) - consists of four local sites covering Hampshire, Kent, Surrey and West Sussex, linked to a regional Business Learning Centre, enhancing support services from each county-based Sustainable Business Partnership.

egeneration is funded by two grants totalling approximately £550,000 from Biffaward, a multi-million pound environment fund that utilises Biffa Waste Services landfill tax credits. egeneration is designed to help business managers improve resource efficiency and environmental impact through providing free services, support, advice and best practice guidance in relevant areas.

New funding recently received from Biffaward enables the expansion of egeneration to cover the entire South East region, including four new local sites and 13 new best practice information modules.



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## Sustainable Business Awards

The 2002 Sustainable Business Awards are building on the success of last year's programme. Through the Awards, SEEDA is seeking to encourage best practice across the region, and to promote the benefits of implementing sustainable business principles.

The scheme seeks to show how environmental and social issues, as well as economic prosperity are critical to the overall development and success of businesses in the region. By highlighting cases of best practice and achievement, the Sustainable Business Awards offer examples for other companies in the region to learn from and follow.

This year's Awards will identify two overall winners - one for small/medium companies with 250 or fewer employees, and one for larger companies with over 250 employees.

The award for the small/medium companies is an 'award of awards' for companies that have already won a sustainability-related award in their local area. Nominations for this award originate from the relevant local Sustainable Business Partnerships (see details below).

The award for larger companies is entered into by completing an entry form and submitting it directly to SEEDA.

The closing date for both categories is the August 31, 2002.

There will also be corporate sponsored thematic awards for energy efficiency, waste minimisation, innovation and corporate social responsibility. The judges will identify candidates for these awards from the totality entries submitted so it is unnecessary for individual entrants to specify which thematic award

they would like to be considered for.

Winners will receive trophies, certificates and a personal case study (both hard copies and electronic design format) for promotion of their company. They will also be entitled to use the SEEDA Sustainable Business Awards logo on their corporate stationery.

Entries need to be received by August 31 for a preliminary round of judging. During September and October site visits will be conducted to finalist companies and case studies will be prepared. The judging panel will make their final decisions in mid-November and the Awards will be presented at a Celebratory Dinner on the November 28.

● Entrants to the larger companies' category can obtain an application form from:

**SEEDA Guildford Tanya Mennie 01483 484278**

● Entrants to the small/medium company category need to enter through their local Sustainable Business Partnership as follows:

**East Sussex Sustainable Business Partnership  
Andy Arnold 01273 481606**

**Hampshire and Isle of Wight Business  
Environment Forum**

**Maggie Francis 023 92449404**

**Kent Sustainable Business Partnership  
Stephen Rees 01622 221920**

**Surrey Sustainable Business Partnership  
Michael Edley 020 85417001**

**Thames Valley Business Environment Forum  
Barbara Moye 01753 870518**

**West Sussex Sustainable Business Partnership  
Graham Berry 01243 756859**

# SEEDA takes lead role in ESF strategic planning

SEEDA is taking a key role in driving the future strategic direction of European Social Funded activity in the South East region.

SEEDA is one of seven organisations in the region that have been approved as a co-financing organisation for ESF (European Social Fund). It is now commissioning activities to identify and meet emerging skills shortages in the region with a view to improving the skills base and adaptability of the labour force and increasing levels of entrepreneurship.

The new system of co-financing was introduced in 2000 by the former Department for Education and Employment as a mechanism for streamlining and improving the bureaucratically

burdensome distribution of the European Social Fund, the European Union's main financial instrument for creating jobs and improving the skills of the workforce.

As a co-financing organisation, SEEDA will match European Social Funding with its Single Pot to fund a range of projects that meet the goals set out in its funding specification, up to a value of £3.8m.

Successful projects will receive SEEDA and European Social Funding in a single stream and will benefit from a simplified system right from the applications process through to the submission of claims, payments and the collection of management information.

31 project proposals worth more than £11m were received in the first funding round, which closed on the May 1. Successful projects will be informed by July 1 and the details of all projects to be funded in this round will be published on the SEEDA website ([www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)).

In the next full round of Co-financing, to be held in Summer 2003, SEEDA will seek to lead on additional areas of ESF activity, including research on institutional discrimination in the labour market and actions to combat discrimination (race, gender, age and disability).



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## SEMLAC arrives in South East

SEEDA has welcomed SEMLAC a new agency for museums, libraries & archives in the South East.

SEMLAC, the South East Museum, Library & Archive Council, began initial operations at the start of April. The agency will work on behalf of Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries and with national, local and regional partners to lead and facilitate development for the three sectors in the South East.

Notable for its scale, complexity and richness, the South East museum, library and archive sector is the largest in England, including world class collections and facilities, and vital community services. SEMLAC will work with more than 300 museums and galleries, and an estimated 3,000 libraries and 250 archive repositories, across the public, private, academic, health and research sectors.

The principles behind the establishment of cross-sector bodies have been led by Resource, with the aim that every region will have a single regional agency by 2004.

The South East has been working to an accelerated timescale and SEMLAC is one of the first new agencies to emerge.

Resource Acting Director, Chris Batt said: "We are delighted to see such rapid progress taking place to create new opportunities and synergies for museums, archives and libraries in the South East."

SEEDA welcomes the new body. Head of European Policy and Culture Stella Bellem said: "The new body will promote further creative synergies amongst an already rich and diverse sector; SEEDA is looking forward to working with the new agency for the further enhancement of heritage, information and knowledge management in the South East."

SEMLAC will offer wide and inclusive access to its services across the range of the regional constituency, allowing it strategic flexibility and impact. It will be a lean, responsive body with a new, small board, and specialist core staff. SEMLAC will build from its museums agency predecessor to create a wholly cross-sectoral organisation over the coming year. It will operate from a headquarters site in Winchester, with satellite sub-regional offices across the South East in Chatham and possibly Brighton and Reading in the future.

The period between April and November will be one of transition for SEMLAC with the first formal launch of the new agency taking place in November 2002. The website - [www.semlac.org.uk](http://www.semlac.org.uk) - will be a key part of its service delivery and holds detail information and contact details for SEMLAC.

SEMLAC Chief Executive Helen Jackson said: "Creating a cross-sectoral agency for the South East presents many new and exciting opportunities for the sector and regional communities. We are looking forward to working with our colleagues and partners to put museums, libraries and archives at the heart of life in the South East."

Representing the South East of England Cultural Consortium, Chair Sir David Watson said: "SEMLAC represents a major step forward in the joining up of our regional cultural strategy, which the Cultural Consortium has been urging. We wish all of its staff and partners well."



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# Business Recovery Fund proves a successful antidote to Foot and Mouth crisis

Rural-based businesses in the South East were hit hard last year by the Foot and Mouth outbreak. Months of access restrictions and lack of visitors to the countryside left hundreds of enterprises struggling to survive.

Responding to the crisis, SEEDA established a Business Recovery Fund of £1.15m to provide grants for individual business affected by the Foot and Mouth epidemic.

Particular emphasis was placed on helping the smaller businesses of the South East, with the region's Business Links responsible for delivering the grants on SEEDA's behalf. Together, SEEDA and the Business Links were able to assist and support 150 rural-based businesses at this critical time.

## Diversification

In a number of cases the provision of business support services and timely funding has allowed rural businesses not only to recover, but also to redefine their business plans and diversify. With

guidance from local Business Links many businesses were able to identify and access new markets and develop revenue streams.

**ACS Transtech Ltd**, based in Bolney near Burgess Hill, produce high voltage, outdoor switchgear. As this type of equipment is normally located in rural areas, engineers could not get on to site to replace them during the Foot and Mouth outbreak. As a result, demand for new switches fell and sales suffered severely. However, with a £5,000 grant from SEEDA, ACS Transtech was able to take advantage of a new business opportunity when one of the only UK suppliers of insulators, an essential component of the switchgear product, went out of business.

ACS Transtech used the grant to purchase its equipment and stock and, as a result, it can now manufacture this component itself, reducing costs and improving its competitive position.

At the same time, ACS Transtech also diversified its product range and now produces the insulators as an independent product line. It recently won its

first order worth £12,000 and plans to continue developing this new revenue stream.

**The Dorking Equestrian Centre** was unable to operate at all at the height of the Foot and Mouth crisis, as footpaths and bridleways were closed, leaving the future of the Centre and its 19 horses in doubt.

Even after bridle path access restrictions had been lifted, the Centre recognised it needed to have an alternative income stream by maximising the usage of its facilities. A grant of more than £9,000 was awarded to the Centre, allowing it to convert the indoor riding school for show jumping to be developed as an added attraction.

Although finished only recently, five new events have already been held and have generated additional income for the centre.

## SEEDA supports local food chain

*Peter Lingham (centre) being presented with the plaque by SEEDA's Rural Sector Director, Valerie Carter (left)*



A SEEDA's Farm Diversification Grant has been used to further support the development of local meat products.

Livestock farmer Peter Lingham, who farms on the North Downs at Upper Halling in Medway, has converted a redundant dairy parlour to provide a cutting room for meat preparation and a sales area. The farm now employs a butcher.

It enables him, a primary producer, to

add value to his product by getting involved in the preparation of high quality and traceable meat and direct sales to local customers.

SEEDA's work with local producers, particularly the livestock sector, is actively trying to work with farmers to get more involved with product development and marketing. Farm Diversification Grants have supported several small scale improvements in the local meat food chain.

# Livestock revival continues

SEEDA has secured the services of a secondee from the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) to help take forward the Livestock Action Revival Plan, developed as part of the economic revival of the region post Foot and Mouth.

Nick Allen has been seconded to SEEDA for 2.5 days a week for the next two years to develop the seven recommendations in the Plan. The work is to be steered by the Livestock Industry Group chaired by SEEDA.

Based normally with the MLC at Sparsholt College in Hampshire, Nick has been involved with the Hampshire Abattoir group for the last two years.

He previously ran his family's farm in Hampshire where the main enterprise was a 500 sow outdoor breeding herd and 200 hectares of arable.

Many small rural businesses have traditionally depended heavily on agricultural shows and craft fairs for securing sales and generating new business. However with the Foot and Mouth outbreak, most of these events were either cancelled or postponed and new sales avenues had to be explored.

**Sticks and Things**, a Banbury-based woodturning specialist, turned to its local Business Link when its traditional market, the local craft fairs, was effectively shut down by the Foot and Mouth crisis.

With funding from SEEDA, it was able to work with a business advisor at Business Link to isolate new channels to market its products and diversify the business. After being put in touch with a brand specialist and web designer, Sticks and Things was also able to create a new image and develop a website that will allow it to sell to a worldwide audience and exploit new markets.

In a similar fashion, **Oxney Motorcycles** in Kent found its normal sales routes were unavailable due to the epidemic.

Oxney Motorcycles rebuild, restore and repair vintage and classic motorcycles and, for many years, have relied on large rural shows to generate sales from high spending international visitors.

Having approached its local Business Link, Oxney Motorcycles received a grant from the Business Recovery Fund, and used it to build a website so that it can now communicate its products to its international audience and customers 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Communication

With the countryside effectively shut down for several months, a key issue for many businesses at the end of the epidemic was how to encourage existing customers to return as well as developing new ones.

The 13-hectare **Rare Breeds and Waterfowl Park**, near

Ventnor on the Isle of Wight, was forced to close during its busiest months due to Foot and Mouth disease. As a consequence it lost up to 50 per cent of its normal 45,000 annual visitors.

Working with the Business Link, the Park received a SEEDA grant to cover the cost of marketing activities to help rebuild visitor numbers this year. The grant also freed up remaining funds for food and silage production for the winter, ensuring that animals could survive.

**ChidAction Ltd** was a new venture in 2001 on a dairy farm, at Sharpthorne near East Grinstead, hosting a woodland ropes and challenge course for corporate team building and outdoor training. The closure of the countryside prevented it from launching on time and critical potential revenue was lost.

However, with SEEDA's funding of £8,000 and local Busi-

ness Link's support, ChidAction was able to develop and implement a new marketing strategy and fund its presence at two key exhibitions.

ChidAction's General Manager Ana Blunt said: "The leads gained from the exhibitions are proving their weight in gold. We have also been able to produce a more professional looking brochure



and website and can advertise more widely than we thought possible."

## The Future

The Business Recovery Fund ran for one year and ended in March 2002. These are just some of the very different cases that SEEDA Business Recovery Fund has been able to help. Business Links will be revisiting all businesses assisted by grant during the year to check on their success.

*Rare Breeds and Waterfowl Park, near Ventnor*



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## South East water resources forum conference

Urban flooding, cross-regional supply solutions and the impact of leakage were discussed at the first Annual Conference of the South East Water Resources Forum. Keynote speaker Chris Baines, called for a holistic approach to solving the region's resource problems. Instead of a narrow focus on the construction of flood defence schemes within built-up areas, attention should be given to upstream land management issues that will assist in preventing storm-water run-off in the first place.

The day included a series of short presentations followed by lively discussion on topics such as Water Industry Business Planning, the Water Framework Directive, Rural

White Paper and the Curry Report, Water and Spatial Planning, and Water and Climate Change. It is clear that continuing development and climate change trends in the South East is forcing urgent attention to be paid to mitigating severe water shortages in the medium term.

This needs to focus on both supply and demand management and will require significant raising of awareness levels and lifestyle changes.

The South East Water Resources Forum, sponsored by SEEDA and the Environment Agency, was established in 2001 to engage key stakeholders in identifying and responding to known and potential water

challenges in the South East. The Forum is an inclusive organisation with membership open to all key stakeholders with a direct interest in water resources in the South East.

Chairman of the South East Water Resources Forum, Graham Setterfield, was appointed for the period 2002-2003. Mr Setterfield brings extensive experience of working in the water industry to the Forum, including having worked at Southern Water, Water UK and currently as an Independent Consultant.

Regular meetings are designed to facilitate discussion on current issues. If you are interested in joining or learning more about the Forum, please contact Tanya Mennie at SEEDA on 01483 - 484 278 or email: [tanyamennie@seeda.co.uk](mailto:tanyamennie@seeda.co.uk).

## Sustainable Business Tip of the Month

In making positive choices towards sourcing local fresh foods for events, canteens and staff lunches, businesses can:

- Reduce pollution, fuel use and traffic congestion by decreasing the 'food miles' of ingredients
- Support the local business community involved in production, preparation and distribution
- Improve nutrition, benefits to health and tractability of the food by using fresh local produce
- Contribute to the maintenance and diversity of their environment and surroundings by supporting the local economy through farming
- Enjoy the taste and character of prime seasonal food!



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## Events Diary

4 July	Launch of Folkestone Enterprise Centre	 Jayne Skipper 01483 500723
17 July	SEEDA Chairman visit to Kent County Council	 Phil Bailey 01483 484227
17 July	Regional Assembly Plenary Meeting	 Phil Bailey 01483 484227
18 July	Industrial Crops Conference, London	 Zoe Landsley 01483 484209
22 - 28 July	Farnborough International 2002	 Julie Perry 01483 484119
17 Sept	SEEDA Chairman visit to West Sussex County Council	 Phil Bailey 01483 484227
19 Sept	Havant Property Day	 Jayne Skipper 01483 484723
17 Oct	SEEDA Open Annual General Meeting, Portsmouth	 Lisa Murray 01483 484230
22 Oct	SEEDA Chairman visit to Surrey County Council	 Phil Bailey 01483 484227

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