Prosperous, Competitive, Sustainable

Our vision is to be the best economic development agency a top global region could have: with expert interventions, expert deal making and expert advice.


Diamond Synchrotron

SEEDA's new focus


Pinewood Studios

The changed economic climate means that SEEDA must make help for businesses its top priority. SEEDA began a review of its activities in 2008 but the depth of the recession brought our plans into clearer focus.

SEEDA's vision is to be the best economic development agency that a top global region could have, providing expert interventions, expert deal-making and expert advice.

We aim to help create the best possible environment for business in a healthy and prosperous economy. We will focus on supporting international competitiveness and high growth through innovation and improved productivity, with a strong understanding of the potential impact on local economies. With this narrower remit, SEEDA will become a smaller, more agile organisation.

Our prime focus is now on three areas critical to future success:
- international trade and inward investment, nurturing global companies
- innovation, through collaborations to commercialise new ideas
- business growth, through excellent infrastructure and expert support.

We have also aligned the principle of creating jobs through new industry with existing regional strengths to identify six priority sectors for support. These have significant potential to create new jobs and drive the South East out of recession:
- Environmental Technologies
- Advanced Engineering and Marine
- Aerospace and Defence
- Life Sciences and Health Technology
- ICT and Digital Media
- Financial Services.

We will integrate investment in business support, innovation, skills and physical development to support these sectors and provide a clear, accessible support offer for businesses by:
- strengthening our core offer to all businesses
- supporting the success of businesses operating internationally
- providing collaborative new opportunities for high-growth companies
- investing in business-critical infrastructure such as specialist R&D laboratory space
- driving mainstream investment in education-led regeneration
- directing mainstream funding to employer-led training.

SEEDA and the new South East Local Authority Leaders' Board have come together in a new Regional Partnership Board to produce jointly a new Regional Strategy while delivering the existing Regional Economic Strategy and the South East Plan.

Priority places

Key business support services are available region-wide. In addition we will focus attention on areas of high growth potential and underperforming areas where major regeneration will help boost economic success:
- The eight Diamonds for Investment and Growth (see map overleaf)
- The Ashford Growth Area
- Three ongoing regeneration programmes - Hastings and Bexhill; Dover; Margate

Regional strategies

SEEDA is embarking on a new approach to developing and delivering regional strategies, working in partnership with local authorities throughout the region. Working together through the South East England Partnership Board, we are developing the evidence to inform a new integrated regional strategy.

Regional Delivery Boards involving SEEDA, local authorities, stakeholders and delivery partners are guiding investment priorities for economic development and skills; transport; and housing and regeneration. These will drive forward the investment priorities agreed with the Government through the Regional Funding Advice.

Priority investments

Examples of the type of projects that we will prioritise in future will help deliver focused economic growth in the medium and long term:

Investing in key sectors
- Investing in technologies that will help secure the future success of the South East, such as the ASTRAEA space satellite programme
- Working with neighbouring RDAs to attract globally important projects to the Greater South East - for example we worked with EEDA and LDA to support ALPHASAT, a major aerospace investment that will support development of the next generation of mobile telecommunications satellites
- Developing an 'Innovation Culture' through our business support work, including MAS, IGTs, Knowledge Networks and sectors
- Developing a Low Carbon Industrial Strategy including: retrofit programme, Institute for Sustainability, ultra low carbon vehicles
- Supporting an Assisted Living Science and Innovation Campus and a 'Space Innovation Centre'

In addition to the single pot, SEEDA draws funding from a number of programmes to secure more investment in the future of the South East. Significant programmes where funding can be anticipated over the 2008-11 period total some £50m and include European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund and the Regional Infrastructure Fund.

Corporate Plan 2008-11: Key targets

SEEDA's Corporate Plan is organised in six portfolios.
The key aims of each portfolio are outlined below along with examples of how results are being delivered in practice:

Global Competitiveness

Ensuring South East businesses have the support they need to compete in the world economy

Aim: Attract high value international businesses to invest in the South East
Result: SEEDA working with UKTI secured 90 new inward investment projects in 2008-9. These projects will create or save 3,800 jobs over the next three years

Aim: Develop the Knowledge Transfer Networks/ Partnerships programmes
Result: £7.3 million invested in Canterbury Innovation Centre to facilitate knowledge transfer between the University of Kent and high growth businesses

Aim: Support innovation and high growth business across the region
Result: Six new SEEDA Innovation and Growth Teams (IGTs) have been launched and £15.4m invested in locally led partnerships. Two more IGTs will follow, providing specialist support and help for high potential businesses

Aim: Support high growth companies to innovate and to commercialise science based R&D in new markets and growth sectors, particularly environmental technologies
Result: SEEDA has invested £3m in Vestas' new R&D centre on the Isle of Wight, prototyping the next generation of offshore wind turbines. £825,000 is invested in development and testing of a low carbon electric car - the MINI-E at BMW in Oxford

Aim: Prioritise sectors and technologies that can make the largest contribution to innovation and productivity-led growth
Result: SEEDA invests £1.4m per year in seven industry led sector consortia to support our top performing industries

Aim: Develop Science and Innovation Campuses
Result: SEEDA plans to invest in three Science & Innovation campuses - Harwell, where SEEDA has submitted a proposal to the Strategic Innovation Fund for a Space Science and Innovation Centre; a Communications Technologies campus with an initial focus on Assisted Living; and the Institute for Sustainability in North Kent to demonstrate new forms of building and retrofitting.


Sittingbourne Enterprise Hub

Smart Growth

Helping businesses improve productivity and employment opportunities

Aim: Strengthen business support for growth and productivity
Result: SEEDA's Business Link re-tendering aims to raise the bar in business support and build on successes such as 16,000+ free business health checks delivered by September 2009. We also continue to fund the Manufacturing Advisory Service, which has delivered over £310 m of added value through manufacturing improvements over the past six years

Aim: Simplify business support to make it easier for businesses to access help
Result: SEEDA delivers 24 products to business under the national 'Solutions for Business' brand accessed via Business Link

Aim: Strengthen the Continuous Employment Support Service (CESS)
Result: SEEDA's increased investment in CESS helped 12,000 people made redundant in the recession to find alternative employment in 2008-9

Aim: Skills development to support future economic growth
Result: £2m investment in a new business campus for Chichester University at Bognor Regis and £5.3m to support the new Hastings College.

Sustainable Prosperity

Encouraging businesses to contribute to a low carbon economy

Aim: Pathway to Zero Waste
Result: This programme is successfully helping businesses reduce waste and generate new business opportunities by re-using waste

Aim: Provide leadership on energy efficiency
Result: SEEDA is supporting a project to retro-fit energy efficiency measures to homes in Dartford, Kent, reducing energy consumption and the area's carbon footprint

Aim: Improve sustainability in the South East
Result: SEEDA is a partner in the new Institute for Sustainability in Kent, which is helping to mainstream new approaches such as eco-friendly construction

Aim: Stabilise and then reduce our ecological footprint
Result: A good practice guide to reducing the ecological footprint in the eight South East 'Diamonds' is helping local authorities to commit to carbon reduction targets ahead of the RES target date for change.


Westmill Wind Farm, picture taken by Gale Photography

MAS South East Best Practice Visit at Siemens Magnet Technology


Enabling Infrastructure and Development

Ensuring SEEDA regeneration and infrastructure investments improve conditions for businesses and communities in the South East

Aim: Invest in business-critical infrastructure
Result: SEEDA is supporting a new Regional Infrastructure Fund, which has drawn in an additional £25m from the Department for Transport. In 2009 the RIF is expecting to allocate its first funding to two projects in Kent that will enable development of 8,900 homes and creation of up to 5,500 jobs. We also support projects including Airtrack and SMART

Aim: Work with partners to support regeneration and economic prosperity
Result: Support maintained for committed regneration programmes in Thames Gateway, South Hampshire, Shoreham, Margate, Dover and Hastings & Bexhill.

Strategic Influence

Making the case for policy and investment issues critical to the South East's economic success

Aim: Implement Government's Sub National Review
Result: SEEDA has worked closely with CLG, BIS and the region's local authorities to agree new partnership arrangements for delivering joint management of a new integrated approach to strategic planning and has created a virtual executive team across SEEDA and SEERA Ltd

Aim: Work with the new South East Local Authority Leaders' Board to bring together and deliver the RES and South East Plan
Result: South East England Regional Partnership Board established April 2009. Initial think pieces commissioned to inform key areas of the new Single Regional Strategy

Aim: Make the case for infrastructure investment
Result: SEEDA has worked effectively with partners to identify key South East investment priorities across housing, transport and economic development

Aim: Ensure RES delivery
Result: The challenging economic climate has not affected the underlying RES direction but it has made some targets harder to achieve in the short term. We continue to work closely with partners across the South East to ensure we maximise delivery against our long term targets

Aim: Establish and support regional delivery boards in partnership with local authorities through the South East England Leaders' Board
Result: Following the abolition of the Regional Assembly, an Economic Development and Skills Board will be set up in autumn 2009 replacing the Regional Skills for Productivity Alliance. It will sit alongside the Regional Transport Board and the expanded Regional Housing and Regeneration Board.

Developing SEEDA

Ensuring we have the capability to deliver world class economic development and effective regional strategy

Aim: To be the best economic development agency a top global region could have: with expert interventions, expert deal making and expert advice
Result: A smaller SEEDA focused clearly on new priorities is due to go live in November 2009

Aim: Meet Government target for cost savings
Result: SEEDA is on target to save £3.6m in administration costs by 2011.

How SEEDA has helped combat the recession

The South East entered recession at the start of 2009. Although employment in the South East has remained the UK's highest, unemployment has more than doubled over the past 12 months, rising at the quickest rate ever recorded in the region.

During the second half of 2009, the region's economy appears to be reaching the bottom of the cycle. However the rate of growth in the South East has slowed and the regional economy is expected to contract by more than 3% this year before growing slowly in 2010 and recovering more strongly in 2011.

In response, SEEDA has reviewed its activities to focus on those that will deliver the greatest possible economic returns. Our top priority is to help businesses survive the recession and ensure the South East is ready to take advantage of the upturn.

SEEDA's work has helped soften the blow of the recession for many in the South East. For example, from August 2008 we provided what became a £15m emergency help package for businesses to support the Government's Real Help Now initiative. This delivered enhanced Business Link services; expanded Grants for Business Investment; extra help for inward investors and exporters. The package also included:

- A £3m Transitional Loan Fund to support viable businesses facing short term pressures due to the economic conditions. Loans worth nearly £2.6m to 22 companies helped safeguard or create 839 jobs by September 2009
- An expanded Continuous Employment Support Service to find new jobs for redundant staff. Working with JobCentrePlus, we helped over 12,000 people move into alternative employment in 2008-09.

During this first year of the Corporate Plan, SEEDA helped to strengthen the South East's economy in 2008-9 by:

- Helping create or save 8,000 jobs - against a target of below 4,000
- Helping 17,000 people find work - against a target of 10,000
- Helping 22,000 people improve their skills - against a target of below 15,000
- Delivering over 7,000 free healthchecks via SEEDA-funded Business Link between October 2008 and March 2009. (A further 9,000 healthchecks were delivered in the first six months of 2009-10)
- Supporting UKTI to secure 90 new inward investment projects, creating and saving 3,800 jobs over the next three years

An independent review by PricewaterhouseCoopers estimated that we contributed £2.64 billion to the region's economy during 2002-07, an average £5.60 for every £1 invested by SEEDA with double that return on many aspects of our direct support to business.

If you require any further information about this Plan or the activities of SEEDA, please contact us

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If English is not your first language we can provide a summarised version of this document in Punjabi, Hindi, Gujurati, Urdu, Polish and Bengali. The document is also available in large print, Braille, disk and audio cassette.

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SEEDA SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Working for England's World Class Region

Corporate Plan Refresh

2008-11: A Summary

Introduction

SEEDA's original Corporate Plan (2008-11) was agreed by Ministers in June 2008. Since then we have experienced the steepest global recession for many decades. The downturn in the property market and Government reductions to all RDA budgets mean that SEEDA's budget has been cut. However we will still invest some £250m in the success of the South East economy over the two years 2009-11.

A number of policy changes have influenced our refreshed Corporate Plan - the new joint approach to regional strategy shared by SEEDA and South East local authorities, alongside new Government initiatives on greening the economy and regeneration. Our support for specific sectors likely to drive our economy out of recession also reflects the Government's approach to active industrial strategy in New Industry New Jobs.

Our refreshed Corporate Plan will ensure we focus our work for the next two years to deliver the best possible economic results for the South East.

A full copy of our refreshed Corporate Plan is online at www.seeda.co.uk

Rob Douglas CBE
Chairman, SEEDA

Rob Douglas took over as SEEDA Chairman on 2 November 2009. Rob has a track record as a successful businessman, with experience in both multi-national companies and small business. He comes to SEEDA committed to delivering for the South East economy and ensuring that our businesses are able to create prosperity for the region and the UK as a whole.

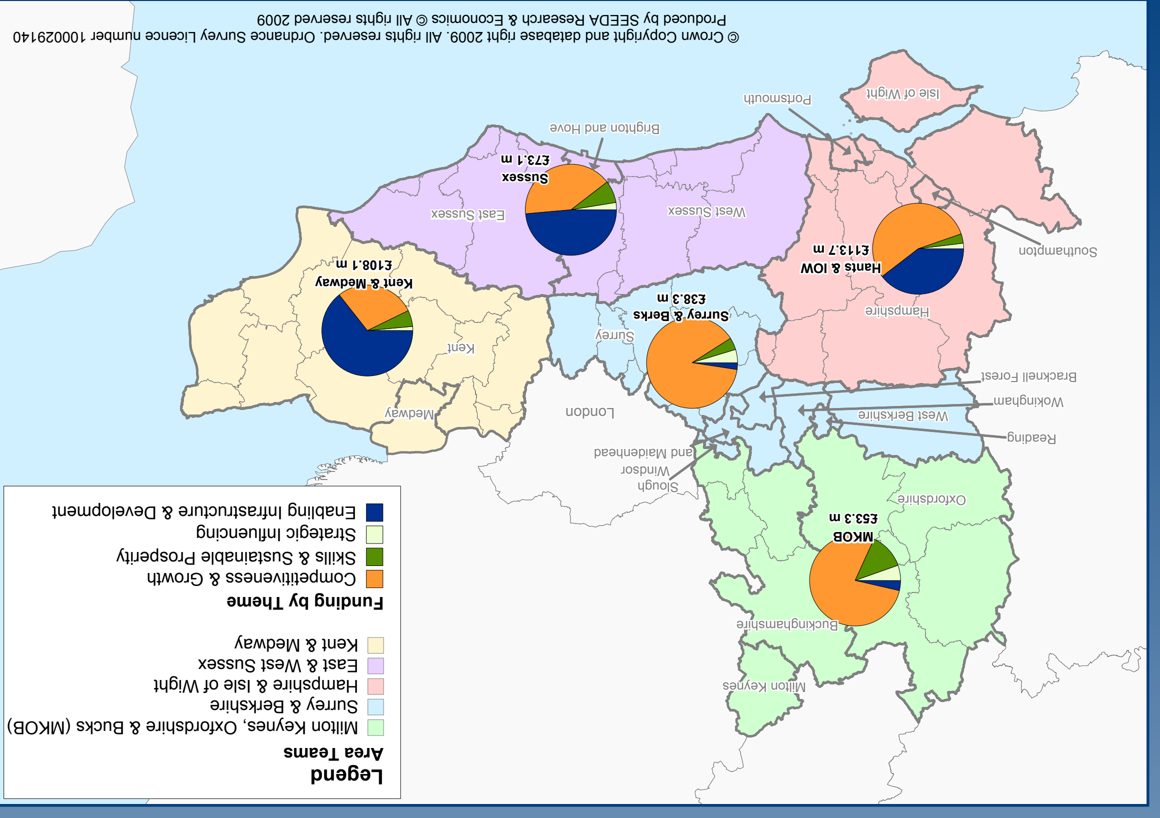
About the South East

The South East is the engine room of the UK economy. Latest figures show the region makes a major contribution to the nation's finances. We contributed £176 billion to the UK economy in 2007, second only to London. Key facts and figures about our region include:

- The South East economy is larger than countries such as Austria, Denmark, Norway, South Africa, Greece, Finland and Singapore
- The South East covers 19,400 square kilometres, with 19 county and unitary authorities and 55 district councils
- Our region stretches around London from Thanet in the East to the New Forest in the West and Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes in the North
- We are home to 8.3 million people - the largest population of any region of England: more people than in Scotland and Wales together and four times the size of the North East
- Over 80% of the South East is classified as rural yet 75% of South East residents live in urban areas
- Average residence-based GVA per head of population in the South East was £22,624 in 2007, 10% above the UK average
- The South East is the region in the UK with the highest number of residents in employment
- There are 24 universities and higher education institutions in the South East including two Russell Group and research intensive universities
- Employment in R&D carried out by businesses in the South East accounts for more than 24% of all UK employment in R&D, the second highest in the country
- Qualification levels in the South East are above average for the UK, 31.5% of the South East working age population held NVQ 4 and above or equivalent qualifications in 2008
- Business start-up rates in the South East averaged 54 businesses per 10,000 resident adults in 2007, the second highest rate after London
- In 2008/2009 the South East accounted for 13% of total UK foreign direct investment
- Together, the South East and London form the nation's principal gateway to Europe and the rest of the world. After London, the South East reported the highest number of destination passengers (37.2 million) in the UK in 2007.

SEEDA spending 2008-11 by theme and area

SEEDA's programme budget over the period 2008-11 has been cut by over £50m to some £390m. To accommodate this, SEEDA's Corporate Plan has been reprioritised to focus on delivering our legal commitments and investing in future growth.



The South East