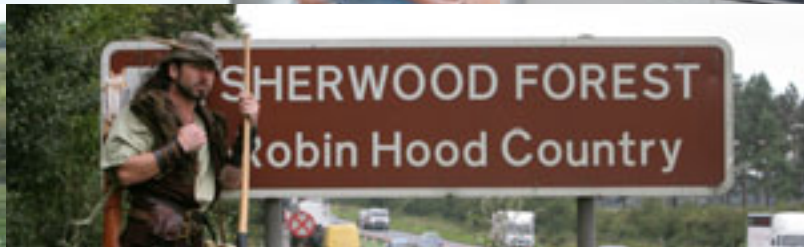
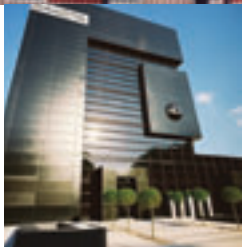


# NOTTINGHAMSHIRE GROWTH



# PLAN

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# FOREWORD



Nottinghamshire has always been the home of my company, like many other we enjoy a global reputation with a rapidly expanding market share, international reach and strong supply chain. As a local business, my priorities are clear. I want to:

- consolidate and enhance the performance of my company
- attract greater investment in our products and facilities
- stay ahead of my competitors through continual innovation, workforce development and new partnerships
- deliver economic benefit to the local area, through employment, supply chain opportunities
- help build an international reputation as a great and friendly place to do business.

These priorities apply equally to the economic growth of Nottinghamshire - something that we can all share and have a real stake in. They underpin the proposals in the Growth Plan, which sets out how we can pull together to harness the economic potential of Nottinghamshire's businesses, people, assets and its location.

I have been involved in the creation of this Growth Plan from the outset, both in my role as a local business but also as a Board member of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, and through my participation in Nottinghamshire's Business Engagement Group. The enthusiasm and ambition of Nottinghamshire's business leaders and stakeholders has been genuinely impressive, the relationship between the public and private sector is very positive and provides a real strength for us all. I am grateful to all of those who have taken the time and energy to contribute to our plan.

There is a great sense of confidence about our plan, and a real desire to kick start and drive forward economic growth across the county and the city as a whole. I am proud to present the Nottinghamshire Growth Plan to you, and look forward to working with you in the future on the delivery of our shared aims and aspirations.

**Trevor Fletcher**  
MD and Chairman, Hardstaff Group.



# INTRODUCTION



Partners in Nottinghamshire are working together to stimulate economic growth and, crucially, create more and better quality jobs within the county. This Nottinghamshire Growth Plan sets out the critical actions that will help drive positive change and provides a framework to secure and guide resources for future investment.

Nottinghamshire has its own distinctive character and needs a clear focus. The Growth Plan forms a key input to building the priorities for the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. There are also areas of close linkage with the Nottingham City Growth Plan and a number of actions will therefore be delivered jointly. The Plan was prepared through a series of discussions with key stakeholders and following publication as a draft, extensive consultation has added more depth and detail. Key themes emerging were:

- the need to be ambitious for the county;
- to be forward looking and not rest on recent achievements; and
- to be clear about the actions that needed to be taken to deliver success – who needs to do what.

It is a plan for growth and investment across the whole of Nottinghamshire. It recognises that a concerted effort from business and public sector communities will be needed to deliver the actions identified.

The following principles underpin the Growth Plan approach:

- Higher-level, strategic and county-wide ambitions are designed to reflect the diversity of different district-level activity and needs
- It operates within a wider subregion approach that reflects D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership priorities
- Opportunities and challenges will be profiled with a focus on business growth

It provides a stronger voice at a local, regional and national level that will help us to make a strong case for further investment and freedoms and flexibilities from Government that will help us achieve our ambitions.

Nottinghamshire has a significant part to play in delivering the growth ambitions of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. The county is home to many of the area's outstanding businesses and a wealth of assets in terms of its people, places and opportunities. This Nottinghamshire Growth Plan will act as a platform for D2N2 delivery in Nottinghamshire, and will support future work towards securing a Local Growth Deal.

# STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

## Building on the county's strengths

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Confidence is critical when creating an environment which allows an area to flourish. Business leaders recognise the need to create a powerful and positive narrative that builds on Nottinghamshire's many achievements and unique selling points.

Nottinghamshire is rapidly becoming one of the best connected counties in England with an enviable central location; and excellent air, road and rail links that are all undergoing significant improvement over the coming years. Digital connectivity is also set for significant enhancement.

It is home to a highly motivated, skilled and diverse workforce. Schools' performance is the best it has been for over 20 years. The county also has a strong record of getting young people into apprenticeships, building an important skills base for the future. It has a number of high performing and innovative FE Colleges and two internationally-recognised universities.

Its people are known for their friendly and welcoming nature with a youthful and creative outlook. They have also adapted well to change over the years as the business landscape has changed significantly. Businesses also comment favourably on the excellent working relationships between our respective local authorities and the business community, and the "can do" attitude to partnership working.

A strong manufacturing tradition has been supported by the growth of many new and creative sectors. A drive to make superfast broadband available to at least 90% of businesses and residents will support this ambition.

Nottinghamshire also boasts a strong identity that includes globally recognised icons in the legendary folklore character of Robin Hood alongside the literary giants of Byron and DH Lawrence. It can also claim important landmarks in history that includes the county being the starting point for both the Pilgrim Fathers' history-changing journey and the English Civil War. There is potential to further develop the tourism offer around some of these strong historical landmarks and legends, and investment in new attractions. Major new developments at Sherwood Forest and changes at Nottingham Castle mean that those visiting to experience the Robin Hood legend will be able to enjoy a wider and more satisfying experience.

The strong and vibrant image of the county is supported by an impressive sporting heritage with famous football clubs and a world-renowned Test cricket venue in Trent Bridge, while a major investment programme for the National Watersports Centre will see a range of new visitor facilities being created.

Harnessing this into a coherent sense of place, along with the Growth Plan's focus and purpose, will help Nottinghamshire's economy to prosper and flourish.

## Business perspectives

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The views and priorities of Nottinghamshire's business leaders and key business partner organisations have been incorporated into the Growth Plan.

In line with the national and global picture, many businesses report a challenging operating business environment. Yet, the county is starting to see clear signs of growth in terms

of recruitment although access to finances continues to be a concern for many smaller firms. The Federation of Small Businesses reported that the bank lending squeeze had resulted in 4 in 10 small firms being refused credit. However, the business start-up rate in the county is strong, and outpaces many of the county's neighbours.

## Economic performance

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The Local Futures Sub-Region Profile, commissioned by Nottinghamshire County Council in July 2012, provides an overview of the economic challenges.

Manufacturing continues to play an important role and at 13.5% of economic output is significantly higher than the UK average (10.5%). Much of this employment is concentrated along the M1 and A1 corridors. Manufacturing (including engineering) can be highly productive - on average its contribution to gross value added (GVA) (the productivity of an area), is twice that of other sectors - and Nottinghamshire has a sound economic base to help further clustering and increased productivity. There are opportunities to build this base further in regard to the wider export market. Nottinghamshire's businesses have a good record in exports and it will be important to ensure that this is sustained and enhanced. Exports from the region are increasing by 11% - significantly greater than domestic sales. UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) has commented that whilst at best 20% of companies export, they account for 60% of annual productivity growth and 70% of innovation.

A dynamic local enterprise culture is vital for the long-term competitiveness and success of an economy and business stock is growing faster in Nottinghamshire than the average for the region. However, the number of businesses per head of population remains disappointingly low. Self-employment rates are 8.4%, compared with 12% nationally.

Whilst earnings, GVA and the employment base are all around the average for the country, the number in employment decreased by 1.9% between 2009 and 2010.

Nottinghamshire's performance in terms of the knowledge economy is variable: employment in knowledge-driven production (e.g. aerospace, chemicals, energy, printing) is below the national median, but employment in knowledge-driven services (e.g. IT, R&D, finance) is above the national average, placing Nottinghamshire in the top 40% of sub-regions. The county has seen recent growth in these sectors at a time when employment in knowledge-based sectors is declining nationally.

### FACTS & FIGURES

- There are **26,765** registered small businesses in Nottinghamshire (under 50 employees), making up **97%** of the business stock.
- There are **825** medium sized businesses (employing between 50 to 249 people) and **120** large businesses (employing over 250 people) in the county.
- **42,000** Nottinghamshire people are self-employed, out of a total workforce of **289,100**.
- **39,000** people (13.5% of active workforce) are employed in manufacturing and the county is home to a number of globally significant companies.



## Employment and skills

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Employment growth is a primary objective with an aim to increase both GVA and local income rates. In Nottinghamshire, while the employment base and GVA are around the middle range, incomes across the county are towards the bottom range with some variations. This offers a competitive labour market for expanding and incoming businesses but also points to the need to develop more high value businesses.

The Nottingham City Growth Plan highlights how the workforce of many of the city's businesses is drawn from the wider county area. Within the county there are a number of local labour markets that include the city of Nottingham, Mansfield and Ashfield, Newark, and some parts of Bassetlaw which face towards South Yorkshire. Building connectivity, the skills base and a strong local, national and international reputation will assist employment growth.

Nottinghamshire has a relatively young population with an average age of 38 years. Also in terms of the 15-24 year old range, the county enjoys one of the highest proportions in the country at just under 15%. This signals not only a demand for skills and training activity but also a supply of a younger workforce for employers. While the youth unemployment rate in Nottinghamshire is 8.2%, there are wide disparities between districts with the highest in Ashfield at 11.2% and the lowest in Rushcliffe at 4.1%.

In terms of unemployment rates, Nottinghamshire still ranks high although there are wide district variations. For example, in Ashfield 9.6% of economically active people were not in work, compared to 5.3% in Rushcliffe.

Significant improvements in GCSE results in the last few years will provide employers access to a more highly skilled workforce. There are, however, challenges in getting young job applicants work ready. Helping our young people to make the right learning and career choices linked to what the labour market needs will be key to realising their potential.

Nottinghamshire has a strong record of young people entering apprenticeships at over 15%, and efforts to tackle the NEET (not in education, employment or training) issue have also resulted in a significant drop in numbers.

The number of residents of working age qualified to degree level is 21.4% compared to the national figure of 24.3%. The north of the county, generally speaking, has lower skills levels compared to the south.

The growth of the knowledge economy is strongly linked to the availability of higher level skills and so supporting this development will encourage a structural change that will improve prospects for longer-term employment growth and higher incomes.

### FACTS & FIGURES

- Over 60% of Nottinghamshire's students achieved five or more A\* to C grades in 2012, taking the county's performance above the national average for the first time.
- 24.2% of Nottinghamshire's adult population are educated to NVQ level 3 (equivalent to 2 or more A levels), higher than the national average of 22.7%.
- Nottinghamshire's two universities have a student population in excess of 58,000, contributing to a generally younger population profile than the national average.



## Infrastructure

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Effective networks for transport and other types of connectivity, including broadband, are crucial in terms of stimulating the conditions for growth and investment.

A major strength for Nottinghamshire is its central location together with its existing and planned transport links. The M1 and A1 both provide excellent north-south connections. In addition, further enhancements to the transport infrastructure are imminent, and should improve east-west connectivity.

A significant investment in broadband will see superfast connections rolled out to areas where the private sector would not consider economically viable. This will further enhance the economic attractiveness of the area for investors and employers.

Housing growth, as outlined in local planning strategies, remains a key contributor to growth and is an important confidence indicator. Large scale housing developments can unlock wider employment opportunities and infrastructure.

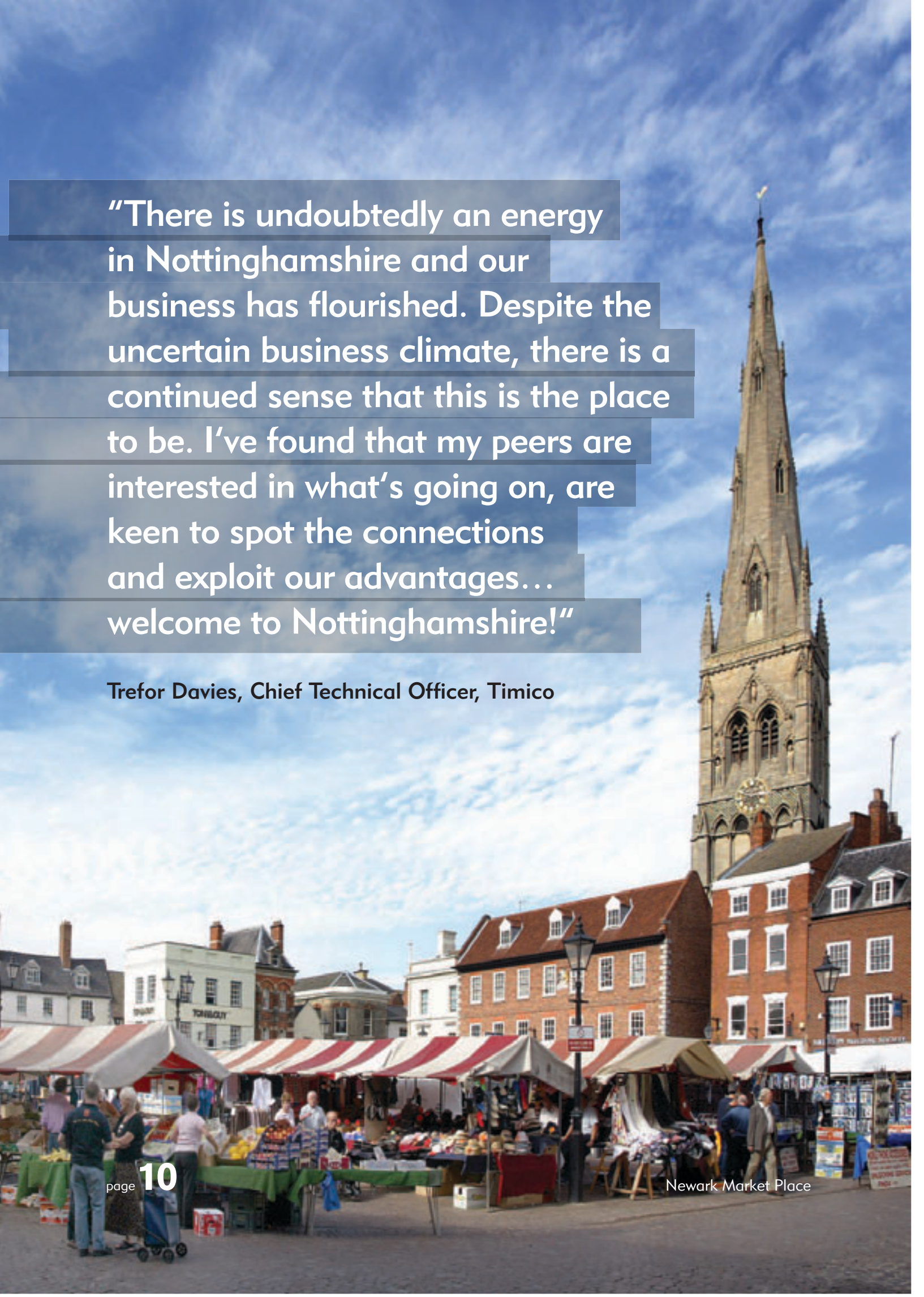
A significant opportunity is the large amount of industrial and commercial land and property available to support future growth, although this will require promotion of the area's benefits alongside improvements to infrastructure to make such opportunities commercially attractive for investment.

### FACTS & FIGURES

- Investment of £17 million has been secured to transform Nottinghamshire's broadband infrastructure and ensure that at least 90% of the county's premises can access superfast broadband services by 2015.
- Nottinghamshire continues to attract infrastructure investment through schemes such as:
  - A46 widening (£362 million)
  - A453 widening (£168 million)
  - Mansfield bus station (£12 million)
  - Hucknall inner relief road (£12 million) and
  - Midland Mainline electrification (£800 million).

“There is undoubtedly an energy in Nottinghamshire and our business has flourished. Despite the uncertain business climate, there is a continued sense that this is the place to be. I’ve found that my peers are interested in what’s going on, are keen to spot the connections and exploit our advantages... welcome to Nottinghamshire!”

Trefor Davies, Chief Technical Officer, Timico



## THEME ONE

# COMPETITIVE BUSINESS GROWTH



Nottinghamshire's economic landscape has undergone a structural transformation as it has witnessed small businesses and start-ups across a range of sectors gradually replace domination by large employers in traditional industries.

The county has a strong manufacturing low carbon and environmental goods base and has some of the UK's most cutting edge businesses in this sector. Food and drink manufacturing and construction have also been identified as strategic priorities in Nottinghamshire by the D2N2 LEP. These are likely to create the greatest economic growth, whereas business services, health and care, retail, the visitor economy and logistics are also likely to generate employment opportunities.

Creating conditions for business start-ups and their survival will be important in unlocking growth. Confidence remains fragile but some individual businesses are achieving high growth rates and this optimism needs to be promoted and built upon. Changes to the reach and scale of business support have resulted in much reduced provision. However, local networks are thriving with new sector-based groupings evolving to work collaboratively and to trade and develop local supply chains. Innovation focused new business starts and micro-businesses are thriving, particularly within the three innovation centres.

Businesses are keen to champion Nottinghamshire and its thriving business-base and to play their part in attracting new investment and seeking markets further afield, particularly in under exploited areas. We need to be more effective at informing new and existing exporters as to what advice and support is available. Nottinghamshire's inward investment offer and how it is delivered also needs to be reviewed, in order to attract more businesses to the area.

Small businesses are still struggling to win public sector contracts despite local authorities' efforts to make it easier. Many public sector construction projects are procured via 'aggregation of projects' and framework agreements, which tend to exclude smaller local enterprises from the process. Greater collaboration through supply chain development and promotion of procurement opportunities is vital to small businesses.

Nationally, over 70% of businesses do not employ graduates and the position is similar in Nottinghamshire. There are two high quality universities in the county as well as two in Sheffield and others in Derby and Lincoln, so there is a wealth of talent in and around the county. More opportunities need to be created for graduates to use their knowledge within county firms and, at the same time, to help local businesses develop new products and processes and enter new markets.



Confidence in the economy is also enhanced by a vibrant visitor offer which generates positive PR about Nottinghamshire within the wider country and beyond. Tourism based businesses account for over 24,000 jobs in Nottinghamshire and the sector contributes over £1.3 billion to the county's GDP each year. There is much scope to grow this, with Visit England projecting a 5% growth in tourism earnings in the county by 2020. Within this context, the County Council is committed to ensuring that Sherwood Forest, home of Robin Hood, hosts a modern and exciting visitor centre and attraction. In order to achieve this, the Discovery Group has recently been appointed as an operating partner to create a new all year round visitor and tourist attraction on land owned by the Council opposite the Sherwood Forest site.

Another area worthy of attention is the River Trent corridor. This is the location for the area's major sporting facilities including Trent Bridge Cricket Ground; Nottingham Forest's City Ground; Meadow Lane, home to Notts County and Nottingham Rugby Club; National Water Sports Centre; Nottingham Racecourse; Nottingham Sailing Club; and Nottingham Rowing Clubs. The value of the sport visitor economy has increasingly become recognised as a key economic driver and provides international profile opportunities for the County. There is potential to promote this area as a Sporting Quarter, building on planned investments at, for example, the National Watersports Centre.

## OUR OBJECTIVE

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Create an environment that allows businesses to flourish, where creativity and innovation are valued, investment is facilitated, entrepreneurs are encouraged and established businesses can prosper.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

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### Investing in growth

- Refresh our inward investment strategy in conjunction with partners to identify ways of funding a more proactive approach going forward. This review will also examine, with Invest in Nottingham and the District Councils, how previous inward investors with potential for further growth can be helped to overcome obstacles and succeed.
- Complement high-growth programmes with additional targeted support through the Nottinghamshire Innovation Centre network.
- Working jointly with the City Council, address challenges in access to finance by establishing the:
  - Nottinghamshire Investment Fund, backed by local pension funds and private sector investors to help early stage 'Investment-ready' growth enterprises in the Nottinghamshire. Investments of £100k to £1m and, in exceptional circumstances, up to £5m;
  - Nottingham Technology Grant Fund (NTech) to offer grants to health and life sciences, digital content and cleantech businesses in Nottinghamshire. Grants of between £25K - £1m will be available.

- Nottinghamshire partners will work with UKTI to promote growth and exploit international market opportunities by better connecting businesses to existing activities, and facilitating connections between existing successful exporters and those with ambitions for growth.
- In addition, the County Council will provide investment to Nottinghamshire companies through a peer-to-peer fund which will increase opportunities for businesses to get the backing they need to fund growth.
- Scope out the potential for a new Sporting Quarter with the overall objective of harnessing the growth in local sport, leisure and health sectors as an economic driver, creating county-wide business and employment opportunities.
- Develop a low carbon business investment plan and prospectus in conjunction with the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. This would include supporting the development of a world leading Low Carbon Vehicle Technology Park and training campus at the Hardstaff Group site close to the A453 / M1.
- In conjunction with the National Farmers Union, undertake a proactive campaign to highlight to the local farming community the emerging commercial markets in renewable energy crops and heat/power generation. We will also examine the potential to develop former colliery sites into “Energy Parks” as a location for wind and solar energy, methane gas extraction and the use of warm mine water as a renewable source of heating and cooling.

## Supporting business

- Develop an information portal that includes all the available business support products, service providers and funding streams in order to increase take-up and business survival rates.
- Deliver improvements to opportunities for accessing public sector procurement so that more SMEs can win local contracts. Give consideration to promoting a clause in all new public sector procurement contracts to ensure that primary contractors are responsible for passing on the prompt payments made to them.
- Work with UKTI and Invest in Nottingham to promote Nottinghamshire businesses’ participation in a regional network for companies engaged in exporting - the East Midlands International Trade Association (EMITA).
- Work with local universities to explore ways in which Nottinghamshire businesses can be encouraged to recruit graduates and to develop more opportunities for placements and internships.

## Championing the county

- Following the review of inward investment activities, establish a Nottinghamshire Ambassadors’ Group within the Invest in Nottingham framework to champion businesses and promote our success stories.
- Deliver promotional campaigns to attract new business, sport and leisure visitors to Nottinghamshire, thereby contributing to overall increases in the visitor economy for the county.

**“We have a lot of successes to be proud of in the county, brought about through our collective effort. Our efforts in bringing a renewed infrastructure to Nottinghamshire should be applauded but no one should rest on their laurels. We must aim for more.”**

**Ian Morgan, Deputy Chairman, Wellglade Group and Trent Barton**





## THEME TWO

# CONNECTIVITY



Nottinghamshire is rapidly becoming one of the best-connected counties in England and a number of imminent road and rail improvements will further enhance this critical business factor. The Midland Mainline improvements will see journey times to London come down to 90 minutes whilst the East Coast Main Line is a vital attribute for parts of the county. The announcement that HS2 will have a station at Toton serving Nottinghamshire provides a long term opportunity to further enhance connectivity. Although the scheme will not be operational until 2032, it is important that preparatory work is undertaken in order to maximise the future impact of this investment.

The long-awaited dualling of the A453 will provide another high-speed link to the M1 and access to East Midlands Airport. The airport has grown to be a major economic driver in the region. It is the UK's major freight hub and annually serves 4.3 million passengers flying to over 90 destinations. The importance of East Midlands Airport to the region is set to grow substantially as it adds more flight destinations and builds on its growing role as an international freight hub. To the north of the county, Robin Hood Airport will see access improved with a direct link to the M18 planned for opening in 2014, and efforts will continue to attract long haul flights to take advantage of its runway capacity.

Mansfield's new public transport interchange will bring together the new £9 million bus station and the train station to provide better interchange between modes of travel.

As these projects get implemented, future challenges will be to improve east-west connectivity across the county and also make better links between transport hubs. A key challenge will also be how to deliver integrated transport links to East Midlands Airport.

The lack of a strategic approach to key employment sites has led to a fragmented and local perspective at the expense of a focus on which sites have the better market potential. Employment sites promoted alone struggle to secure the interest from the market and to secure funding for required infrastructure and services.

Another connectivity issue critical to business is access to high-speed broadband. Nottinghamshire has successfully bid for Government money that will allow broadband speeds to be increased in areas where it is economically unviable for the private sector to invest. When complete in 2015, 90% of all Nottinghamshire premises will have access to superfast broadband. Delivery of high-speed broadband will provide a platform for business growth and expansion in previously unattractive areas. The County Council has also delivered a demand stimulation programme for businesses through a series of free training and awareness raising sessions. This has improved business readiness to increase their use of online technologies and encourage innovation in using higher broadband speeds. The aim is to increase take-up to be at or above the rate of the UK in rural areas of Nottinghamshire.



The county's market towns and village centres are popular places to live and have vibrant communities. They are important assets providing jobs, services and opportunities but some larger centres have declined with the closure of anchor businesses, and villages suffer through the loss of their pub and post office. Investment in these areas needs to be sustained if the existing offer is to be maintained and then for diversity to be enhanced. There is potential to explore the Business Improvement District (BID) model and also to ensure that investment through the Local Improvement Scheme has a greater economic focus.

## OUR OBJECTIVE

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Forge Nottinghamshire's enviable infrastructure networks into one of the best connected counties, driving investment and creating new jobs.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

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### Investing in growth

- Deliver early phases of the Nottinghamshire Enterprise Zone swiftly and innovatively, utilising new flexibilities in planning and business rates.
- Deliver superfast broadband to 90% of businesses and residences across the county through a multi-million pound investment. At the same time, create increased awareness and knowledge among businesses of the potential of the new broadband technologies, and promote the attractiveness of rural areas as business locations
- Increase investment in the vibrancy of market towns to deliver more accessible and resilient retail and service sectors by promoting the BID model to other parts of the county.
- Enhance the economic impact of schemes delivered through the Local Improvement Scheme in consultation with local business / trader groups located within the county's market towns.

### Supporting business

- Maintain pressure on key agencies to deliver major infrastructure improvements such as the A453 and Midland Mainline, and ensure that the needs of businesses are taken into account.
- Promote the benefits of this increased connectivity to potential inward investors and indigenous companies that are looking to expand.
- Focus on developing and promoting key new transport hubs such as East Midlands Parkway and plan for the future HS2 investment at Toton Sidings.

## Championing the county

- In order to attract investment to strategic inward investment sites, a small number will be designated as Business Investment Zones and proactively marketed. The proposed business park at Rolls Royce Hucknall, for example, looks to have significant potential for growth but requires support in bringing it to the market.
- Work will also take place to consider if joint public and private sector financial packages can be assembled to support the initial up-front costs faced by companies locating their activities to such sites. We will establish a Nottinghamshire Developers' Forum that will be able to lobby for the fast-tracking of key sites.
- Prioritise and invest in key housing sites across the county, working closely with planners, developers and landowners and District Councils to ensure that sites are brought to market quickly and effectively to release further investment into surrounding areas.

**“Young people are key to our future. When investing in apprenticeships and trainees we need to know that we have the talent and support for success. Through our partnership with Nottinghamshire colleges, in addition to initiatives in preparing young people for work, we are confident we have the talent for providing skills and growth in Nottinghamshire.”**

**Paul Clifford, Managing Director, Advanex Europe Ltd**

## THEME THREE

# ASPIRATION AND TALENT



Education performance in Nottinghamshire continues to improve at a rate that is above the national average, underpinning efforts to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce in the future. In addition to this overall progress, a strong focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects will provide a link to jobs with progression routes in both manufacturing and many service sector jobs.

The need for young people to be more “work ready” is a persistent comment from county businesses. Academic success needs to be matched by qualities such as punctuality, customer care and team working. Work experience and internships have a critical contribution to make, and businesses have an opportunity to shape the future workforce.

Nottinghamshire’s colleges are a critical component in developing the pipeline of talent for the county’s economy. They have a difficult task in balancing the individual ambitions of learners and responding to business needs. Too many young people simply choose to take academic subjects that they like, but do not prepare them for the world of work. Greater awareness of the opportunities of pursuing vocational routes to training, such as fully funded apprenticeships at 16-18, would help in this regard. Information and guidance is critical to ensure learning choices are more closely linked to a realistic understanding of employment opportunities, yet provision is becoming more fragmented.

Youth unemployment has been growing since 2005 and the transition from learning to work has become increasingly difficult. There has been increased competition for jobs, fewer entry level opportunities and rising aspirations amongst young people without an understanding of the realities of the labour market.

Forecast growth in knowledge intensive sectors will mean demand for higher levels of skills. Increasing the share of apprentices working towards a Level 3, 4 or 5 is important in order to meet increasing demand for higher level skills due to industrial and technological change, and to meet current requirements for technician level skills related to manufacturing. This is particularly important in engineering where an ageing workforce means those retiring with high level skills will need to be replaced.

In parts of the county, there is a historical legacy of ‘low skills, low pay’, although this has started to change in recent years. The resurgence in manufacturing and engineering is helping to grow the economy locally, and enabling local people to develop higher level skills and ambitions. A new approach to fostering an enterprise culture with young people is needed, along with a greater focus on business and job opportunities that would encourage the retention of graduates and more highly-skilled workers.

## OUR OBJECTIVE

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Increase the competitiveness of Nottinghamshire by creating the conditions to grow an increasingly skilled and productive workforce.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

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### Investing in growth

- Deliver the Nottinghamshire Youth Employment Strategy to tackle high levels of youth unemployment by assisting employers to connect with young people, preparing young people for work and making it easier for them to be recruited.
- Work with all schools, colleges and young people's organisations to address the skills, aptitude and attitude of young people entering the workplace for the first time.
- Deliver a local approach to business-focused activity in schools and broker a better relationship between local business leaders and schools, in order to maximize the development of vocational and enterprise development programmes.
- Focus on encouraging young people to make the right career choices and follow structured routes into employment. Work with the proposed D2N2 LEP Labour Market Observatory to link labour market intelligence to those providing information, advice and guidance.

### Supporting business

- Work with the Nottinghamshire City and County Employment and Skills Board to enable businesses to take ownership over skills training in key industrial sectors, ensuring that they can directly influence workforce development and business support. This will ensure that the county has an attractive workforce offer for inward investors and growing businesses.
- Expand the programme of support for Nottinghamshire Work Clubs, which have been successful in helping people out of work give practical support and encouragement to each other to find the right route back into employment through innovative new partnerships with providers and businesses. Increased efforts will be made to link more businesses into Work Clubs to support the training and recruitment of local staff.
- Ensure improved awareness of the options for vocational training is raised at an early age for young people and their parents and guardians.
- Promote apprenticeship provision and take-up at Level 3 and above in growth industries such as finance and business services, engineering and low carbon industries.

# REFERENCES

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