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As one of nine regional development agencies across the UK, EEDA had a clear mission – to improve the economy of the East of England.

At the best of times that was about putting in place business support and funding to encourage entrepreneurial activity; it was about giving people the skills they need to maximise their contribution to both the workplace and the economy; and it was about working in partnership to regenerate places through sound economic investments – investments that generated return by attracting new visitors, stimulating business activity and catalysing further investment.

During tougher times, EEDA led the East of England’s response to economic shocks and the recession by flexing regional business support to meet short-term needs.

Investing in success
EEDA also had an important mandate to make longer-term investments that built on specific local strengths. In the East of England, our global reputation in industries such as low carbon innovation, advanced manufacturing, ICT and life sciences, benefitted from major EEDA interventions.

EEDA piloted the UK’s first Small Business Research Initiative alongside the NHS and Technology Strategy Board. EEDA also led the East of England’s successful bid to install a fully-integrated electric vehicle charging network, laying the foundations for the region to become a test-bed for the development and uptake of electric vehicle technology.

Working in partnership
EEDA did not work alone. Forging effective partnerships – which crossed county and administrative boundaries – to focus solely on economic growth, was an essential ingredient of our work over 12 years. In Stevenage, EEDA brought together public and private sector partners to secure a multi-million pound joint investment in GlaxoSmithKline’s global research centre, the ‘Bioscience Catalyst’, fighting off competition from the United States.

Over the past 12 years, EEDA has provided the vital economic evidence and evaluation of past projects that partners required to make informed investment decisions. Whether that was in detailing the £600 million economic case for dualling the A11, or calculating the return on investment of building a world-class University Campus in Suffolk, EEDA’s role was focused on ensuring excellent value for taxpayers’ money.

Return on investment
EEDA had a proven track record of delivering value. Independent evaluation concluded that for every £1 EEDA invested, an average return of £4.75 was generated for the region’s economy, rising to £7.60 when likely future benefits are taken into account.

Over the coming pages, we explore the work of EEDA over the last 12 years – the major projects and the foundations we laid for economic growth in the East of England.

This is our legacy.

Professor William Pope, chair, EEDA
Deborah Cadman OBE, chief executive, EEDA
Improving the economy of the East of England

One of nine regional development agencies set up across England in 1999, EEDA had a clear mission – to improve the economy of the East of England.

As a business-led organisation, EEDA’s specialist expertise and resources supported people, places and businesses to seize economic opportunities and respond to economic shocks. Operating at a regional scale, EEDA could address both drivers of economic growth and market failures spanning local administrative boundaries.

EEDA worked to set the strategic direction of the East of England’s economy – influencing partner organisations to invest in shared objectives, taking tough prioritisation decisions in areas such as high-level skills provision and strategic transport infrastructure, and kick-starting transformative projects that made sustainable improvements to the region’s economy.

EEDA’s work had a track record of delivering significant return on investment – excellent value for taxpayers’ money.
EEDA’s legacy – a starter for ten

Over the last 12 years, EEDA has:

1. **Transformed a fragmented business support landscape** – presenting local businesses with a streamlined, easy-to-access service.
   
   **In focus:** The Business Map, EEDA’s online tool for companies looking for business support, was accessed and valued by over 50,000 customers.

2. **Introduced targeted, high-quality business support programmes** – helping local businesses to improve productivity, develop new products and access global markets.
   
   **In focus:** Business Link, managed by EEDA, has supported over 332,000 local businesses since April 2007. EEDA’s Inward Investment and Investor Development activity also assisted market-leading firms like Palm Paper, Dr Reddy’s and Partner Logistics to invest in the region, creating or safeguarding in excess of 7,080 jobs for local people and supply chain opportunities for local industry.

3. **Addressed market failures affecting early-stage and high-growth companies** – providing access to critical forms of finance, specialist coaching programmes and export advice. EEDA piloted the UK’s first Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI), which stimulated demand for innovative new healthcare products developed by SMEs across the East of England.

   **In focus:** Through EEDA’s Grants for Research and Development programme, for every £1 EEDA invested in local innovative companies, £12 was returned to the economy in creation of new jobs and increased business tax returns.

4. **Dramatically increased higher education provision** – addressing an unmet demand from local learners and industry requirements for skilled workers, EEDA contributed to a 15 per cent increase in higher education provision across the region.

   **In focus:** 5,000 new higher education places were created in Suffolk, thanks to major investment by EEDA and its partners in the expansion of University Campus Suffolk. Serving industry needs, EEDA also provided 16,880 flexible training opportunities for employers to up-skill workforces through the Beyond 2010 programme.

5. **Rapidly responded to economic shocks** – leading special task forces to protect people and key industry sectors from economic shocks. This included the Blue Tongue/Foot and Mouth outbreaks of 2006-07, the explosion at Buncefield oil depot in 2005 and the Vauxhall car plant closure in 2002.

   **In focus:** EEDA’s Response to Redundancy programme supported over 22,200 people to retrain and find new jobs following redundancy. EEDA also introduced free and
confidential ‘health checks’ through Business Link in Autumn 2008 to help over 15,000 local businesses recession-proof their operations as the global financial crisis struck.

6

Laid the foundations of world-leading innovation – building on the East of England’s strengths in global-leading innovation, EEDA installed critical infrastructure including science parks and sector-specific innovation hubs to translate innovative ideas into successful commercial ventures.

In focus: 1,500 new high-skilled jobs will be created at GlaxoSmithKline’s ‘Bioscience Catalyst’ campus in Stevenage, speeding-up the commercialisation of life-saving new drugs. Without EEDA’s leadership and early-stage investment, the UK risked losing GSK’s major investment in world-leading science to the United States.

7

Regenerated areas across the East of England – supporting towns and cities to drive forward ambitious regeneration plans, EEDA piloted Integrated Development Programmes (IDPs) and new approaches to financing development. EEDA also applied leading-edge approaches to transport prioritisation and appraisal which helped attract funding for a number of key schemes, such as £134 million for the A11 dualling work project and £291 million for the Felixstowe-Nuneaton rail route.

In focus: Targeted EEDA investment transformed areas such as Ipswich Waterfront and Great Yarmouth Outer Harbour – a catalyst for further private sector investment and the generation of new jobs for the local economy. EEDA-led projects accounted for 20 per cent of brownfield land remediation in the East of England between 2003 and 2007.

8

Invested in quality of life – safeguarding the environment through green infrastructure projects and supporting major cultural programmes.

In focus: Alongside the Arts Council and other partners, EEDA introduced the UK’s most ambitious joint investment programme to support creative talent. New national centres of excellence including the High House Production Park in Thurrock and the National Centre for Carnival Arts in Luton have placed the East of England’s creative talent on the international stage.

9

Empowered local communities to tackle disadvantage – transforming lives by helping local authorities develop targeted solutions to combat social deprivation – an approach that provided greater value for money when compared to equivalent national programmes.

In focus: Through the Economic Participation programme, EEDA worked in partnership with local authorities to support over 82,000 people with skills development and over 42,000 with employment support since 2005/06.

10

Positioned sustainability at the heart of economic development – making the East of England the first UK region to adopt a 60 per cent carbon reduction target by 2031, ahead of UK policy.

In focus: EEDA focused the £95 million European Regional Development Fund on low carbon innovation across the East of England, blazing a trail for other regions and countries across the European Union. Projects included InCrops and Resource Efficiency East.

Over the coming pages, we take a closer look at EEDA’s impact and achievements over the past 12 years.
Businesses are the heartbeat of a strong economy – creating the jobs and tax returns that benefit UK plc.

Home to around 430,000 businesses, one in nine UK companies are based in the East of England. However, at 9.1 per cent, the business start-up rate in the East of England – the best indicator of entrepreneurship levels – was below that of all other UK regions except the South West.

Independent research indicates that companies accessing targeted business support report greater profits compared to those who do not. They are more likely to survive as a start-up; more likely to grow their profits and create new jobs. They are less likely to close in financial distress.

Therefore, to improve the economy of the East of England, EEDA retained a sharp focus on supporting growth within the local business community, stimulating entrepreneurial activity and protecting local industry from economic shocks.
EEDA has set the strategic direction for business support in the East of England over the last 12 years. It has:

**Transformed a fragmented business support landscape**

EEDA has provided a streamlined, simple and coherent customer journey for local businesses to access critical forms of support.

The Business Map – responding to business feedback, EEDA introduced The Business Map in September 2008, an innovative online tool helping SMEs find critical forms of business support. Based on the iconic design of the London Underground map, The Business Map simplified access to over £100 million of publicly-funded support options. It served over 50,000 customers.

**Introduced targeted, high-quality business support programmes**

EEDA has helped businesses to improve productivity, develop new products and access global markets. Based upon sound economic evidence and forecasting, EEDA targeted investment towards regional strengths, particularly innovation and the rural economy.

Business Link – managed by EEDA in the East of England, Business Link supported 332,452 local businesses since 1 April 2007. Of these, 123,000 businesses received further in depth support, with 23,000 going on to access two days of in-house advisor support to improve turnover, profit and other performance measures. Business Link provided information, advice and guidance on a range of issues facing local businesses, from liquidity and liquidation, to market segmentation and social media. Under EEDA’s management, Business Link’s support was flexed according to local needs and changing economic circumstances.

EEDA transformed six locally-delivered Business Link services into one dedicated regional support service in April 2007. In April 2010, Inward Investment and Investor Development support services were also integrated into a single supply contract, enabling EEDA to re-invest significant back-office savings into frontline support. As a result, EEDA increased the number of dedicated business advisors serving local companies from 60 to 90. Business Link’s customer satisfaction consistently exceeded 90 per cent approval with year-on-year improvements under EEDA’s leadership.

To stimulate entrepreneurial activity, EEDA increased Business Link’s penetration of pre-start up and start-up companies, increasing interventions from 22,623 in Q4 2006/07 to 35,512 in Q2 2008/09. Start-ups supported by Business Link showed a three-year survivability rate of 84 per cent, compared to 66 per cent in businesses not accessing support.

Inward Investment and Investor Development – from 2006 to May 2011, EEDA commissioned, funded and managed support services to encourage foreign direct investment, helping international companies to set up in the region and stimulating new investment from established businesses. As a result, EEDA helped 112 companies to invest in the East of England, creating or safeguarding in excess of 7,080 jobs. EEDA’s inward investment team assisted market-leading firms including Palm Paper, Dr Reddy’s and Partner Logistics to locate and invest in the region.

Women’s enterprise – addressing low rates of entrepreneurship amongst women in the East of England, EEDA’s Enterprising Women and Inspiring Women programmes directly assisted 1,400 women with skills development and supported a further 700 women-owned businesses, creating over 180 new businesses. The 2006 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor reported that the most marked increase in women’s enterprise across the UK could be found in the East of England, where it went from 1.2 per cent to 3.5 per cent.

Specialist support – EEDA provided a variety of specialist support programmes to help local companies exploit specific commercial opportunities, including:

- **Manufacturing Advisory Service** – expert industry consultants supported in excess of 3,000 local manufacturers between 2002 and 2011 to significantly increase productivity and profits by making changes to workplace operations.

- **CompeteFor** – an EEDA-funded online ‘dating agency’ matching local businesses with contract opportunities.

**Impact**

“Business Link’s support was amazing. It really felt as though we suddenly had an extended team at the other end of the phone.” Dr Nitasha Buldeo (left) alongside Dr Vishal Naidoo, directors and co-founders of Organic Apoteke, who were supported by Business Link to grow their business.

“Business Link’s support was amazing. It really felt as though we suddenly had an extended team at the other end of the phone.” Dr Nitasha Buldeo (left) alongside Dr Vishal Naidoo, directors and co-founders of Organic Apoteke, who were supported by Business Link to grow their business.

“Business Link’s support was amazing. It really felt as though we suddenly had an extended team at the other end of the phone.” Dr Nitasha Buldeo (left) alongside Dr Vishal Naidoo, directors and co-founders of Organic Apoteke, who were supported by Business Link to grow their business.
associated with London 2012. Over 16,000 businesses have utilised the service, with over £60 million worth of contracts awarded to East of England companies.

- **takeITon** – EEDA supported 793 companies to improve their IT infrastructure and skills through grant funding and development workshops.
- **Resource efficiency** – over 1,078 SMEs supported to review resource efficiency issues and identify potential efficiency savings.

**Responding to economic shocks** – leading special task forces to protect local people and key industry sectors.

EEDA commissioned economic impact assessments to help understand and mitigate the effects of economic shocks, formed partnerships to plan for recovery and deployed significant resources to those affected.

EEDA has led the region’s rapid response to a number of economic shocks over the last decade, including the explosion at Buncefield oil depot, which affected 600 companies and 16,500 employees at Maylands Business Park in December 2005, and the BlueTongue/Foot and Mouth outbreaks in 2006/07.

In 2000, Vauxhall announced plans to close its car plant in Luton, with the expected loss of 1,900 jobs and a further 1,400 jobs in the supply chain. Chaired by EEDA, a Luton Vauxhall Partnership group brought together representatives from the company, unions, the local authority, Jobcentre Plus, and further education. EEDA provided funding to support retraining for those affected, contributing to the re-skilling and re-employment of 1,500 workers from the factory. Four months after the closure took effect, Luton’s unemployment had increased by only 0.5 per cent.

**Responding to recession** – during the global financial crisis of 2008 and subsequent recession, EEDA played a key role in shaping the national and regional response by providing policy-relevant intelligence including economic outlooks and monthly labour market briefings.

EEDA’s Response to Redundancy programme, working in tandem with Jobcentre Plus, supported 22,200 workers at risk of redundancy to re-train and re-enter the job market. EEDA also flexed its business support programmes to meet the changing needs of industry. For example, Business Link advisors with strong connections to the banking sector provided companies facing credit denial with advice on which banks might entertain their borrowing proposition, helping them to grow their business even in recessionary times.

**Manufacturing Advisory Service**

EEDA’s Manufacturing Advisory Service for the East of England (MAS East) has supported over 3,000 local manufacturers over the last nine years.

By helping companies to identify and implement subtle but significant changes to the way they work, recipients of the support made average efficiency savings in excess of £100,000 each.

This has generated more than £61 million for the East of England economy and safeguarded more than 400 jobs for the region.

**Destination Growth**

Bringing speakers of international quality to the doorstep of local businesses, Destination Growth was EEDA’s flagship event for the East of England’s business community.

Destination Growth was designed to equip local businesses with the tools, advice and contacts they needed to grow their business. High-profile speakers included Lord Alan Sugar, Michelle Mone (pictured right) and Gerald Ratner.

First hosted in 2005, over 2,000 businesses have attended the biennial event – the biggest business event in the East of England. In 2009, Destination Growth was tailored specifically to help local companies ‘survive and thrive’ during the recession.
Developing skills

A business' greatest asset is its people – and in today's economy the need to improve and update skills is paramount.

For businesses, a highly-skilled workforce increases competitiveness, productivity and profitability. For individuals, better skills lead to enhanced career options and higher wages.

Historically skills levels in the East of England have not compared well nationally, particularly in terms of intermediate and higher-level skills.

This is partly explained by the low percentage of adults undertaking job-related training, the low percentage of graduates and postgraduates staying in the East of England and the high number of people entering low-skilled employment after compulsory education.

For the region to develop as a successful economy and compete globally in the future, skills levels must be raised across the board. As a matter of priority, the region needs to increase the demand for learning among individuals, employees and employers, and increase capacity in further and higher education provision.

Over the last 12 years, EEDA has focused its efforts on addressing these key two skills issues, which impact on the region’s economic productivity.
EEDA has never had a big budget for addressing skills issues in the region compared to other national agencies.

But EEDA was less restricted by national targets and able to use its budget flexibly to tailor skills support to local employer needs.

Addressing the two main challenges faced by the East of England, EEDA has:

**Developed workplace skills**
EEDA has worked to develop workplace skills that regional employers really need.

Through EEDA’s leadership of the European Social Fund (ESF) programme in the East of England, EEDA has been able to use ESF as a flexible tool to lever and additional funding to boost investment into skills projects.

**Towards/Beyond 2010 programme** – this EEDA and European Social Fund funded programme has helped over 16,800 people and 5,770 businesses train their staff.

Towards 2010 helped employers get the skills their businesses needed to be successful. First established in 2002 and re-shaped in 2005, the programme was designed to target growth sectors in the East of England. Sector specialists worked alongside companies to identify skills training programmes to overcome specific challenges and exploit market opportunities.

**Landskills East** – this Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funding programme was set up to help employers in the region’s land-based sector acquire the skills they needed for the 21st century. Nearly 4,500 people have been supported to develop technical skills and 1,664 have been able to undertake management courses to improve their prospects.

**Business Link** – through the EEDA-funded Business Link programme, a skills brokerage service provided access to funding for training to employers who wanted to improve basic skills levels in numeracy and literacy, as well as good sources of technical training. From April 2009 to December 2010, 5,574 businesses made use of this service.

**Increased the supply of higher education (HE) places**
Universities have become increasingly important to the economic success of places as sources of ideas, technologies and highly-skilled graduates.

EEDA identified that HE was a weakness generally in the regional economy, with lower levels of higher qualifications than the national average. As a result EEDA took the lead in commissioning a regional study to analyse where the region most needed and could benefit from investment in higher education. Using this evidence, EEDA and other partners were able to present a case to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as to where to invest in new university facilities. The result was a 15 per cent increase in higher education provision across the region between 2002/03 and 2009/10.

EEDA’s strategic approach to putting together the business case was fundamental in securing HEFCE and other investment in new campuses in Suffolk, Southend, Peterborough and Harlow. In each instance, the investments in higher education have formed a focus for local regeneration as well as meeting the need for more people with higher skill levels and businesses engaging with universities for recruitment and knowledge transfer.

By investing £36.6 million, EEDA was able to attract a further £412 million of investment into higher education, which has equated to 50,000 new students going to university to improve their career prospects.

**Impact**

‘It’s been great for staff morale. They have gained transferable skills and from my point of view – as an employer – it helps me with staff retention. It’s very hard to get staff, so anything that encourages them to stay is vital.’ Liz Lake (pictured above), LizLaKe Associates, whose staff improved their skills through Towards 2010.
University Campus Suffolk

The regeneration of Ipswich waterfront is the largest single regeneration project in the East of England. At its heart is the flagship University Campus Suffolk (UCS).

UCS has improved access to higher education for Suffolk residents. The campus opened its doors to new recruits in 2007 and in its first year saw an eight per cent increase in take-up of HE places across Suffolk. The campus also represents an additional resource for local and regional businesses – and many of the courses have been specifically designed to respond to the skills requirements of local industry. So far UCS has provided over 9,800 students with a university education and expects growth to continue as the range of programmes offered increases and the university estate is developed further.

EEDA’s investment in bringing a higher education campus to Ipswich leveraged £38 million from other partners. Without EEDA’s involvement the project would not have happened as HEFCE alone did not have sufficient funds or risk appetite to deliver the project. The resulting cohesion between local stakeholders has strengthened the whole area for further development.

University of Essex, Southend Campus

Southend is the largest urban area in the East of England by resident population and has one of the worst performing local economies.

As a government priority area for regeneration, EEDA used its influence to bring a University of Essex campus to Southend.

Making the most of a redundant building in the heart of the town centre, the new university campus has sparked a wider regeneration in Southend. As well as increasing the availability of HE places, the new campus has stimulated growth amongst local businesses by giving them access to university expertise via a dedicated business hub.

EEDA’s investment of £3.7 million attracted a further £23.5 million of investment from a number of other partners, including £14 million from the Government.

“EEDA’s funding has been critical to Southend’s transformation into a university town. As well as creating opportunities for education and training and providing business support to the regional workforce, the development has helped to spearhead the regeneration of Southend.”

Dr Tony Rich, registrar of the University of Essex
Innovation

The East of England is the UK’s ‘ideas region’.

Twenty five per cent of all UK private sector investment in research and development is spent in the East of England. Thirty of the world’s leading research institutions, including Cambridge University and Norwich Research Park, are based in the region.

The East of England is home to the largest and most successful life sciences cluster outside the United States and a globally-renowned technology cluster in Cambridge. The region boasts considerable strength in emerging sectors such as environmental technologies and renewable energy.

However, the East of England’s strength in research and development is not matched by its record of commercialisation. International comparisons show that East of England firms were less likely to introduce a new or improved product to the market, less likely to introduce or allocate funds to training or make capital investments to support innovation.

To capitalise on the East of England’s innovation strengths, EEDA played a major role in supporting businesses to exploit the commercial potential of ideas and compete on a global stage.
Over the last 12 years, EEDA has:

Laid the foundations of world-leading innovation

EEDA has installed the critical infrastructure required to translate innovative ideas into successful commercial ventures.

EEDA led strategic, catalytic investments in sector-specific enterprise hubs and third generation science parks, underpinning the region’s strengths in growth sectors and establishing vital links between research conglomerates, innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and academia.

Enterprise hubs – EEDA established a network of 14 physical and virtual enterprise hubs across the East of England, serving key industry sectors such as health and life sciences, ICT and advanced manufacturing. Enterprise hubs provide innovative start-ups with flexible incubation space, access to specialist facilities and equipment such as laboratories, business support from sector specialists and opportunities to collaborate with like-minded businesses. Enterprise hubs also link tenants into national and international supply chains.

£50 million of EEDA investment in the East of England’s network of enterprise hubs leveraged an additional £90 million of public/private investment. Examples of EEDA-funded enterprise hubs include:

- **OrbisEnergy, Suffolk** – an energy-efficient landmark building, OrbisEnergy is at the heart of the developing multi-million pound offshore renewable energy sector in the East of England. Orbis offers state-of-the-art, easy-in, easy-out office units, conference facilities and a virtual office service.
  
  www.orbisenergy.net

- **Babraham Bioscience Technologies, Cambridgeshire** – a world-class biomedical research centre offering combined office and laboratory space for start-up and early-stage ventures. Four businesses at Babraham Bioscience Technologies featured in the top six venture capital investments in 2009 and 2010.
  
  www.babraham.co.uk

Science Parks – third generation science parks have installed a culture of ‘open innovation’ across the East of England. Established around major research corporations including GlaxoSmithKline (Stevenage), Unilever (Colworth) and BT (Martlesham), science parks enable innovative start-ups and SMEs to collaborate with global conglomerates and world-class academics on-site.

EEDA has invested over £14.7 million into the science park programme, leveraging a further £74 million of public/private investment. Science park interventions not only create thousands of new jobs and businesses for the regional economy, they also help to anchor major corporates in the East of England.

Addressed market failures affecting early-stage and high-growth companies

EEDA has provided access to critical forms of finance, specialist coaching programmes and expert advice.

Funding and finance – EEDA’s Grants for Research and Development programme addressed an inadequate supply of capital to businesses with high growth potential. Exploiting the East of England’s global reputation as the UK’s ‘ideas region’, EEDA’s grant funding helped over 350 innovative SMEs to convert ideas into commercial success. Independent evaluation concluded that for every £1 EEDA invested in a business, over £12 was generated to benefit the region’s economy – in terms of business growth through increased profits and job creation.

Innovation Vouchers – encouraging collaboration between industry and academia, EEDA’s Innovation Vouchers provided hundreds of innovative SMEs with up to five days of dedicated consultancy time with academics at the region’s top universities and research institutions.

Investment readiness and coaching programmes – 850 companies took advantage of targeted investment readiness and coaching programmes provided by EEDA. Understanding Finance for Business supported companies in identifying and securing various forms of funding and finance. Over £4.3 million of finance was raised by 57 companies in the first two years of the programme. EEDA’s Coaching programme has helped 55 companies to unlock and sustain high growth.

Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) – working in partnership with the Strategic Health Authority in the East of England, EEDA piloted the UK’s first SBRI project in April 2009, helping innovative SMEs develop new products and processes to solve modern healthcare challenges. This ground-breaking demand-led project granted 11 companies up to £100,000 each to complete feasibility work on their innovations.
GlaxoSmithKline Bioscience Catalyst

1,500 high-value jobs will be created at GlaxoSmithKline’s new science park – the ‘Bioscience Catalyst’ in Stevenage. As the UK’s first open innovation campus for drug discovery and development, the Bioscience Catalyst is scheduled to open in early 2012. 25 early-stage lifescience companies will collaborate on-site and work alongside GSK to speed-up the commercialisation of potentially life-saving drug discoveries.

Without EEDA’s leadership in bringing partners together, the UK risked losing GSK’s major investment in this world-leading drug discovery centre to the US. EEDA’s early-stage investment of £4 million leveraged an additional £32.6 million of public/private sector investment and created the impetus for GSK to commit to the project in Stevenage.

Hethel Engineering Centre

EEDA’s enterprise hub for advanced engineering and manufacturing, Hethel Engineering Centre (HEC) underpins the East of England’s growing low-carbon cluster. Since opening in 2005, HEC has created 147 jobs, created 35 new businesses and supported a further 1,079 businesses. HEC’s Learning Centre has supported 6,000 students with specialist training.

A £5 million partnership project led by EEDA, Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk Council and Group Lotus plc, HEC opened in February 2006 offering flexible terms on office and workshop tenancy, specialist business support and access to specialist equipment for high performance engineering and manufacturing companies. In response to industry demand, EEDA funded HEC’s expansion in 2010, providing new space for an additional 11 tenants.

Access to finance

With a track record of helping businesses to grow and bring innovative new products to market, EEDA’s grant funding programme has supported 367 companies since 2005, sharing a total of £32 million between them.

Some of the region’s biggest business success stories used EEDA funding to kick-start their growth including Blue Gnome – the fastest growing biotechnology company in Cambridgeshire and named in Deloitte’s prestigious Technology Fast 50.

Pictured right: Nick Haan, founder of Blue Gnome
Opportunity for all

Despite perceptions of widespread prosperity, the East of England contains many communities where poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion put a significant brake on economic growth.

The reality is that the broader economic success of the region masks local disparities and pockets of deprivation, particularly in coastal areas and new towns, which rank very poorly across a range of economic and social indicators. Some towns and cities in the region are among the worst performing areas in England, which is inhibiting their ability to improve their competitive position and quality of life for their residents.

EEDA aimed to address disparities in skills, levels of worklessness and new business start up rates to address social exclusion in these less prosperous areas through two innovative, community-led regeneration programmes - Economic Participation and its predecessor Investing in Communities.

These programmes focussed on improving employability by raising low skills levels, addressing barriers to employment such as access to transport or access to training provision, and supported entrepreneurialism through self employment and business start up advice and support.
Over the last 12 years, EEDA has worked with partners across the East of England to address the barriers that lead to disadvantage and social exclusion. EEDA has:

**Empowered local communities to tackle disadvantage**

EEDA recognised that while some issues of disadvantage and inequality require intervention at a regional level, others are best addressed at a local level.

**Investing in Communities and Economic Participation** – in 2003, EEDA saw an opportunity to re-think community regeneration – designing a programme that was driven by local needs and ambitions and providing funding through local partnerships to enable the most deprived people and places to achieve their full potential.

Investing in Communities (and its successor Economic Participation) enabled partners to look at how existing services could be better integrated or to identify gaps or duplication in provision, in order to improve the impact, outcome and value for money of delivery. These programmes enabled wide partnerships to form locally to look at the issues more holistically and provide funding to test out new models of delivery.

Since 2005/06 the Investing in Communities and Economic Participation programmes have created 2,796 jobs and 810 businesses, helped over 42,000 people find employment and over 82,000 people gain new skills or qualifications.

Through EEDA’s novel approach in empowering local partnerships to tackle deprivation we were able to work with partners to identify local needs, coordinate local activity and direct our investment into local projects that would enhance employability and increase economic opportunities for disadvantage people and places.

**Building communities** – enabling community organisations to take ownership and management of public assets is a powerful tool for local economic regeneration. Assets, such as buildings or other community facilities, can provide a basis for social enterprise - giving opportunities for individuals to develop skills, confidence, aspiration and revenue streams for the community.

EEDA’s Building Communities programme was designed to support this activity – helping community-owned organisations buy or develop buildings or land to generate local economic benefit. The programme provided opportunities for training and bursaries to help organisations become ‘investment ready’, and signposted them to sources of information and funding – as well as providing a small number of capital grants to selected projects.

**Investing in Communities: NEET Trick**

The NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) Trick project provided a paid job for young people in the Dereham and Breckland district area. The project provided the first work entry on the individual’s CV and ensured a sympathetic, yet professional, working environment with the necessary work disciplines demanded by any employer.

The NEET Trick project was led by Norfolk County Council and was developed with Children’s Services, Connexions, Norfolk Adult Education and Action for Children. As well as improving partnership links and working in the local area, NEET Trick was a highly successfully programme with approximately 60 per cent of programme participants going into employment.

**Building Communities Fund: Disability Essex**

Disability Essex wanted to design and build an innovative and sustainable headquarters to accommodate new training needs and the widest range of disabilities that users may have. Other facilities were needed that could be made available to the wider community and other organisations outside of business hours, and part of which could be permanently rented to an external business. Both the rental element and the new training services would provide sustainable income streams to support the core costs of the organisation’s and building maintenance costs.

The Building Communities Fund was able to provide a £15,000 bursary to fund the development of the business case, and an additional £750,000 in the form of a capital grant to fund the building itself (pictured above). Disability Essex was also successful in securing £839,000 from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The rest of the funding for the £2 million project came from Essex County Council and Disability Essex’s own funds. The project provides training to 250 students per annum.
A fit-for-purpose physical environment and effective transport links are two essential ingredients of a successful economy.

Businesses need premises to trade from, an accessible workforce and effective transport systems. Despite perceptions that the East of England is well served, many localities in our region suffer from deprivation and count the economic cost of inadequate infrastructure.

To safeguard the long-term competitiveness of the East of England, EEDA has contributed to modern, transformative and sustainable infrastructure projects, providing attractive and desirable places in which to live and work.
Impact

EEDA has helped the East of England enhance its competitiveness over the last 12 years. It has:

**Ensured infrastructure investments are targeted where they will have the greatest impact**
EEDA worked with local authorities, regional and national partners to make certain that public and private sector investments were coordinated and combined for the greatest economic impact.

**Integrated Development Programmes (IDPs)** – EEDA has supported towns and cities throughout the East of England to take forward ambitious regeneration programmes, developing innovative new approaches to planning and investment. IDPs provided a single delivery plan for capital-led investment from a range of partners designed to deliver growth.

**Insight East** – servicing demands from regional planners and policy makers, EEDA provided the critical evidence base against which informed-decisions could be made on major infrastructure investment. Insight East – EEDA’s team of economic experts – provided partners with analysis of past projects and sophisticated economic forecasting models to inform decisions.

**Prioritising transport investment** – EEDA led a number of studies on the economic impacts of transport including groundbreaking reports to establish the productivity benefits of different investment options as well as carbon reduction needs. This evidence enabled EEDA to unite regional stakeholders behind a prioritised list of bids from the Transport Innovation Fund. More than £200 million was approved for three regional schemes, including the £81 million for enhancements to the Peterborough-Nuneaton rail route, which forecasts £800 million of productivity benefits over a 60 year period. It was also EEDA’s evidence base that was used in the campaign to secure investment to dual the remainder of the A11 in Norfolk and secure Government backing to install the infrastructure needed to charge electric vehicles.

**Stimulating demand for next generation broadband** – in early 2002, EEDA identified lack of broadband as a major constraint to economic growth in the region. Broadband infrastructure is particularly important in rural areas to support the large number of small rural businesses. Between 2002 and 2005, the government and EEDA put £5.8 million into increasing the availability of broadband across the East of England – roughly £1 per person. EEDA’s award-winning ‘Demand Broadband’ campaign was instrumental in bringing entry level broadband into the region and stimulating high levels of take-up.

**Inspire East** – EEDA set up Inspire East to ensure that the East generated the very best places in which to live and work. Inspire East’s mission was to roll out best practice in sustainable physical development and regeneration, as well as skills and training provision. Inspire East’s ‘Excellence Framework’ provided an online toolkit for regeneration professionals to help projects be more sustainable. The framework has been adopted by the Building Research Establishment with the aim of rolling out the service nationally.

**Prioritising ‘brownfield’ land** – EEDA brought back into use over 300 hectares of brownfield land, making it available for housing, businesses premises and community use. At the time this represented around 20 per cent of all brownfield land reclaimed in the East of England.

**Delivered transformational regeneration** – working with local authorities, EEDA invested in flagship long-term capital projects, which have provided the catalyst for further investment and transformed the economic potential of places.

**Great Yarmouth docks and town centre** – Eastport, the Outer Harbour, opened for business in early 2010 creating a major new economic asset for the area. The harbour construction has created 17.6 hectares of land for future port development. This development has prompted improvements to the town centre and waterfront areas, supporting the town’s tourism industry.
Colchester Community Stadium – the stadium has been a major catalyst for the redevelopment of North Colchester. Opened in 2008, the venue hosts a range of commercial and community events. As well as being home to Colchester United Football Club, it has created 49 jobs, secured junction improvements on the A12 and released land for future housing and commercial use.

Cultural infrastructure – EEDA and Arts Council England worked together on a joint prospectus to develop a £110 million portfolio of eight cultural centres of excellence with the potential of transforming their communities. The internationally recognised centres include the Royal Opera House High House Production Park in Thurrock; Aldeburgh Music in Suffolk; The UK Centre for Carnival Arts in Luton; and firstsite in Colchester. These facilities have benefited thousands of people and will continue to do so for decades to come.

Green infrastructure – infrastructure is not just about towns and buildings. The East of England is predominantly rural in nature. EEDA invested in projects that enabled people to make the most of the region’s abundant ‘green’ assets, vital to our quality of life offer; supporting wildlife, tourism and education; protecting the region’s green spaces; and providing public access to enjoy stunning natural habitats. EEDA funded facilities include Wat Tyler Country Park in Essex; Great Fen in Cambridgeshire; and Amwell Nature Reserve in Hertfordshire.

Provided fit-for-purpose business premises

EEDA gave small businesses flexible, suitable and affordable premises from which to trade. For example:

Mayland Business Centre (Axis Point) - work started in September 2010 on phase 1 of the Maylands Business Centre, including a new office innovation centre and 22 industrial starter units. The centre serves Maylands Business Park and beyond, encouraging business growth, stimulating the supply chain, and improving the early prospects of success for small fledgling businesses. The park makes a significant contribution to the economy as there are over 700 businesses on site employing over 20,000 people. Investments such as this are part of the long-term regeneration plans following the damage caused by the Buncefield explosion in 2005.

South Fens Business Centre, Chatteris – work started in February 2011 on an expansion of the popular South Fens Business Centre in Chatteris. The site will accommodate four new business units with the aim of attracting high-value businesses to Fenland and encourage the growth of more skilled jobs. EEDA’s contribution of £220,000 towards the £770,000 project will help the local economy diversify from its traditional reliance on agriculture and food processing.

Bedford I-Lab – this state-of-the-art business centre offers high-quality, fully managed offices to small, innovative companies looking to grow in a supportive environment. More than 50 tenants make use of wide-raying business support services, local academic expertise and access to a diverse mix of companies.

The High House Production Park in Purfleet, Thurrock

This £60 million project is one of the most exciting and innovative regeneration projects in the Thames Gateway. It saw the creation of an international centre of excellence for production and professional development in backstage and offstage services for the performing arts. With the Royal Opera House as the anchor tenant, the new Production Workshops opened in December 2010 with the National Skills Academy due to open in 2011. It will create 250 jobs and provide 11,000 training places.
Regeneration of the Ipswich Waterfront, Suffolk

The old docks at Ipswich have been transformed over the past ten years into a stunning waterfront location in the region’s largest regeneration scheme. A decade after the £1 billion project began, The Mill – the tallest building in Suffolk – houses the Jerwood DanceHouse, headquarters of the dance agency DanceEast. The Waterfront is also home to the University Campus Suffolk where EEDA’s £18.5 million investment helped provide world class learning facilities in the landmark waterfront building. The work has transformed the area from a disused dock to a modern and thriving riverside community.

The UK Centre for Carnival Arts in Luton

The home of Europe’s biggest one-day carnival, opened in May 2009, the centre enables visitors to learn the skills that make Britain’s carnivals such thrilling spectacles. The world’s best carnival artists will be in residence and will help to teach in the UK’s first foundation degree programme dedicated to carnival arts. The centre has created 36 jobs, helped 88 businesses and supported over 2,000 people develop new skills.

Olympic legacy - Lee Valley White Water Centre, Hertfordshire

The Lee Valley White Water Centre was the first London 2012 venue to be completed in 2010. EEDA’s £4 million investment was used to directly increase the scale and flexibility of this world-class venue, almost doubling the number of people who will be able to access and enjoy the centre after the Games have finished. The effects of the upgrades to the facility will attract an estimated 70,000 visitors a year boosting Hertfordshire’s tourism economy.
Creating a greener economy

Tackling climate change is one of the biggest issues facing the world today.

The East of England is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change as the driest and most low-lying region in the country with a large agricultural industry.

On the plus side, the East of England is at the heart of a new industrial revolution: the transition to a low carbon economy. With predictions of a 45 per cent growth in the global environmental technologies sector by 2015, coupled with a large proportion of the UK’s environmental goods and services sector based within this region, there is a significant opportunity for the East of England to become a leader in low carbon technologies.
Over the last 12 years EEDA has led the way towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient economy. EEDA has:

**Championed carbon reduction**
EEDA has embedded sustainability at the heart of economic development and influenced others to do the same.

**Regional leadership** – the East of England was the only region to adopt a challenging 60 per cent carbon reduction target as part of its 2008 regional economic strategy – ahead of Government’s own policy in this area.

EEDA developed its own evidence base (such as the Transport Carbon Study and the Power Infrastructure Study) to influence sustainable decision making in the region. EEDA also supported specialist organisations to focus on specific aspects of sustainability and influence long term economic development, such as Climate East, Renewables East and the East of England Biodiversity Forum.

**Cut Your Carbon** – EEDA’s Cut Your Carbon competition funded nine communities to tackle climate change, with many more supported through an innovative website which helped communities measure their carbon footprint and offered practical advice. Funding winners included:

- Wenhaston Energy Support Group - awarded £70,000 to install electricity-generating solar panels and a biomass system
- Green Sproughton Community Group - awarded £112,000 to breathe new life into its historic tithe barn. The money was used to add insulation, low energy lighting, and to power the barn using renewable energy.

**Evalu8** – EEDA’s support of the Evalu8 project helped secure £7 million from the Government’s Plugged in Places initiative to install 1,200 electric vehicle charging points across the East of England by 2013. This keeps the East of England firmly at the forefront of the low carbon electric vehicle revolution, providing residents with the recharging infrastructure needed to make electric vehicles a viable low carbon option.

**Helped businesses to seize opportunities**
EEDA has helped businesses to seize opportunities by making the most of the transition to a low carbon economy.

**European Regional Development Fund** – EEDA has been responsible for administering the East of England European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme, which has the overarching objective of supporting low carbon economic growth. The East of England was the only region to give its programme a low carbon theme. So far 34 projects are underway, which are expected to help more than 5,200 businesses; create nearly 1,253 new jobs and safeguard 1,551 jobs; support over 2,240 collaborations between businesses and the knowledge base; and support nearly 2,600 new environmental business initiatives.

**Tailored business support** – EEDA’s major business support contracts were adapted to focus on this upcoming sector. For example, specialist low carbon advice was given via Business Link and increased funding provided for low carbon manufacturing support through the Manufacturing and Innovation Advisory Services. EEDA also provided enhanced international trade support for low carbon sectors through the EnviroTrade programme.

**Low carbon finance for business** – to help fund low carbon innovation, businesses were supported to access funding to develop low carbon products and services through the Grant for Research and Development. A new £20 million ERDF Low Carbon Venture Capital Fund has been launched to facilitate access to funding for this growing sector.

**Supported the rural economy**
The East of England is renowned for its wide open spaces and stunning views. With few large towns or cities EEDA had a particular focus on supporting people and businesses in rural areas.

**National leadership on rural issues** – through its leadership on rural affairs on behalf of all regional development agencies, EEDA managed the relationship with the Department for Environment, Rood and Rural Affairs nationally.
Tailored support for rural businesses – EEDA has been able to mainstream rural business support provision to ensure that support services such as Business Link were tailored to the particular needs of rural businesses.

The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) – RDPE aims to improve competitiveness in the agriculture and forestry sector; enhance the rural environment; foster competitive and sustainable rural business communities. EEDA was the first regional development agency to award an RDPE project.

In the East of England EEDA’s management of the 2007-13 RDPE programme has supported a wide range of projects – such as Landskills East, Camgrain and Woodfuels East.

Led the way in sustainable construction

EEDA promoted new ways of thinking so that new and refurbished buildings had the lowest possible carbon footprint while still being affordable.

Inspire East – EEDA set up Inspire East and the Excellence Framework to ensure that investment decisions were following best sustainability principles. EEDA used this framework not only for its own projects, but used its influence to encourage adoption by other public sector partners undertaking major infrastructure projects.

SmartLIFE – EEDA has also supported specific projects designed to encourage sustainable building practices. EEDA’s investment in the SmartLIFE project helped 1,701 16-19 year olds gain qualifications in Innovative Methods of Construction, addressing a skills shortage in the East of England.

Building Research Establishment – EEDA also worked with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) on a number of projects, such as the BRE stable block, which used innovative techniques in efficiency and design to renovate old, inefficient buildings, which make up the bulk of the nation’s housing stock.

“After eleven years of ‘learning on the job’, England’s regional development agencies were making a major contribution to delivering sustainable development on the ground all across the country. As the RDAs ‘lead’ for sustainable development, EEDA was right at the heart of this process, both in terms of its own projects and methodologies, and in terms of catalysing action elsewhere. In that regard, the abolition of the RDAs has caused a serious setback for the sustainable development agenda in England.”

Jonathon Porritt, Founder Director, Forum for the Future and former Chairman of the UK Sustainable Development Commission
Camgrain

Through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE), EEDA supported Camgrain to develop their Advanced Processing Centre, the biggest, cleanest and greenest processing centre in the UK for wheat, barley and other crops.

The project processes locally-grown combinable crops into high-grade food ingredients using state-of-the-art clean technology. The aim was to raise productivity, save energy and guarantee farm-to-shelf traceability to increase the value of cereals grown in the region.

Camgrain has been able to store an additional 90,000 tonnes of crops per year at the Centre. The Centre also processed the majority of Camgrain’s total output of 321,000 tonnes in 2010/11 – an increase of 40 per cent from before the project. So far 36 full time equivalent jobs have been created, £3.25 million worth of business for Camgrain suppliers per year and annual carbon savings of 1,000 tonnes have been achieved.

The project was granted £4 million of RDPE funding through EEDA, out of a total project cost of £12 million. As a result of the RDPE-funded project, Camgrain has also been able to invest in the equipment and systems to create the UK’s first BRC Gold Standard accredited ‘Clean Room’, which carries out state of-the-art processing of high-quality food ingredients.

InCrops

InCrops (or innovation in crops) is a ‘virtual enterprise hub’, with a base at the University of East Anglia in Norwich and partners throughout the region, offering entrepreneurs and companies involved in crop production new opportunities for crop exploitation and commercialisation.

The InCrops project was set up to bring together some of the East of England’s world class researchers in new, bio-renewable and low carbon products derived from alternative non-food crops with entrepreneurs who can turn them into commercial realities.

To date the project has assisted 26 SMEs, including two new start-ups. In October 2010 the project won the ‘Low Carbon Innovation’ category at the East of England’s Creating Futures Awards.

By 2014 the project will have engaged and assisted 200 businesses, many of which will integrate new, innovative, lower-carbon products, processes or services. As a result, 50 new businesses will be started up and 70 jobs will be created or safeguarded.

The project was worth £4.06 million over five years, of which EEDA contributed £1.05 million, with a further £1.15 million coming from the ERDF programme.
About regional development agencies (RDAs)

One of nine regional development agencies set-up across England in 1999, EEDA had five statutory purposes:

- to further economic development and regeneration
- to promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness
- to promote employment
- to enhance development and application of skills relevant to employment
- to contribute to sustainable development.

What was distinctive about our approach?

EEDA was a business-led organisation, with a dedicated mission to improve the East of England’s economy – to make it more sustainable. Our strengths came from:

- a critical mass of specialist expertise and resources to address market failures, support industry and places to seize economic opportunities and respond to economic shocks
- operating at a regional scale, which enabled EEDA to address drivers of economic growth spanning local boundaries and take tough prioritisation decisions in areas such as higher-level skills provision, innovation and strategic transport infrastructure
- being able to plan strategically over a longer term than electoral cycles
- marrying a strong understanding of local needs and opportunities with knowledge of international markets and competition
- a sophisticated understanding of economic trends and possible futures.

EEDA’s responsibilities, resources and ways of working evolved over time. However, there remained a core focus on:

- setting the strategic direction of the East of England’s economy
- influencing people and organisations – public, private and voluntary – to invest in achieving shared objectives
- investing in transformative projects that made sustainable improvements to the region’s economy, allowing people and businesses to harness their potential
- above all, providing value for taxpayers’ money – a significant return on their investment.
12 years of success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54,536</td>
<td>jobs created or safeguarded</td>
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<td>258,009</td>
<td>people with improved skills</td>
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<td>15,942</td>
<td>businesses helped to start and grow</td>
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<td>122,349</td>
<td>businesses assisted to improve performance</td>
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<td>£1.37 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>389 hectares</td>
<td>of brownfield land reclaimed</td>
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An independent report found that for every £1 EEDA spent, we generated an average **return of £4.75 for the East of England economy**, a figure which is expected to rise to **£7.60**.