

# PRESS RELEASE

## Getting Building Fund announcement

**£27.3million secured to support COVID-19 recovery in Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes, and Northamptonshire**

**Strictly embargoed until 6am, Tuesday, 4 August**

Bedford, Corby, Luton, Milton Keynes, and Northampton are among the towns set to benefit from a new pot of funding which has been launched today [August 4] to stimulate jobs and support economic recovery across the country.

The government's new £900million Getting Building Fund (GBF) has been designed to fund local, ready to start, infrastructure projects.

The South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP), which covers Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire, has been allocated £27.3million of the pot, to fund a variety of projects from college developments and green energy schemes to cultural projects and town centre regeneration.

The 12 projects are due to start by December and be completed by early 2022, together set to create nearly 500 new jobs and help more than 2,300 students.

Hilary Chipping, SEMLEP Chief Executive, said: "We are delighted to have secured more than £27m from government to help support economic recovery in this area. These projects will support key priorities including skills for young people, the green recovery and innovation, which will all generate jobs.

"Last July we published our Local Industrial Strategy, laying out the priorities and interventions we needed to invest in to realise innovation, further improve connectivity and achieve sustainable growth. These Getting Building Fund projects meet these priorities and the needs of the local economy as we strive to recover economically from this pandemic."

The projects include the redevelopment of Barnfield College in Luton, technical equipment for a living lab in Milton Keynes, carpet recycling plant in Northamptonshire, a transport hub in Flitwick, gallery expansion in Northampton and green energy projects in Corby and Bedford.

SEMLEP will carry out due diligence on each of the projects, which will be completed later this year. It is at this point that funding will be officially approved and funding agreements signed.

**Skills projects:**

- **Barnfield / West Herts College, Luton, awarded £4,750,000:** This is the largest grant awarded and will support the redevelopment of the college's New Bedford Road campus. This will provide a new modern 6,000 sqm FE facility, creating learning space better suited to modern courses. It will also rationalise the existing estate and provide land for 110 new family homes.
- **MK:U – Start Up to Scale Up Programme, Milton Keynes, awarded £2,435,000:** An innovation Hub in Milton Keynes, known as the Smart City Living Lab (SCLL), will provide education and support to scale start-up businesses. This will focus on smart city technologies including robotics, virtual reality, digital twinning, sensor technology, intelligent infrastructure, autonomous vehicles, drones, and advanced communications.
- **Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), Bedford, awarded £2,900,000:** Bedford College's facilities will be updated to enable it to start teaching Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), funding a new curriculum and the redevelopment of the existing construction teaching facility.
- **Artificial Intelligence Maths and English Learning Platform, Bedford, awarded £440,000:** This grant will fund a new learning platform which has been designed to improve the achievement rate of learners undertaking Maths and English qualifications, improve the digital skills and improve teacher efficiency and wellbeing.

### Green recovery projects:

- **Bedford Green Energy Innovation Park, awarded £1,867,500:** Located on a 30-ha former landfill site, this innovation park within the Oxford–Cambridge Arc will generate green, low carbon, clean energy to encourage others to reduce carbon emissions, adopt innovative technologies, and improve air quality.
- **Electrical Supply to Millbrook Proving Ground, Bedfordshire, awarded £3.5million:** This will fund further expansion of the automotive testing facilities at Millbrook Proving Ground by upgrading the power supply, allowing for more onsite employment activity.
- **Innovate Recycle, East Northamptonshire awarded £2.35million** This project will support breakthrough technology, recycling end of life polypropylene carpet, enabling around 4,400 tons of waste carpet that would

otherwise have gone to landfill to be recycled in the UK's first plant to be developed in Northamptonshire.

- **Rockingham Clean Energy Hub, Corby, Northamptonshire, awarded £1,195,000:** This project will provide state of the art clean energy assets to provide power to the Rockingham Automotive Logistics Hub, supporting the UK's first large scale energy EV logistics hub and position the SEMLEP area as an exemplar of clean, renewable energy management and electric vehicle distribution.

### Place making projects – investments in local infrastructure:

- **GLaM (Kettering Gallery, Library and Museum), Kettering, awarded £3million:** Funding will revitalise and extend GLaM by creating flexible work/exhibition space, engaging with educational institutions, and developing a programme of events to strengthen community links.
- **Flitwick Transport Interchange, Bedfordshire, awarded £2,219,035:** Funding will support the development of an integrated transport hub at Flitwick Rail Station to deliver new passenger facilities, increase modal shifts from private vehicles to sustainable travel and support the regeneration of the station area.
- **NN Contemporary Gallery Relocation & Renovation, Northampton, awarded £1.2million:** Funding will be used to relocate and refurbish NN Contemporary Art (NN), an internationally recognised art space in the centre of Northampton's Cultural Quarter. The project will create an attractive and innovative contemporary public space for industry and culture, complimenting wider investments focused on the long-term health and sustainability of the town centre.

### Business support projects:

- A new Business Resilience and Recovery Grant Scheme will be created, also through the Getting Building Fund, to support businesses in the SEMLEP area that have been affected by Covid-19. Details will be announced shortly.

