

# Press release: Out of this world innovations forge ahead in 2018 thanks to Local Growth Fund

- Multi-billion-pound Local Growth Fund backs world-leading programmes as the government builds a Britain fit for the future
- Goonhilly Space Exploration Station in Cornwall and the National Graphene Innovation Centre in Manchester among winners of grants in 2018

A cancer research laboratory in Southampton, a Centre of Excellence for degree apprenticeships in Sheffield and the roll out of superfast broadband to Cumbria are several innovative projects across the country which have received backing from the government's £9.1 billion Local Growth Fund (LGF) in 2018.

Communities across Britain are benefitting from large, pioneering programmes made possible from the LGF and are defending Britain's place as a world leader for innovation.

Managed by Local Enterprise Partnerships, LGF-backed projects, like a new aerodynamic vehicle testing hub in Northamptonshire, are not only putting communities on the map but also creating high skilled jobs and paving the way for further investment into their areas.

The Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine are the greatest beneficiaries of LGF grants with £3.4 billion being invested across the North and £1.9 billion supporting a wide range of projects in the Midlands, respectively.

Minister for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth, Jake Berry MP, said:

When we say we are building a country that works for everyone, we mean it. Over the course of this year I have been privileged to visit many of the projects supported by the Local Growth Fund.

I've seen first-hand how our modern Industrial Strategy is making a difference to local communities, businesses and people's daily lives.

From supporting world-leading manufacturing in the Northern Powerhouse and training engineers of the future in the Midlands Engine to investing in future space missions and pioneering cancer research in the South of England, the Local Growth Fund shows the government's commitment to boost economic growth and build an economy which is fit for the future.

Some of the most pioneering projects the LGF has supported this year include:

## **Goonhilly Earth Station for deep space missions**

In February, [Goonhilly Earth Station](#) in Cornwall received a £8.5 million LGF investment to help create the world's first commercial deep-space communications station. It will be capable of tracking future missions to the Moon and Mars. Once the upgrade work is complete, Goonhilly will have the ability to track and control forthcoming robotic and human missions to the Moon and Mars – making a significant technical and economic contribution to European efforts in global space exploration.

## **The Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre, Manchester**

Manchester University's [Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre \(GEIC\)](#) has received £5 million from the LGF to support the opening of their new centre for exploiting the potential of graphene advanced materials. The world-class multi-million-pound centre will help to accelerate the commercial impact of graphene, which is the strongest material ever created.

## **Liverpool City Centre Connectivity Scheme**

A £38.4 million LGF investment is supporting the Liverpool City Centre Connectivity Scheme, which aims to reduce congestion and create a new gateway to Liverpool's historic Lime Street. This is part of a wider £45 million programme to improve connectivity around Liverpool City Centre – by foot, bike, car, coach and bus.

## **Boeing, Sheffield**

A total of £4 million from the LGF scheme supported the new [Boeing Fabrication Factory](#) in Sheffield, which opened in October. The new facility, spanning just over 6,000 square meters, makes components for the 737 and 767 passenger jets from raw materials sourced in the UK. It employs 52 people including 25 high-valued apprentices. The number of jobs and apprenticeships is set to grow over the coming year.

## **National Centre of Excellence for Degree Apprenticeships**

Approximately £500,000 from the LGF supported the opening of Sheffield Hallam University's brand new [National Centre of Excellence for Degree Apprenticeships](#). It is providing a bespoke teaching space and IT equipment for hundreds of learners seeking degree apprenticeships.

## **Connecting Cumbria project**

The LGF contributed £3.6 million to extend the availability of superfast broadband across Cumbria through the [Connecting Cumbria project](#). It will extend broadband coverage to approximately 95%, and encourage more rapid business growth and more job opportunities in rural areas.

## **Kenilworth Railway Station project**

In April, [Kenilworth train station](#) was re-opened after 50 years thanks to a

combination of £3.49 million from the LGF, funding from Warwickshire County Council and the Department for Transport's New Stations Fund. This is part of a major rail investment scheme to boost economic regeneration between Nuneaton and Leamington Spa and support sustainable travel, including more reliable signalling between Coventry and Nuneaton, and new stations at Bermuda Park and Coventry Arena.

### **Northampton College Advanced Engineering Centre**

An investment of £2.25 million from the LGF has supported the construction of an [Advanced Construction Engineering Centre](#) in Northampton which is due to be completed in the summer of 2019. The state-of-the-art facility will support learners to develop the skills needed for the most up-to-date construction and engineering technologies.

### **Catesby Aerodynamic Research Facility**

A £4.2 million LGF investment helped build an [aerodynamic testing facility](#) in a disused Victorian railway tunnel in Northamptonshire. The project to convert the 1.7 mile long tunnel into an indoor, fully controllable vehicle testing facility to include wind and simulated weather impact, aerodynamics and emissions enhancing the capability of the UK vehicle industry and leading to the creation of a 4.5 acre science park with offices, workshops and a research facility as well as creating new jobs.

### **Centre for Cancer Immunology**

A Local Growth Fund investment of £4.5 million supported the opening a world-leading [centre for Cancer Immunology](#) at University Hospital Southampton. The development of the UK's first dedicated Centre for Cancer Immunology will place the Solent firmly on the map as a global centre of excellence for the development and delivery of new therapies to cure cancer.

The government has committed £9.1 billion of the Local Growth Fund to Local Enterprise Partnerships through 3 rounds of competitive Growth Deals.

This investment consists of £3.4 billion for the Northern Powerhouse, £1.9 billion for the Midlands, £700 million for the East of England, £2.1 billion for London and the South East, and £970 million for the South West.

The rest of the £12 billion Local Growth Fund is allocated separately from Growth Deals, with the most significant other streams consisting of the £2 billion Home Building Fund and £475 million Local Transport Majors.