



**MIDLANDS
ENGINE**

**ACCELERATING
DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY**

JANUARY 2022

MIDLANDS ENGINE

OUR PARTNERSHIP MANDATE

Operate at scale across the Midlands geography

Identify, prioritise & capitalise on major economic opportunities

Grow the global footprint of the Midlands

WAYS OF WORKING

Advocacy - working for our region, with Government

Influencing - shaping policy and investment to **benefit** our region

Convening - driving change through **collective action** in partnership



Sir John Peace, Chairman, Midlands Engine

"The Midlands Engine partnership has made a strategic commitment to accelerate economic growth and underpin future regional competitiveness through digital super-connectivity - with **bold ambitions to become the best-connected UK region.**

"Our ambition is galvanised by the current reality that many rural and urban areas in our region are not benefitting from the connectivity they need to drive economic recovery, enable communities and deliver growth.

"It is only through true connectivity for everyone that we can **grasp the exceptional opportunities digitalisation presents for transformational change.**"



Rachael Greenwood, Executive Director, Midlands Engine

"As a key enabler for levelling up, **accelerating digital connectivity cuts across all of the work of our partnership.**

There is no aspect of our lives that isn't touched by the power and possibilities of smart technology.

"The scale and breadth of digital projects being invested in and rolled out by Midlands Engine partners demonstrates our **serious commitment to creating change faster** for the benefit of the whole region."

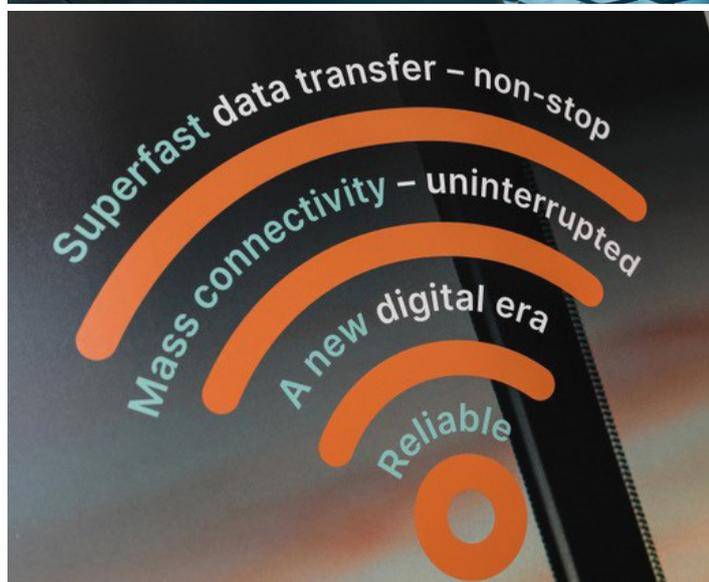
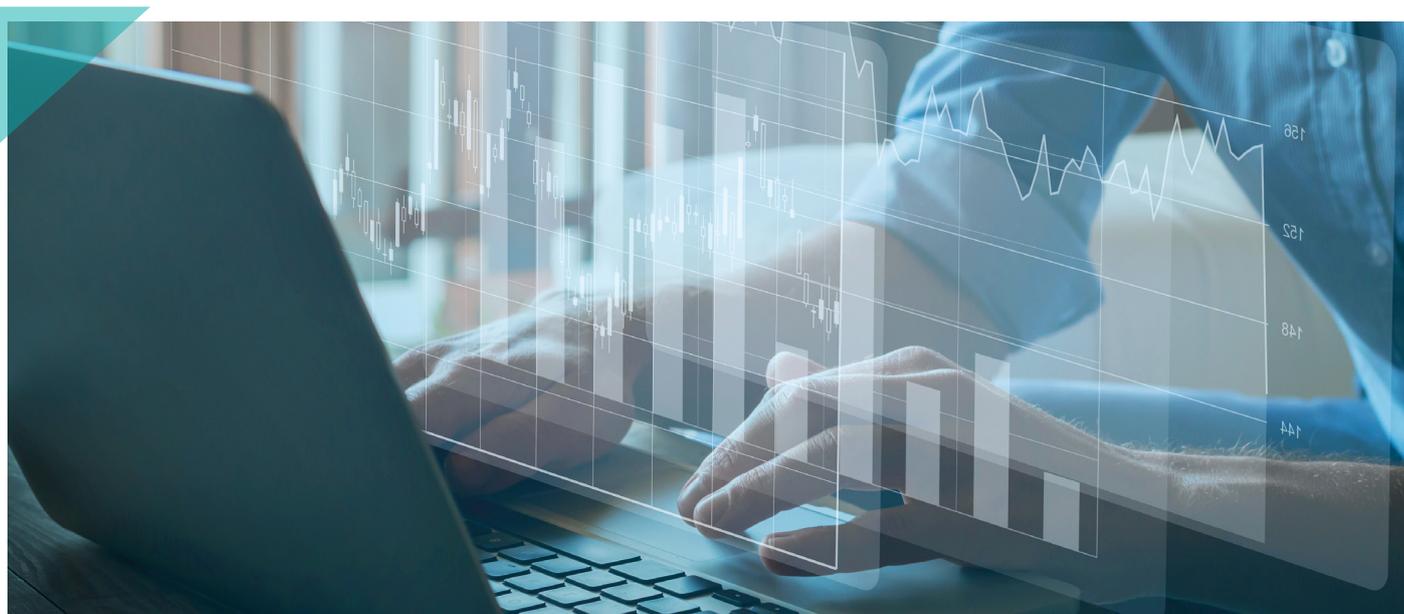
Unlocking the power of digital connectivity through partnership

Our aim in driving forward digital levelling up across our region, in partnership, is to rapidly expand our regional network of digitised businesses and grow an exceptional digital skills base - accelerating economic growth and social prosperity, underpinned by excellence in digital connectivity.

There's much to be done ahead, including bridging the digital poverty divide across our region, which has been exacerbated by the pandemic. But we are ambitious. The Midlands is already a centre of excellence in digital innovation. Home to the UK's first multicity 5G testbed: enabling regional 5G connectivity alone is worth

£5 billion to the Midlands economy over the next five years and a further £15.9 billion over the subsequent five years.

Connecting every part of our region is a fundamental need, for regional prosperity and to amplify the role we play on the world stage. Seeking new opportunities to improve digital connectivity, accelerate business digitalisation, power digital innovation and grow the digital skills we need for today and tomorrow are all crucial if we are to take maximum advantage of the exciting next stages of digital growth.



5G in the Midlands

£5bn

Value over next five years

£15.9bn

Value over subsequent five years

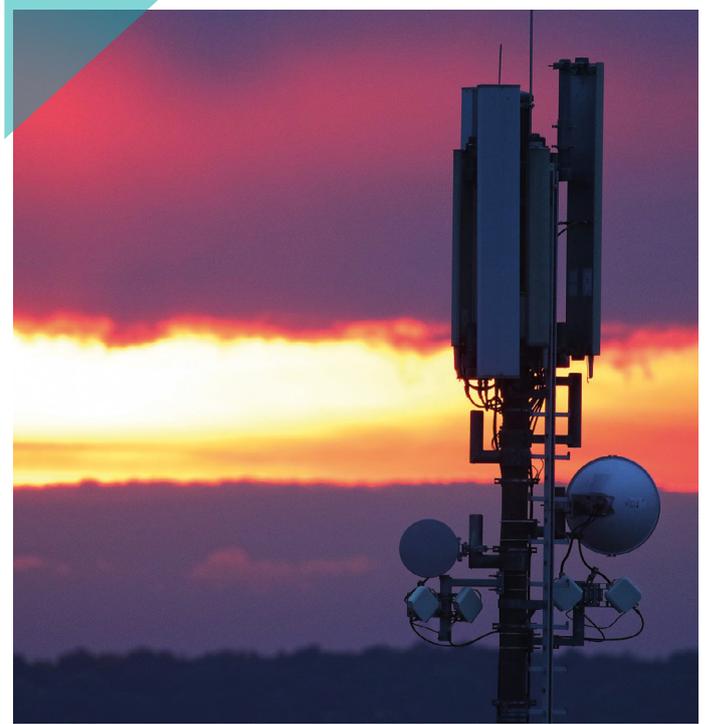
MIDLANDS ENGINE DIGITAL CONNECTED MAP

The evidence base to support digital infrastructure delivery and investment

For the first time, we have a full understanding of regional connectivity thanks to the completion of the first phase of the Midlands Engine Digital Connected Map.

Developed in collaboration with mobile operators, local authority partners, Ordnance Survey, universities and our partners, WM5G, our map shows public assets, and the extent of connections currently in place from all digital services - from superfast broadband and 3G, to the more sought after and demanded technologies today which will support digitised businesses and communities: 4G, 5G, fibre and gigabit connections. Revealing gaps, needs and investment opportunities, it provides an invaluable picture of current coverage and where services are needed most.

Work is underway to use this uniquely formative evidence base to drive more investment to the Midlands to accelerate connectivity and drive regional economic prosperity.



MIDLANDS DIGITAL Powering digital transformation

Leading digital experts, technology firms and public sector influencers have been convened by the Midlands Engine to establish a Midlands digital leadership group.

This influential partnership is working to accelerate regional digital transformation, showcasing our impressive capabilities and pinpointing potential for growth. We will also actively seek opportunities to scale up digital and technology innovation as an early adopter and testbed of choice, for emerging and new technologies - leveraging existing and emerging regional capabilities.

Our partnership focus on digital recognises the role that digital connectivity and digitised businesses, together with smart public services, can play in underpinning the future competitiveness of our region. Our aim is not to catch up with the best-connected places, it is instead for the Midlands to be a region of connectivity, digital innovation and expertise - powering a prosperous economy and inclusive society.

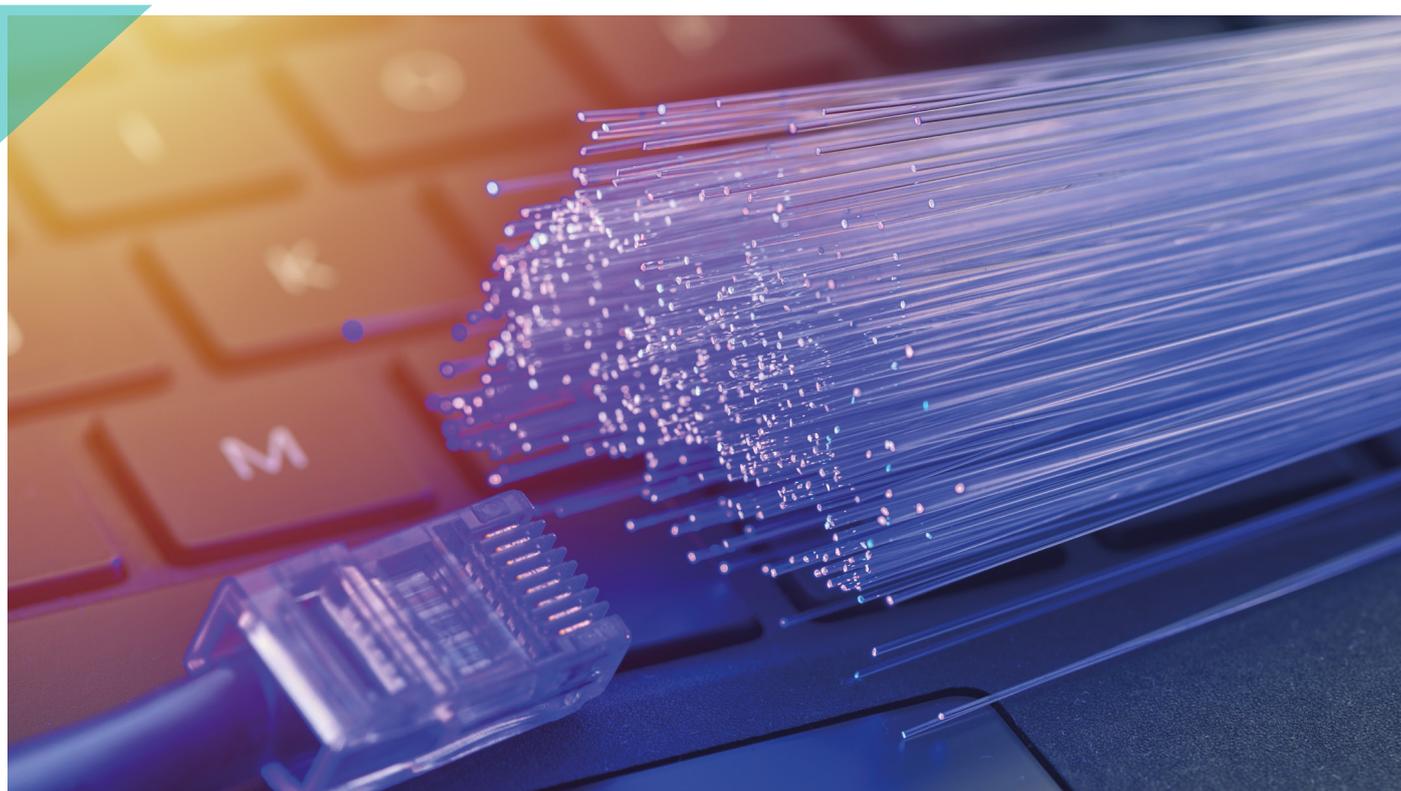
Transforming digital means tackling the challenges of the digital divide and digital poverty too - our work to accelerate connectivity to every part of our region and to address the digital skills gap will create new opportunities for our communities and drive social mobility.

PROJECT GIGABIT

Connecting the hard-to-reach homes and businesses

The government has launched Project Gigabit with the aim of connecting one million of the hardest-to-reach homes and businesses to next generation gigabit broadband.

The Midlands Engine and our partners WM5G are now working with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to explore ways we can accelerate roll-out in the Midlands.



DIME - DISCONTINUOUS INNOVATION IN THE MIDLANDS ENGINE

Seizing digital potential, today and in the future

Our DIME report focuses on helping our partnership identify and understand the gap between where we are now with technology adoption and application. Huge potential exists to be an early adopter of the technologies of the future, which will continue to transform business and industry.

Delivered by our Midlands Engine Observatory, with work led by Loughborough and Coventry Universities,

key findings highlight how a technology 'leapfrog' might be possible (e.g. expediting 3G areas direct to 5G, 6G or satellite) and how future technologies might be brought to our region first as they emerge.

With such exciting potential being revealed, work to develop DIME 2 is now underway with a sharp focus on delivery in the Midlands.

CASE STUDIES

Turning digital opportunities into real world wins

MIDLANDS ENGINE DIGITAL JANUARY 2022

THE WORLD'S FIRST 5G CONNECTED FOREST

"There is no better opportunity to trial 5G in a forest setting anywhere else in the UK - not just for the area's geography, but for its rich and fascinating history.

"I see the 5G Connected Forest project as the start of a journey that will truly see Nottinghamshire on the regional, national and international tourism and environment management maps; as well as providing us with the opportunity to build the digital skills and opportunities of our residents and businesses."

Anthony May,
Chief Executive Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council



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5G HELPS KEEP TRAM PASSENGERS SAFE

"The collaboration between West Midlands Metro, West Midlands 5G, Icomera and GoMedia has enabled us to use the advances in 5G technology to monitor the tram network in real-time.

"We now have the proven ability to transmit CCTV footage to our Operational Control Centre and the Regional Traffic Control Centre quickly, reliably and securely - helping us to improve passenger safety. We are pleased to be pioneers on this project, which has helped to demonstrate the future potential that 5G can offer."

Sophie Allison,
Head of Business Transformation, West Midlands Metro



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DEDICATED CENTRES TO MEET SKILLS SHORTAGES

"South Staffordshire College is always actively looking for innovative ways in which we can support individuals and business to develop the skills needed to thrive in today's world."

"The development of these state-of-the-art Digital Skills Centres, coupled with the support of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP and Midlands Engine, will greatly improve the availability of skilled digital professionals in our area as well as provide much needed essential skills training for individuals."

Kirk Hookham,
Deputy CEO, South Staffordshire College



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BRITAIN'S FIRST 5G FACTORY TRIAL

"Going live with the UK's first 5G factory trials (with Worcester Bosch and Yamazaki Mazak) marked a monumental step in delivering the vision of the Worcestershire 5G Testbed to bring a productivity increase to the manufacturing sector and the UK economy."

"We are proud of the collaboration between all consortium members in making this happen and will be working closely to deliver the expected results from the live 5G trials."

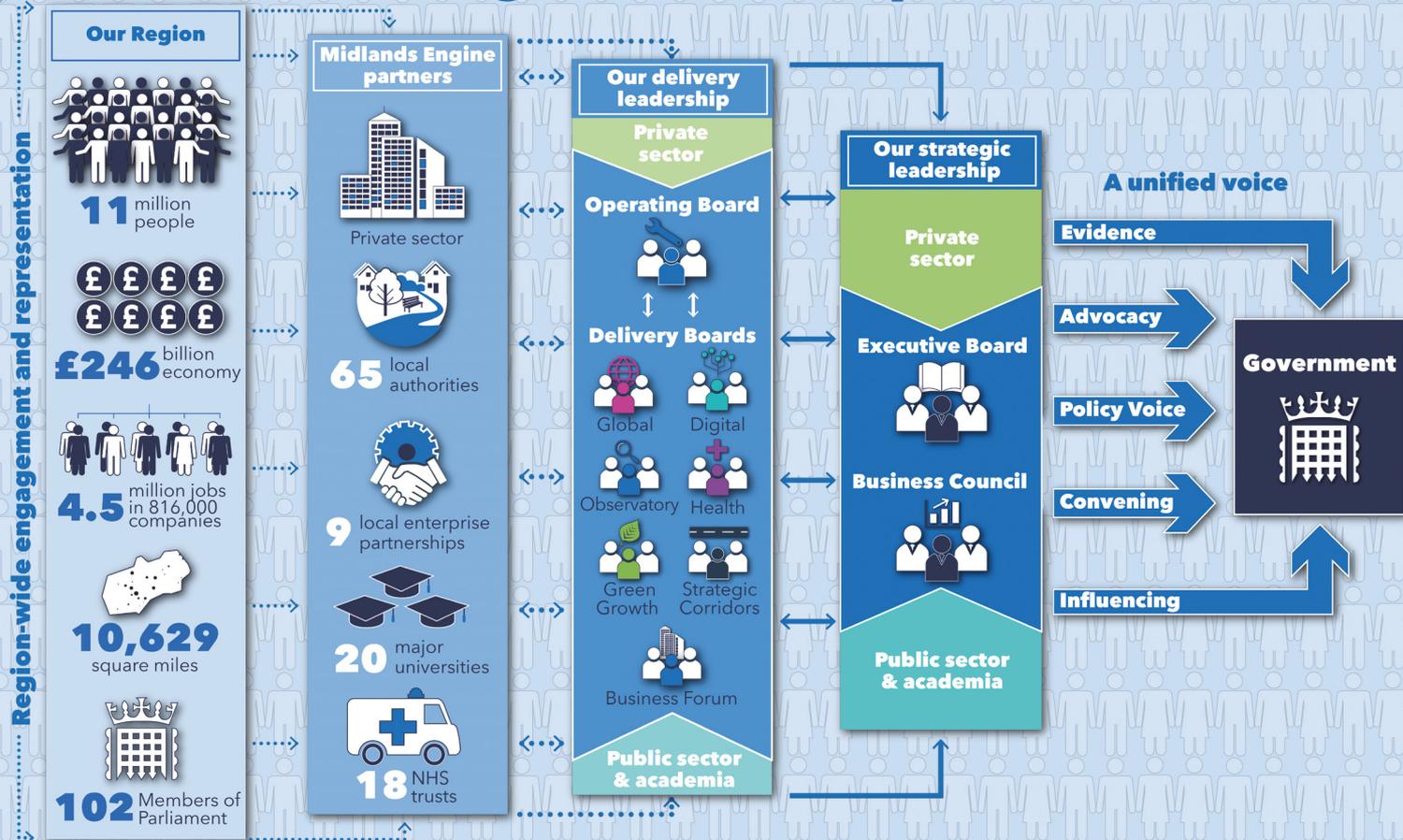
Mark Stansfeld,
Chair, Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership and
Worcestershire 5G Testbed & Trials



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Our Midlands Engine Partnership



Our Partnership - The Midlands Engine is the largest regional economy in the UK outside London and the place that 11 million people call home. Our Midlands Engine Partnership spans the heart of the UK. Working at scale, we focus on adding value - tackling the things that really matter in our region to drive prosperity for our communities and businesses.

Our Impact - Together, we make sure the Midlands voice is heard and act as a positive agent for economic, social and environmental change, to benefit every single part of our region. We do this through shared intent, collaborative investment and a unified voice, direct to Government.

MIDLANDS ENGINE



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The Midlands Engine is a coalition of local authorities, local enterprise partnerships, universities and businesses across the region, actively working with government to build a collective identity, to enable us to present the Midlands as a competitive and compelling offer that is attractive at home and overseas. Copyright © 2022 The Midlands Engine, All rights reserved.

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