
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

1. Introduction

1.1 I met with Ben Bradshaw, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, as part of his visit to the region on 25 February. His itinerary included visits to some of *emda's* important investments in the arts, cultural and sport sector including SportPark at Loughborough University and Curve in Leicester.

1.2 On 26 February ONS published the revised national GDP growth rate estimate for Quarter 4 2009. The first estimate, published in January, was 0.1%. This has now been revised upwards to 0.3%. Although this growth rate is still modest by historic standards, it is significant given the severity of the recent recession and the performance of the Eurozone.

1.3 The final Regional Scrutiny Board (RSB) was held on 18 February, marking the formal conclusion of the East Midlands Assembly's scrutiny of *emda*. Over the past year the RSB has concluded scrutiny on a number of areas of *emda* activity, including: energy; business support; worklessness; innovation and international trade. The RSB has published reviews for these areas, which include recommendations for *emda* and a range of regional partners. In response *emda* has submitted Action Plans and Final Assessment Reports on each of the Reviews, all of which have been signed off by the Board. Although the scrutiny relationship between *emda* and the region's Local Authorities through the Assembly has concluded, *emda* will continue to work constructively with Local Authorities at a strategic level through the new governance structures and as partners in the development and delivery of the Regional Strategy.

1.4 Pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca announced on 2 March that they would be closing their R&D facility in Loughborough by the end of 2011, with the loss of 1,200 jobs in the region. We had been aware that the company was carrying out a review of their operations worldwide and knew that there was a risk of job losses, but we had no indication that the facility would be closed until the day of the announcement. We have established a task force involving regional and local partners, with the following objectives: to help the people affected find new jobs; to identify new uses for the site; to assess the broader economic impact and to stimulate new opportunities for the local economy. The company is aiming to have a project team in place by mid-March to manage the closure. A number of the jobs are likely to be relocated elsewhere, but it may be some time before the details are known.

2. Raising Productivity

2.1 Employment, Learning and Skills

2.1.1 In advance of formally taking on the new responsibilities in relation to the development of the Regional Skills Strategy in April 2010, *emda* has produced a

Regional Priorities Statement for skills. This will influence the annual budgets and set the targets and priorities issued by BIS to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). BIS has instructed the regionally-based shadow SFA teams to discuss with their RDA how the Regional Priorities Statements will influence contracting with their providers. *emda* has already started to have monthly meetings with the shadow SFA to discuss future working, including contact with providers.

2.1.2 The East Midlands Higher Education Institutes have been allocated £592k from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to deliver 370 **graduate internships** across the East Midlands, enabling businesses in the region to benefit from the skills and experience of a recent graduate to deliver a business specific project over a three to six month period. *emda* was instrumental in encouraging a collaborative approach to the delivery of the internships ensuring a clear, single offer is available across the region. The East Midlands was one of only two regionally coordinated bids submitted, which was led by DeMontfort University on behalf of all institutes in the East Midlands, including the Open University. The programme has been designed to be flexible for the graduate and receptive to the needs of the SMEs in response to the request from the Federation of Small Businesses.

2.1.3 *emda* and Unleashing Enterprise, in partnership with the Colleges and University of Leicester Network, hosted a Further Education seminar on 24 February entitled **Enterprise Matters – Unleashing Enterprise Talent in the Further Education Sector**. Key messages delivered during the event included the need for colleges to embed enterprise throughout their curriculum and to encourage enterprising behaviours amongst staff in order to underpin the aims of the regional enterprise culture strategy. *emda* and Unleashing Enterprise are currently developing joint activity focusing on colleges with opportunities for them to get involved in a number of forthcoming activities:

- the delivery of a bespoke FE Challenge project to offer colleges the opportunity to be involved in a challenge event designed around exploiting low carbon economy opportunities;
- the implementation of a BIS-led 'Qualify with a Business' pilot, to integrate key business skills alongside the vocational training; and
- the creation of a regional FE enterprise network, building on the activity of an existing county FE colleges network in Leicestershire to engage enterprising colleges from across the whole region.

2.2 Enterprise and Business Support

Enterprise

2.2.1 The **Ethnic Minority Business Advocacy Network (EMBAN)** is a two year project being run by RDAs, led by *emda*, to provide a single strategic voice on ethnic minority businesses across the UK. Its establishment was a recommendation of the Ethnic Minority Task Force that reported in November last year. We are planning for the formal announcement of EMBAN to take place at the Ethnic Minority Business Awards in the North West on 11 March. The event will be a prestigious celebration of ethnic success

in enterprise and business, with over 500 ethnic minority businesses attending, including significant numbers of influential ethnic intermediaries and major banks such as HSBC, Lloyds TSB and the Royal Bank of Scotland. Press coverage will raise the profile of, and demonstrate the cross-regional approach being taken by EMBAN.

2.2.2 *emda* Board member Parvin Ali represented the RDAs at an **Ethnic Minority Business Roundtable** meeting with Minister of Trade, Investment and Small Business, Lord Davies of Abersoch. The focus of the discussion was on the challenges faced by ethnic entrepreneurs. Lord Davies asked for a follow-up meeting with Roundtable members and representatives of the banking sector to discuss access to finance issues, which subsequently took place on 1 March and was attended by Parvin and Bryan Jackson, in his role as RDA representative on Lord Mandelson's Small Business Finance Forum.

2.2.3 One of the recommendations of the national **Women's Enterprise Task Force** was for Enterprise Champions to be appointed. Their role is voluntary and they will provide advice and guidance to BIS Ministers and RDAs and look at ways of raising the profile of women's enterprise, working with existing women's networks both regionally and on a national basis. If the UK could achieve the same levels of female entrepreneurship as the US, Britain would gain three quarters of a million more businesses. The Enterprise Champion for the East Midlands is Sharon Roberts from Vision Consultants, who was recruited in February. Sharon will be supported in this role by *emda* and a national and regional PR package that is being provided by BIS. Regional Enterprise Champions will lead on future national roundtable events on Women's Enterprise that have been proposed by Lord Davies.

2.2.4 An event at the Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre on 4 February provided a selection of third sector organisations with the benefit of **Business Champions'** experience and knowledge of the business world, as well as offers of ongoing support. The event was designed to encourage local business people to engage with voluntary sector organisations that take the lead in the delivery of health and social care services. This event aligns with the focus of the Business Champions on supporting the third sector and educational activity.

2.2.5 *emda* will be taking part in a BIS co-ordinated national 1 year **pathfinder project** alongside the North West Development Agency, One North East and Yorkshire Forward. The project will link the current Business Link Start-up Service and Intensive Start-up Service with a range of regionally identified priority sector vocational courses in five colleges across each participating region. Learners who want to start their own business will study a level 3 vocational course and have the opportunity to access a coherent package of business support whilst training. *emda* is representing all RDAs on the Project Governance Board along with colleagues from the Skills Funding Agency, BIS and the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils. The pilot will run for 2 years starting from September 2010 and will be evaluated by BIS to shape the design of a subsequent national service.

Business Support

2.2.6 On 11 February, *emda*, in conjunction with Business Link, held its second **Meet the Buyer event** of the year in Kegworth. The event was specifically aimed at the region's food and drink sector and over 30 businesses attended and met with a range of public sector buyers. The Meet the Buyer programme is part of *emda*'s wider strategy to help maximise the opportunities of public sector procurement for the regional economy through the Regional Procurement Opportunities Plan. A previous Construction Meet the Buyer was held at the Walkers Stadium on 27 January in conjunction with the East Midlands Property Alliance - over 100 construction firms attended and met face to face with key buyers.

2.2.7 As part of *emda*'s continued response to support business in the current climate and help them prepare for the upturn, *emda* has extended the provision of its popular **Route to Market** programme. A further 25 workshops are being staged across the region and 130 businesses, against a target of 90, have been enrolled onto the programme and are currently receiving support in areas such as Business Strategy, Finance and Sales & Marketing.

2.2.8 The *emda* funded **Improving Your Resource Efficiency (IYRE)** East Midlands Programme has now been in operation for over six months. During that time the project has provided free, expert advice to 55 companies on how to manage their resources more efficiently and improve business performance. The advice consists of up to one day of on site support focusing on energy, water, waste and clean design issues, using a resource efficiency diagnostic provided by Business Link as a guide. Initial data for the first 37 companies has identified average potential savings of £26.7k per company per year. The programme will support 445 companies up to March 2012 using an *emda* investment of £660k (including a £60k contribution from the Greater Nottingham Partnership).

2.2.9 *emda* funding of £120k for Rutland County Council has helped fund the transformation of **Rutland Workspace Centre**, Ashwell. The former County Council-owned depot, comprising office building, garage and warehouse, has been converted into a complex of broadband-enabled business premises. The new units provide two workshops, six offices, four business units and meeting room for local businesses. The units are aimed at both existing businesses that have outgrown their premises and to new start-ups. The redevelopment, which was completed in February 2010, provides an alternative location for businesses currently occupying inappropriate and limited space in the Oakham West End. The new site is easily accessible from Oakham town centre and close to the Oakham by-pass. It is anticipated that these affordable new premises will encourage the creation of new businesses and jobs in the area.

Business Investment

2.2.10 To date **Grant for Research and Development (GRD)** payments totalling £3.342m, representing 74% of the annual budget have been made by the Business Investment Team. These payments represent Single Programme expenditure of

£2.378m and ERDF expenditure of £964k. The team have also made five GRD offers across the region totalling £324k, including an award of £68k to a company based at BioCity, to develop a patentable oral delivery mechanism for epilepsy treatment.

2.2.11 A further five companies have been awarded grants totalling £553k by *emda*, under the **Grant for Business Investment** (GBI) scheme. Two of these five grants have also been awarded with the support of ERDF funding. So far this financial year, payments totalling £2.8m have been made to 59 companies under the GBI scheme, representing 87% of the scheme's annual budget. These payments have created and safeguarded 501 jobs, leveraged £44.9m of private sector investment and developed 73,196 sq.m. of employment floorspace.

2.2.12 **Connect InvoRed**, the region-wide investment readiness programme, delivered by Connect Midlands, has now been rebranded Understanding Finance for Business as part of the national Solutions for Business portfolio. I helped to facilitate the Connect Midlands Investment Conference (CMIC) last November, at which 15 businesses from both the East and West Midlands 'pitched' for investment to an audience of venture capitalists and business angels from across the UK. One of these companies, BioControl Limited, announced in January that it had raised £200k following the event and a number of presenting companies are also in negotiations with investors. I also attended the first London Investment Conference, held by Connect Midlands, on 20 January at Taylor Wessing's offices in the City. This event attracted 90 delegates, including 60 investors, and four of the 8 companies that presented were from the region.

2.2.13 We formally closed the **East Midlands Transition Loan Fund** (TLF) to new applications on 30 November 2009. TLFs were announced in the Pre-Budget Report in November 2008, and were intended to be a temporary intervention, pending other Government measures to stimulate bank lending. Our £6m fund has already offered 47 loans to the value of £5.5m to businesses employing 2,462 staff and will be fully committed by 31 March.

2.2.14 I am pleased to report that the **East Midlands Early Growth Fund** has had a busy start to 2010 with new investments already made in three internet-based companies, LoveStruck, Inafishbowl and Utilities Exchange. To date, the fund has invested £2.2m in 22 businesses. This has attracted £3.7m of private sector angel matched funding.

International

2.2.15 Since the start of April there have been 27 *emda*-involved **inward investment** successes, with a total of 1,794 associated jobs created or safeguarded (against annual targets of 35 and 2,800 respectively).

2.2.16 Since my last report to Board there have been nine successes:

- Turkish company Tera Teknik, who provide business intelligence to a variety of sectors including IT, have set up a UK operation in Leicester creating 16 new jobs.

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- Lecky Metal Ornaments of Singapore have established a UK operation for the manufacture of ornamental ironmongery in Swadlincote, Derbyshire and 25 new jobs will be created.

2.2.17 Other international activities since my last report included:

- Involvement in UKTI's global investment conference in the Saatchi Gallery on 22 February, which was opened and closed by the Prime Minister and attended by other Cabinet colleagues. The event showcased the UK as Europe's prime investment location to some 250 CEOs from global companies – we were able to make senior level contacts with some of our existing investors as well as prospective investors such as Chinese Pharmaceutical company Tasly.
- Attending a new International Waste to Energy event in London, where we shared a stand with the Waste Management team from Northampton University - resulting in four enquiries from companies proposing to visit the region in the coming months.
- Hosting a visit from a delegation from Shanghai Pudong, following up a memorandum of understanding signed with them previously – they were particularly interested in the region's strengths in Transportation and Healthcare.

2.2.18 Organised by Medilink, the **UK Trade & Investment and Office of Life Sciences Roadshow** got under way in the East Midlands on 3 February. More than 100 delegates attended the roadshow event at Bio City, the first in a series to introduce the Office of Life Sciences' Blueprint to industry and other partners across the country. The Blueprint recognises that the potential to transform the UK Life Sciences industry will only be realised fully through effective global marketing. The overall objective of the roadshow programme is to create an opportunity for Life Science companies and regional partners to discuss the Government's actions and commitments to support the growth of the UK Life Science sector.

2.2.19 The number of recorded large-scale contractions in the private sector fell to 2 in January, down from 3 in December; this downward trend was not reflected in job losses which rose to 205 in January, compared to 123 losses in December.

Tourism

2.2.20 The tourism strategy for developing the visitor economy in the region, '**Destination East Midlands**', comes to an end this year. In preparation for developing a new strategy to guide the future direction of tourism development in the region, East Midlands Tourism will shortly be going out to consultation, seeking the views of the industry and key stakeholders to help shape the future direction of the visitor economy over the next ten years. The strategy is due to be completed in the autumn. Since the first strategy was developed seven years ago the tourism landscape has changed significantly. There has been a growth in online booking, and greater access into the region through the introduction of low cost flights into East Midlands Airport and the development of the Eurostar terminal to St Pancras. There are five destination management partnerships in place, working with local authorities across the region, and a dedicated programme in place to work with businesses in achieving higher standards of

quality in every aspect of the visitor journey. Nationally Visit England has been established to promote England in domestic markets and in key European markets.

2.2.21 Five tourism businesses from the region have been shortlisted for the **National Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2010**. The finalists will attend a national awards ceremony held in Brighton on St George's Day. The region's finalists are in the categories of Access for All, B&B, Self-catering accommodation, Small Hotel and Tourist Information Centre. On 29 March East Midlands Tourism will announce the official opening of the regional awards for 2010, the winners of which will go on to the 2011 national awards. The awards celebrate the achievements of businesses that are driving tourism through their commitment to delivering quality and excellence. Open to businesses of all sizes, there are 16 categories, including Large and Small Attraction, Best Pub Experience, Sustainable Tourism and Guest Accommodation.

2.3 Innovation

2.3.1 **East Midlands Innovation** has been in place for almost five years, chaired by Barry Stickings, former president of BASF Europe and current chair of BioCity Nottingham. At the next Council meeting on 12 March Barry will formally announce his resignation. We are planning formally to thank Barry for his services and leadership of East Midlands Innovation at the iFestival celebratory dinner on 22 April, being held at the Roundhouse in Derby. Board members are welcome to attend the dinner.

2.3.2 The successful implementation of the Regional Innovation Strategy over the past 3 years has influenced other regions to consider similar approaches. Consequently we are now seeing other RDAs adopt the **iNet** model, with Yorkshire Forward (YF) recently agreeing a funding package to launch four iNets covering four priority sectors. YF are also adopting the format of the iFestival within the South Yorkshire area, which builds upon the successful cross-border Transport iNet event held at Robin Hood Airport during our 2009 iFestival. South West Development Agency has also followed suit and recently East of England Development Agency met the team to gain an insight into the process of establishing relationships with partners, which has been a significant factor in the success of iNets.

2.3.3 The Technology Strategy Board (TSB) also sees the iNets as key to helping cement the relationships of the Knowledge Transfer Networks (KTNs) within the regions, which is an important component of the revised KTN National Strategy. The TSB has also been extremely positive about the iFestival model and we are currently in discussion with them about support for rolling out the iFestival across the regions.

2.3.4 As previously reported, we had a successful visit to the Brussels Open Days event in October 2009 where we took part in a workshop on the development and implementation of regional innovation strategies. During the visit, we met key people within the European Commission's departments for Innovation and Research who were impressed with the implementation and success of the RIS including **Peter Droell, the Commission's Head of Innovation Policy**. We are delighted that Peter has agreed to attend the last few days of the iFestival and be the main guest at the celebratory dinner.

His attendance will be significant in helping raise the profile of our innovation activities across Europe.

2.3.5 Lord Mandelson recently announced the creation of a **Low Carbon Economic Area (LCEA) for advanced Automotive Engineering** in the Midlands. The world-leading automotive innovation, research and technological expertise located across the Midlands will be harnessed to establish a market lead in the global development and production of low carbon vehicles. The status will act as a signpost to companies around the world that the world-class businesses, research and technology organisations based in the Midlands should be the first port of call in developing and producing low carbon vehicles and related technologies. Through the LCEA, we will work with Advantage West Midlands and in partnership with industry and universities, to help develop low carbon solutions for key technologies such as motors and aerodynamics. The Transport iNet will be the main route for the delivery in this region.

2.3.6 On 28 January the **Transport iNet**, with the Midlands Aerospace Alliance, hosted an event that helped businesses understand market opportunities and technologies relating to Unmanned Aerospace Vehicles (UAVs). More than 100 people attended to hear industry specialists, including speakers from BAE Systems and Cosworth, showcase their expertise in UAV technology systems and their application to modern markets. UAV technology facilitates the use of remotely-piloted and self-piloted aircraft, which up until recently has been used primarily for military purposes. New research has enabled the development of innovative UAV systems which are now being used everywhere from police forces to power pylon surveying.

2.3.7 Despite the impact of the recession on the construction industry, there are still growth opportunities. Supported by the Sustainable Construction iNet, **Oregon Timber**, has used a £10k Innovation Support Grant to develop new timber-frame panel designs needed to achieve levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 (zero carbon) in the Code for Sustainable Homes. They are now planning to develop their Derbyshire premises, creating between 10 and 20 new jobs.

2.3.8 The iNet will be attending the **Ecobuild exhibition** at Earl's Court in March and will be showcasing Nottingham based LEDinlight who will be exhibiting the latest in low energy lighting, while Mansfield based Hertalan will exhibit its green roofing solutions.

2.3.9 A company supported through the **Healthcare iNet** was featured in the Daily Express in February. Attenborough Dental, based in Nottingham, will make a £1m investment in digital technology, which is expected to generate 30 per cent growth over the next year. Scans of patients' mouths can be transmitted directly to Attenborough's laboratory. Here, using facial remodeling techniques, better fitting and more affordable new bridges, crowns and orthodontic devices, can be made more quickly with turnaround times of a day rather than weeks. The article mentioned the support the company obtained from the iNet to help it source specialist manufacturing equipment and to develop overseas trade links and partnerships with universities in the region.

3. Ensuring Sustainability

3.1 Transport and Logistics

3.1.1 As reported last month, *emda* has been actively engaged with partners in communicating the strength of the case and the economic potential of upgrading the **Midland Main Line**. This included involvement in the Parliamentary reception event held before Christmas, and a session with the Regional Select Committee in January. In February, the Transport Select Committee published a report on investment in the railway that includes a strong recommendation that electrification of the rail network should be seen as a top national priority, particularly the Midland Main Line. The Committee's report has now been submitted to the Government for consideration. It is, however, clearly positive in terms of adding further weight to the input already made by East Midlands and Yorkshire partners.

3.2 Land and Development

3.2.1 The **East Midlands Urban Development Fund** was launched on 9 February. It has been created by *emda* to provide a flexible means of investing in capital projects that focus on innovation and potential high growth sectors within the region's principal urban areas. The Fund comprises contributions of £10m from ERDF and a commitment of £5m of *emda* funding. It is anticipated that at least a further £5m will be generated from private sources. Investment will be made in the form of equity, loans or loan guarantees, and any income generated can be reinvested into other projects. An arms length company (Jessica East Midlands) has been established to control the Fund, whilst day-to-day management will be the responsibility of property consultants King Sturge who have been appointed following a competitive tender process. *emda* Board member Haydn Biddle has been appointed to the Board of Jessica East Midlands. An Investment Committee will be established to provide the Board with views on the strategic fit and suitability of the investments. Committee members will include a range of regional partners who have expertise and knowledge in higher education; industry; innovation; and finance.

3.2.2 Work on a multi-million pound regeneration scheme of **Clay Cross town centre**, which is set to transform this North East Derbyshire former mining town, has officially begun. This scheme was originally started by English Partnerships over 14 years ago and since 1999 *emda* has worked closely with partners to address the complex issues of numerous planning permissions, land assembly through Compulsory Purchase Orders, and the removal of 100,000 cubic metres of spoil, which has blighted the town since the closure of the colliery two decades ago. A new Tesco superstore, retail units, bus station and link road will be created as part of the first phase of the £22m regeneration scheme, with £9.2m of funding coming from *emda* and the HCA. Over 450 new jobs will be created when Tesco opens, more than half of which have been secured for local people as part of an innovative partnership arrangement.

3.2.3 The Conservative Party's Planning Green Paper, '**Open Source Planning**' was published on 22 February. If the Conservative Party gains power at the next election, the

Paper suggests that they will instigate a radical change to the planning system with a greater emphasis on civic engagement and collaborative democracy. Covering a broad spectrum of issues and many substantive changes, the Paper includes proposals for:

- Abolishing regional planning and regional house-building targets;
- Introducing a new process for Third Party appeal by which developers can voluntarily agree to compensate immediate neighbours for amenity impacts and to overcome their objections;
- Providing Council Tax matching financial incentives for local authorities to bring forward new house building with affordable housing more strongly incentivised;
- Abolishing the Infrastructure Planning Commission, whilst retaining its expertise and fast-track application process;
- Replacing the Community Infrastructure Levy with a local tariff system to sit alongside Section 106 planning obligations.

4. Achieving Equality

4.1 On 19 February *emda* participated in a visit of the **Equalities and Human Rights Commission** (EHRC) to the region. The purpose of the visit was to introduce Tim Wainwright (EHRC English Regions Director) and the new (interim) EHRC Communications Director, Richard Emmott, to key regional stakeholders, to illustrate how the EHRC regional team works in partnership with stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sector, and to explore future joint working opportunities. The visit gave us an opportunity to showcase the work we have done in relation to our Integrated Equalities Scheme.

4.2 Also on 19 February Ann Cartwright attended '**Voice 2010**' in Cardiff – the annual National Social Enterprise conference organised by the Social Enterprise Coalition (SEC). *emda* was also represented as part of a national exhibition on the Social Enterprise Business Support Programme, which aims to create effective sector products, services and knowledge sharing networks to support the growth of social enterprises in England.

4.3 Over 70 delegates from private, public and community sectors attended the **East Midlands Rural Broadband summit** held at *emda* on 12 February. The event was chaired by *emda* board Members Geoff Stevens and Tricia Pedlar and focused on the implications of 'Digital Britain' for rural areas, where there is a real risk of businesses and communities being excluded from economic and other opportunities due to market failure in high speed broadband provision. The event aimed to gather input into the development of a strategic approach to rural broadband to inform the development of the Regional Strategy; and to inform the development of the forthcoming rural broadband fund within the RDPE. The initial allocation for this fund is £400k but *emda* is exploring with Defra the scope to use other existing Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funds to augment this total to bring the fund up to £4.4m. A response is currently awaited.

4.4 **Learn to Earn**, a three year project to increase the skills and employment opportunities of people in the County part of the Leicestershire sub-region has recently finished. Supporting incapacity benefit recipients into work and up skilling residents of

deprived communities are priorities for action identified by the Economic Development block of the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA). The focus of this project was to move people who are currently on incapacity benefits into employment by a series of support measures. A total of £504k of *emda* funding between 2007 and 2009 supported individuals using the service, assisting 125 people to get a job and 640 people in their skills development.

4.5 A total of £484k of *emda* funding has been awarded to Nottinghamshire County Council to support the construction of the **Worksop Community Hub**, a purpose-built multi-functional facility that will act as a focal point for the people of Worksop. Existing old and poor quality premises will be replaced by one modern facility offering a range of services including a library, an adult day services centre, provision for people with learning disabilities and youth drop-in facilities. There will be flexible space for community and cultural events and interview and meeting rooms for conferences. The Hub will be equipped with IT for public use, as well as for use for training opportunities.

4.6 **YMCA Derbyshire** has rebuilt part of its main facility in Derby to create fit for purpose accommodation and a new vocational training centre. It is based on a university campus concept with areas of accommodation, a café with internet facilities as well as dedicated areas for vocational training and personal development. *emda* has contributed £312k towards the cost of the vocational training centre that will offer access to pre-vocational and vocational training. It will also benefit the wider community by offering training provision to non-residents who are not in education, employment or training, as well as basic skills and vocational training for people in low skilled employment. This new facility will also address sector skills shortages by providing recognised training in specific industrial sectors that are important to the economic growth of Derby.