

## **Suffolk Business Board presentation**

**28<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

- Alignment with Suffolk Economic Strategy
- About Freeport East
- Enterprise & Innovation
- Green Freight Corridor

## Key Sectors

- Ports/Logistics/Trade
- Clean Energy/Green Industries
- Agri-tech/Agri-food
- Digital
- Advanced Manufacturing

## Enabling growth

- Attracting Investment
- Strengthening our infrastructure base (public and private)
- Enterprise & Innovation (inc new capital to support SME growth)
- Talent & Skills
- A focus on Place

## EPIC

- Freeport East complements others and wants to be focused on where it adds greatest value
- Landscape has changed much within 2 years.....

# About Freeport East (1)



- Freeport East is a public-private partnership
- Freeport East Ltd acts as counterparty to Government to deliver freeport policy
- Formed in 2022 with HQ in Harwich
- We bring together ports, Universities, innovation centres, research institutes, innovative SMEs and major international companies, together with national, regional and local Government
- Freeport area covers over 1000sqkm in total
- 3 specific “catalyst” sites with tax reliefs (Harwich, Felixstowe and Stowmarket/G14)
- £300m+ of business rate income over 25 years
- We aim to work with ambitious UK and international businesses looking to grow their footprint in the UK.....

## About Freeport East (2)

### Policy development

- March 2021 – Government announce Freeports
- December 2022 – Freeport East Ltd established (with 1 FTE)
- January 2023 – Government sign-off Freeport East Business Case (proposals)
- December 2023 – Government set out Freeports Delivery Roadmap – addressing barriers within Government to effective delivery of Freeports
- October 2024 – post-election, new Government states strong support for UK Freeports
- November 2024 onwards – increasing engagement with Government on how Freeports can support Industrial Strategy, Local Growth Plans, Clean Power 2030, etc.....
- Into 2025 – new office/innovation hub in Harwich, 9 FTE, strong Government relationship, major investments secured, several innovation collaborations, skills programmes commencing, emerging stories to tell.....

### Mechanics and delivery

- Business Rate collection – 25 years from 2023 to 2047
- Tax reliefs on three “catalyst” sites – available until 2031
- £25m seed capital delivery on catalyst sites – to be spent through to Q2 2026

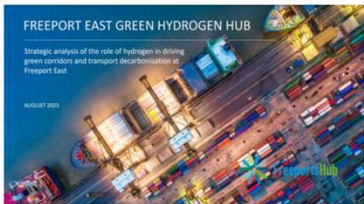
## 5.1 P1 – ESTABLISH FREEPORT EAST LTD

- Company Incorporated on 6 December 2022
- Head Office set up in Harwich
- Freeport East Full Business Case approved by Government in January 2023
- Company Articles of Association agreed and published
- CEO and Chair appointed through open, public recruitment exercises. Further appointments of key members of the Executive team also made
- Governance frameworks and key operating policies developed and implemented
- Memorandum of Understanding between Freeport East and Government agreed and published



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## 5.2 P2 - DELIVER AN AMBITIOUS VISION



Green Hydrogen Hub published report



CGI image of Bathside Bay, Harwich

- Set out plans to deliver the 122 hectare Bathside Bay port expansion project, with potential to bring thousands of jobs and a key asset to support the UK's offshore wind objectives
- Rapidly established Gateway 14 as a key inward investment destination in East Anglia and a driver of local growth.
- Worked with local authorities and skills partners to establish blueprint for a new Skills & Innovation Centre in Stowmarket.
- Established our vision for developing an internationally-significant Green Hydrogen Hub, leveraging our location as part of the wider East of England clean energy cluster
- Set out plans for Harwich to act as a nationally-significant hub for clean energy and maritime innovation and productivity

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## 5.3 P3 – DELIVER INVESTMENT

- First new occupier for Gateway 14 announced - The Range with a £200m investment and set to create 1650 jobs.
- Plans announced for a new £150m Scottish Power green hydrogen facility at the Port of Felixstowe.
- Two further investments approved for Gateway 14 – Bauder from Germany and Assan Panel from Türkiye.
- A strategic partnership signed to support Rux Energy, from Australia, in establishing their novel hydrogen storage technology in the UK.
- Launched our first business support programme, designed to allocate £1million in grant funding to local businesses through our Innovation & Skills and Clean Growth Funds.
- Spread the word internationally – for example, we joined a clean energy trade mission to Türkiye, highlighting opportunities to increase trade and investment with the Freeport East region.

Images: Top: Gateway 14 Development site

Middle: Signing of Memorandum of Understanding with Rux Energy

Bottom: Freeport East presenting at clean energy trade mission to Türkiye



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## 5.4 P4 - MAKE THE MOST OF OUR VISIBILITY AND VOICE



- Worked with partners to push for key Government investments in the region, most notably new rail enhancements at Ely & Haughley Junction.
- Held two Freeport East launch events - in Westminster and at New Suffolk College in Ipswich.
- Kicked off our engagement with young people with a successful Freight & Logistics hackathon event at the Clacton Coastal Academy.
- Launched our new website to promote Freeport East.
- Launched our series of business engagement seminars to raise our profile amongst local businesses and target sectors.
- Attended and spoke at numerous briefings and engagements with Ministers, MPs, local councillors, chambers of commerce, conservation groups, businesses and skills providers.

Images: Top: Launch event at Suffolk New College in Ipswich

Left: Freeport East website

Right: Clacton Coastal Academy event

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## What it means in practice....

Attracting inward investment to bring jobs and new opportunities.....

Assan Panel  
(Stowmarket)

Rux Energy  
(Harwich)

Scottish Power & RWE  
(Felixstowe & Harwich)

Bauder  
(Ipswich & Stowmarket)

Using Freeport East capital funds to stimulate and support growth.....

Felixstowe tax site  
remediation & grid

Gateway 14 Skills &  
Innovation Centre

Clean Growth Fund  
(c. £500k, 8 SMEs)

Skills & Innovation Fund  
(c. £500k)

Providing funding to help grow high-potential local businesses.....

MKC Rail  
(Clacton)

Insight Energy  
(Ipswich)

Revolve Labs  
(Stowmarket)

Versatile RobotX  
(UoE, Colchester)

Strategic Initiatives to enable public and private investment.....

Green Hydrogen Hub

Freeport East Transport  
Masterplan

Green Freight Corridor  
(with East Midlands FP)

Local Grid Planning  
(REA/UKPN)

International partnerships to open doors to trade.....

Turkey

India

Australia

Japan

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**UK Freeports**

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## Enterprise & Innovation

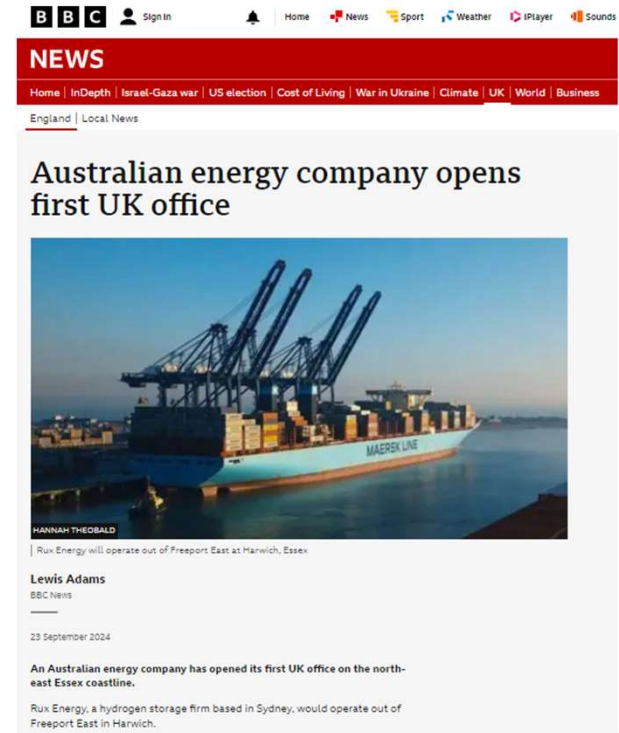
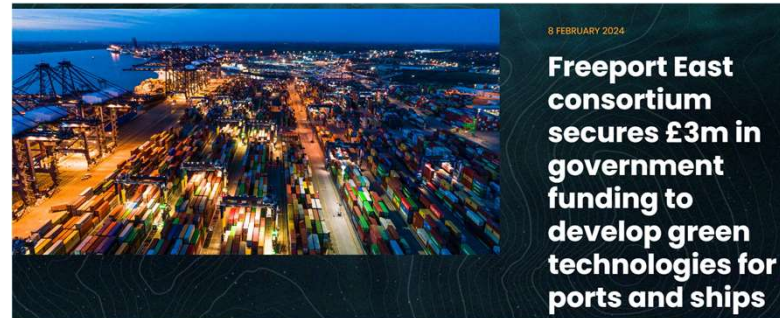
# Building the future UK Freeports

## Enterprise & Innovation

### Four “Innovation” Outcomes

1. Increase public and private sector innovation spending in Freeport East
2. Use Innovation as an anchor to attract inward investment
3. Strengthen the physical & virtual connections and places that support innovation
4. Facilitate the deployment of innovations locally to drive productivity and tackle local social and economic disparities

.....fuller strategy to come....

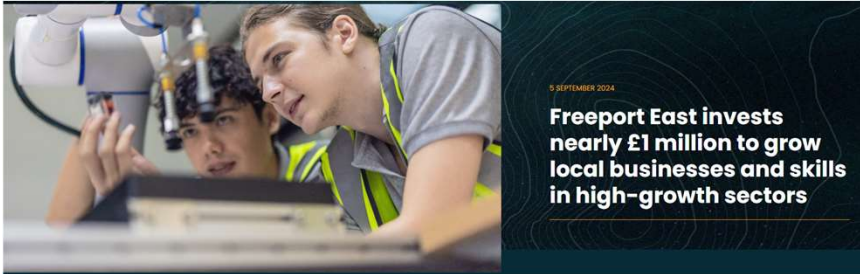


# Building the future UK Freeports

## Freeport East Funds

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The **Freeport East Innovation and Skills Fund** focuses on building access to innovation and skills opportunities, particularly in underserved communities and in sectors relevant to the Freeport East area, such as clean energy, logistics and trade. Recipients of funding support include:

- **A consortium of further education providers, led by Suffolk New College**, who will provide a range of specialist skills support across the Freeport East area, designed to support learners of all ages into future opportunities in growth sectors
- **Road to Logistics** helps to attract new talent into the transport and logistics sectors, particularly by focusing on individuals who need specialist support to enter the industry
- **MENTA** provides business and innovation support for enterprises and SMEs, and will include digital and trade-related businesses in their new programme across the Freeport East area
- **Reboot Education** offers alternative education for children aged 7 to 16, focusing on IT and computer science qualifications
- **Stempoint** will organise workshops for the energy sector aimed at students in years 6-8 including in Harwich and Felixstowe
- **Aspire Education** provides mentoring provision for year 12-13 students and will focus its support in Tendring

The **Freeport East Clean Growth Fund** offers financial assistance to local businesses operating within clean energy and Freeport East's other target sectors, such as green hydrogen, agritech, engineering and digital. Recipient businesses for the Fund include:

- **MKC Rail**, a Clacton-based railway engineering specialist working to develop more efficient and innovative materials for use in rail projects
- **Acer Resources**, a fast-developing vertical farming firm working with researchers at the University of Essex in Colchester.
- **Rux Energy**, a developer of breakthrough materials for green hydrogen storage, deploying a pilot of its technology at a Harwich site, while also partnering with regional universities to build industry partnerships and develop graduate-level green hydrogen skills
- **Automotion** works on deploying Artificial Intelligence to decarbonise diesel engines from its base in Felixstowe
- **Versatile RobotX**, a spin-out of the University of Essex based in Colchester, is developing ECOFARM, affordable fruit-picking robots for use on farms in Tendring and the wider East of England
- **Insight Energy Renewables** based near Ipswich is delivering new commercial models and technologies to support Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure for commercial customers and fleets
- **Revolve Labs** is developing enhanced healthcare training for the NHS, utilising VR and innovative technology from its base in Stowmarket
- **University of Suffolk** will also run a specialist programme to support a range of local innovators to grow their businesses and attract new investment funding

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## **Green Freight Corridor & Felixstowe**

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## Green Freight Corridor Initiative

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### *"Freeport East and East Midlands Freeport sign green freight corridor initiative"*



- Freeport East and East Midlands Freeport have announced a new partnership to support a green freight corridor between our locations
- The corridor initiative will help decarbonise transport and drive enhanced skills and employment initiatives along the length of one of the UK's most important transportation routes.
- Working together, we aim to accelerate the technologies, business models, innovation and infrastructure needed to drive decarbonisation by utilising green hydrogen, electric charging systems and novel technology applications, such as digital twins.

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**Questions?**