



TECH
SOUTH
WEST

TECH SOUTH WEST REPORT

SPRING 2016



Philip Letts
CEO, blur Group

INTRODUCTION

The South West is a global leader in areas critical to the future well being not just of the economy but the planet itself.

We are at the forefront of research and development in climate science and meteorology, environmental science and agri-tech, marine technology and aeronautical engineering. Technology is fundamental to each, and to continuing to innovate, find solutions and bring prosperity.

The tech sector in the South West is big and it is growing. In 2015 it was worth £2.8billion. In just five years, it is expected to be worth £4.2billion* and by 2020 is predicted to outperform all other occupation categories.

Technology and connectivity is only going in one direction, making the world smaller and completely joined up. As a region we can either wait for it to happen or embrace it.

blur Group has launched the concept of Tech South West to initiate the conversation.

The challenge for Tech South West and the thousands of companies that would reap the benefits is to decide if and how we can become a truly world-leading technology centre.

Today there are more than 10,900 tech companies across the South West employing 126,333 people.* It could be a lot more, if we do the right things to encourage and attract the very best talent, inward investment and the best businesses to head west.

This first Tech South West report emerged following a gathering of business and public sector leaders at Exeter Science Park. Further events are planned in 2016 in Bristol and Cornwall.

Read, consider and get involved. Thank you for being curious in what we hope will be the start of an exciting and fruitful conversation that swiftly leads to commitments and actions that put Tech South West on the global 'tech map'.

Philip Letts
CEO, blur Group

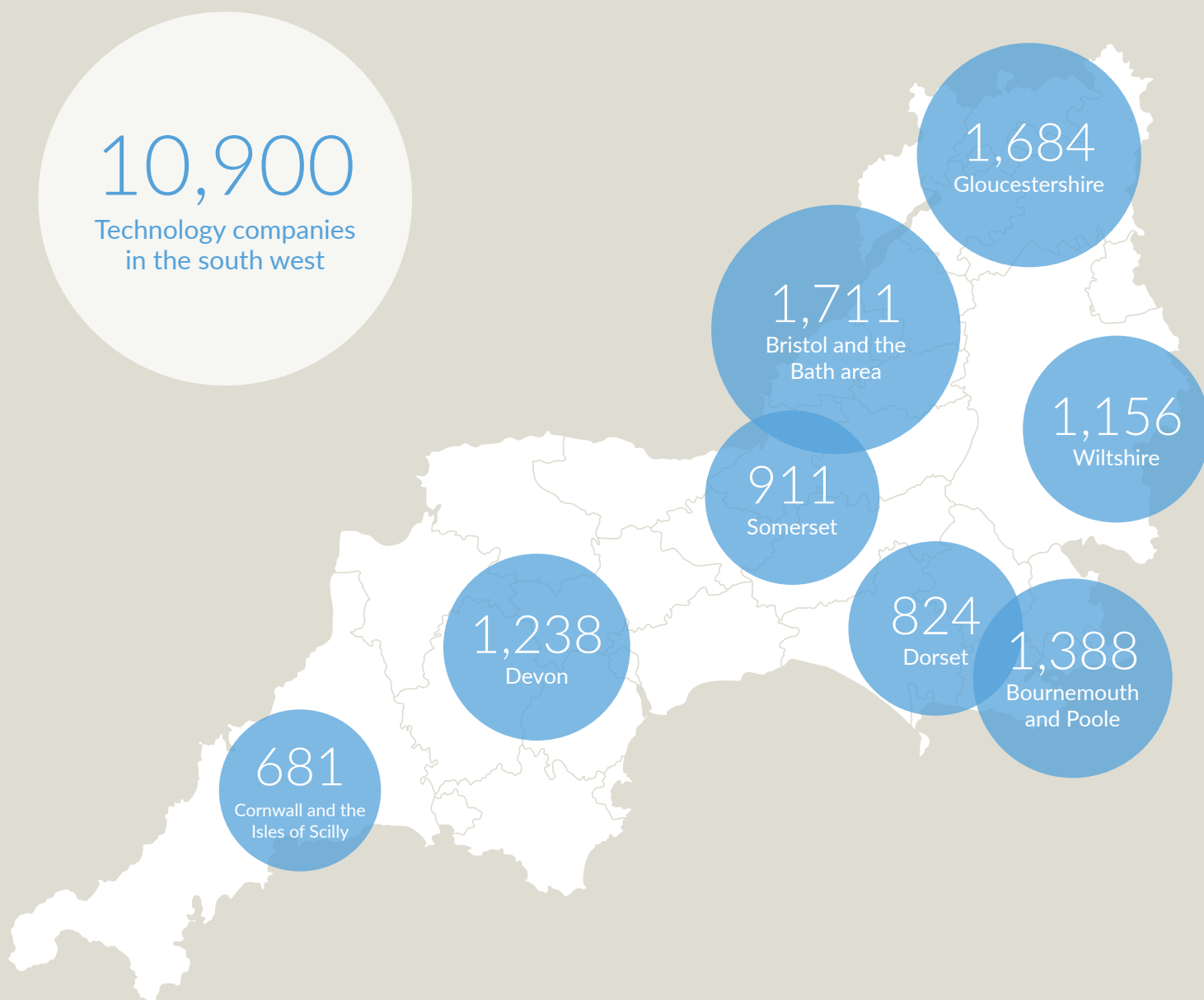
***Figures based on the Tech City UK 2015 and Duedil 2015 reports**

<http://www.techcityuk.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Tech%20Nation%202015.pdf>

<https://www.duedil.com/technation/2015#headlines>

ACROSS THE SOUTH WEST

Tech South West covers the whole region, from Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. Bath and Bristol, Bournemouth and Poole, Devon, Dorset, and Somerset are all part of Tech South West.

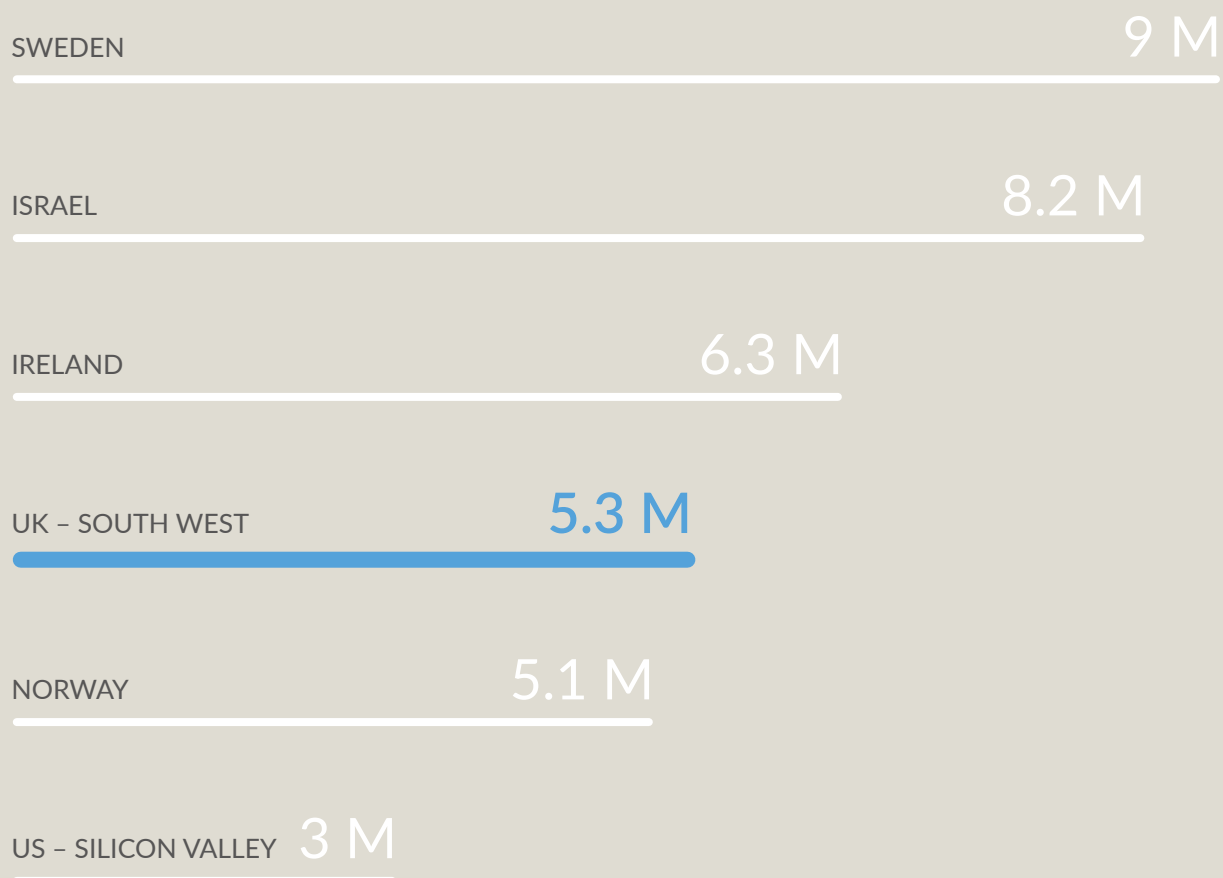


SIZED FOR SUCCESS

The most successful leading tech nations and regions tend to have a population of around 3 to 10 million. They also consistently share certain characteristics: a need for fast-paced sustainable growth in tech, a clear desire for a certain kind of quality of life, and high level of respect and care for the environment.

POPULATION

(Updated to June 2012)



TAKING PART IN
THE DEBATE SO FAR

3D printer
manufacturer

App developers

Architect and urban
design

Communications
agencies

Community
foundation

Digital agencies

Enterprise software

Finance company

Government Expert
Agency

Innovation Centres

International online
legal firm

IT consultants

Local councils

Local Enterprise
Partnership

Media groups

Online holiday
company

SETSquared
partnership

Science Park

Space for Success

Universities and
colleges

TECH SOUTH WEST OUR FINDINGS

We started the debate with a couple of questions: what do we want it to be? What would it take to achieve a South West powerhouse to rival and compete with Tech City in London or Tech North?

These questions set the scene for the first series of roundtable discussions involving business and public sector leaders at Exeter Science Park at the end of 2015.

More than 50 business and public sector leaders from tech companies, universities, networks and key organisations came together to talk about Tech South West.

SOUTH WEST LEADERS VOICE THEIR OPINION:

Tech South West should be:

- An organisation that represents, showcases and promotes the South West's tech sector and tech expertise (across many sectors)
- A voice, brand and lobbying group within the South West, nationally and beyond

Tech South West top priorities

- Attract companies with scale to drive this from the start
- Have a vision and establish what success looks like
- Define achievable goals with a clear focus
- Focus on specific areas across the South West – cities and hubs
- Focus on technology *in businesses*, not just technology businesses
- Create opportunities that can enable change (e.g a technology conference)
- Foster a desire to work together and collaborate, not compete

Things that would take longer but are equally as important as short term goals

- Change the current mindset. Avoid defensive behaviour and work together. Knowledge should be shared
- Help create a partnership atmosphere where people are encouraged to collaborate and celebrated for their success
- Start to treat the South West as a whole region, not a group of individual clusters
- Help create a critical mass of small, agile businesses and larger enterprises, to attract and maintain both talent and inward investment
- Lobby to make the commercial benefits of being located in the South West attractive for businesses. This would encourage critical mass of companies, which then would draw in and retain talent

12

Universities

25

Further Education
colleges

KEY TALKING POINTS

At the event in Exeter, four groups debated the South West's tech sector, including how the region could showcase success, what obstacles needed to be overcome, making ourselves heard within and beyond the region and the priorities in becoming a recognised tech leader. Below is a snapshot of what people said.

How can the South West showcase its existing success?

- Create a vision of where we are heading: one focus and one ultimate overall goal
- Help create a partnership atmosphere where people aren't afraid to collaborate
- Focus on where small tech communities are already happening: cities, then start joining together
- Start bringing people together. There are thousands of voices who want to be heard. Can Tech South West make it easier for people to connect, share and work together?
- Treat the initiative as a business, with the South West tech sector represented as a whole professionally

What are our greatest obstacles to overcome?

- We need tangibles: create specific opportunities that can promote the South West tech sector and enable change, like a technology conference
- We're a big region so focus on smaller areas and hubs - identify the pockets of excellence and activity
- We're playing catch up with other regions so define and focus on our competitive advantage
- Work to change the current mindset. Be inclusive. Discourage defensiveness and work together.
- Share more. Knowledge comes alive when shared
- We need our tech leaders. Find the people who are going to be committed to this initiative and be ambitious – set out to compete globally

How can the South West make itself heard?

- Build a recognisable brand with many touch points
- Establish a 'voice' for Tech South West, e.g. a lobbying group
- Target people outside the Tech industry – otherwise it is too narrow. Focus on technology *in businesses*, not just technology businesses
- Focus on younger generations – retain and attract talent
- Recognise that we have traditionally thought about the South West parochially. Aim to transform that thinking

How can Tech South West become a recognised leader in technology?

- Create a positive and proud image for technology in the South West founded on strong success stories
- Support the work already happening in emerging hubs; both the small and agile companies as well as the larger enterprises, to attract talent and investment
- Retain home grown talent who have or might move away by making them aware that there is a career and a better quality of life in the South West – the perfect tech environment to live and work and achieve success
- Fight for incentives such as enterprise zones to attract the right people, business and investment
- Think how we can encourage skills early and don't stop – 'get them when they're young'

Go to TechSouthWest.org.uk for more ideas on Tech South West.

WORLD LEADERS

The South West is already a global leader in many key tech-dependent sectors. The Research and Development carried out by our universities is in demand around the world.



AERONAUTICS



AGRI-TECH



MARINE TECH



CLIMATE
SCIENCE



METEOROLOGY



SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY



UPCOMING EVENTS

Contact us about running your own Tech South West event

WHAT NEXT?

Companies and organisation have already started to contact us about becoming involved. Getting the right regional leaders involved will drive the success of Tech South West.

We need to push hard and fast to ensure Tech South West can progress from a concept to a fully functioning organisation acting on behalf the region's tech sector.

Check techsouthwest.org.uk to keep up to date and do consider getting your business involved. The more organisations who have their say now and play their part, the more we can build momentum and commtment to progress and grow.

- We are now actively seeking Amabassador Companies - talk to us to find out more
- We are keen to organise further events aournd the region so more people can get involved and have a say - contact us to make it happen
- We are looking to build the membership - get in touch to become a member for free

Once the line up of Ambassador Companies is finalised, the focus will move to developing and implementing the new Tech South West vision and activity plan for 2016. We will continue to provide news and updates through techsouthwest.org.uk and via business communities, tech networks and the media across the whole region.



GET INVOLVED

Tech South West is now actively seeking businesses who are interested in joining Tech South West in Ambassador Company and Sponsorship roles.

INTERESTED IN
LEARNING MORE?

Email getinvolved@techsouthwest.org.uk

BECOME AN AMBASSADOR COMPANY

Tech South West is now actively seeking 8-10 businesses to help drive the next phase of Tech South West in Ambassador Company roles. The Tech South West group of Ambassador Companies will help develop, represent and steer Tech South West. We see a growing number of benefits and opportunities for the companies that get involved.

BECOME A CORPORATE SPONSOR

Tech South West is seeking suitable corporate sponsors who are passionate and committed to the region and its business success and recognise the vital importance of technology to the South West's future success.

To discuss Tech South West Ambassador and Sponsorship opportunities, please email getinvolved@techsouthwest.org.uk

BECOME A MEMBER

Membership (free) of Tech South West will give you access to Tech South West events and the chance to have your say as the initiative develops in the coming months and years. We are looking for individuals from a wide range of organisations within the tech sector and beyond, to become members of Tech South West.

To become a member of Tech South West, please email getinvolved@techsouthwest.org.uk

TECH SOUTH WEST
SECTOR

135,713

Tech Jobs in the
South West

5.2%

Digital Tech economy
with the South West

£3.3B

Digital GVA
(total output (goods and
services))

TECH NATION 2016: THE SOUTH WEST

The latest Tech Nation report, published by Tech City UK in partnership with Nesta in February 2016, reveals the growth and emerging confidence of the South West's tech sector.

South West Tech Sector from 2010 to 2014

- Bournemouth and Poole cluster has seen a 68% increase in FVA and 39% turnover increase
- Bristol and Bath cluster has witnessed a 53% increase in turnover
- There has been a 161% increase in digital jobs in the Exeter and Newton Abbot cluster
- Truro, Redruth and Camborne cluster achieved a 153% increase in turnover and 127% increase in GVA

South West on the Rise

According to the Tech Nation 2016 report, when it comes to leading indicators of cluster growth, the South West had two of the top five fastest turnover growth clusters in the country: Truro, Redruth and Camborne (+153%) and Bristol and Bath (+53%) between 2010-14.

Bristol and Bath also has the highest productivity (sales per worker) in the country, at £296,340, the fifth highest total number of digital jobs (36,547) and the third greatest overall turnover (£8.16bn).

Bristol, Bath and Exeter all feature in the 'top 20 digital salaries' chart for the UK.

Salaries for digital posts in the Truro, Redruth and Camborne cluster in Cornwall are 9.5% above average local salaries, and for Exeter and Newton Abbot in Devon, 7.4% above.

Bournemouth and Poole and Bristol and Bath cite experienced talent from their local cluster as the most common source of new talent.

Data sourced from Tech Nation 2016 report <http://www.techcityuk.com/technation/>

WHY BLUR GROUP IS INVESTING

As an international AIM-listed technology company that chose to move its head office from London to the South West, we want to encourage the tech debate within and beyond the South West region. We're just one company that believes in Tech South West, keen to play our part. Together, with other committed South West businesses, we could be on to something big.



ABOUT BLUR GROUP

blur Group is an Enterprise Services Platform that helps private and public sector organisations eliminate wasteful spending and inefficiencies in the purchasing of business services.

It offers cloud software and managed services together to create an end-to-end solution that provides everything from sourcing, supplier shortlisting, contract and project management through to payment processing and reporting.

blur Group's online global marketplace offers a wide range of business services and works with over 65,000 vetted service providers in the areas of marketing, technology, professional services and property services.

The platform is used by multi-nationals and major companies including Argos, GE and Danone, with some firms outsourcing the majority of their procurement process to blur Group to drive efficiencies and eliminate wasteful spending across their business, and others using blur Group's platform for spot purchasing of specific services.

www.blurgroup.com
+44 (0) 800 048 8664