



Department for
Communities and
Local Government



Investing in **your** future: Case study booklet

Edition 1



East Midlands European Regional Development Fund Programme 2007 - 2013



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in Your Future
European Regional
Development Fund 2007-13

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Overview

In challenging times, stimulating growth is a key priority. This is important right across the country, particularly in less affluent areas. That's why the Government is focused on empowering local communities to help make this happen, and is putting local councils, organisations, and businesses in charge of economic growth. It is also providing them with appropriate funds to bring new businesses and jobs to their areas. Experience shows that local organisations work well together to focus on what's right for their localities. They support local communities in developing economic strategies and improved local environments to make areas more attractive to business and visitors. One of the biggest sources of funding for local economies is the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Since 2007, England has benefited from more than €3.3 billion of ERDF funding for projects around the country.

East Midlands ERDF Programme 2007 to 2013

In 2007 the East Midlands was awarded €268.5 million through the current ERDF Programme and since this time has been demonstrating just how important it is to the businesses, people and overall regeneration of the East Midlands.

As a key funding stream from the European Union, the Programme has three main objectives:

- Increasing productivity through innovation
- Improving resource efficiency in businesses and communities
- Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

The impact that ERDF funding has had is impressive. As a result of the funding awarded to date:

- 205 projects have been supported
- 9,950 jobs will be created
- 3,830 new businesses will be created in the East Midlands
- 17,145 existing businesses will be helped to improve their performance

To achieve these objectives funding is awarded to projects that focus on innovation, research and development and enterprise activity.

Priority axis one:

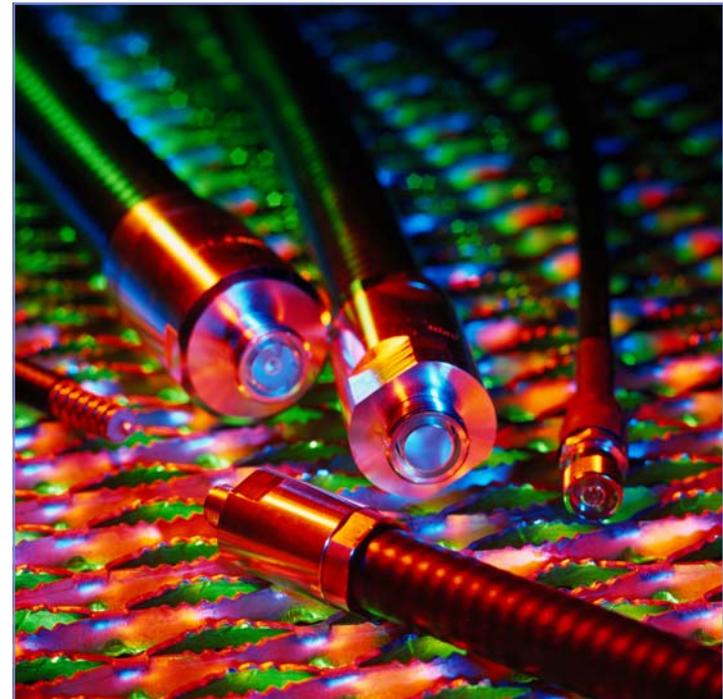
Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Manufacturing Advisory Service 3 Enhancement Programme

Originally designed to help local businesses during the economic downturn, this successful programme offers vital support to companies in the manufacturing sector.

This £2.3 million ERDF funded programme is supporting a range of activities including helping businesses to collaborate with like minded companies, encouraging smarter thinking to improve performance and providing hands on support and advice at workshops and training sessions. The workshops are focussing on business critical areas identified by companies including Strategy and Vision for Manufacturers and How to Lead a Team through Change.

Derbyshire based motorcycle repair and paintwork experts, 8 Ball Custom Paintwork Ltd, contacted the Manufacturing Advisory Service team delivering the programme looking for help with their sales strategy and growth plans. With a well established and successful reputation as the officially-approved UK warranty repairers for Harley-Davidson, the company wanted to take the business forward by embracing other automotive possibilities and were able to gain help with the development of a framework of potential new business opportunities including; identifying key contacts, dealer lists and proposing a business development strategy and contact material.



For 8 Ball, the benefits of using the programme were clear, as Paul Humphreys, Managing Director highlights: “It’s sometimes very easy to get ‘wrapped up’ in set priorities and approaches. It was good to work with someone independently who could both validate our key areas for focus and also provide practical advice and information which could be used to create a road map for activity over the new year”. Just like 8 Ball, by the end of the Programme it is estimated that around 300 other businesses will have received help through the programme.

Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Accelerating a Low Carbon Economy

The East Midlands ERDF Programme is investing £2.7 million in the Accelerating a Low Carbon Economy scheme, designed to help to improve business innovation in sustainable energy technologies with help from local graduates.

The scheme extends the work of The University of Nottingham's Energy Technologies Research Institute - already a world-leading energy research hub. Local businesses have the chance to see for themselves how the technologies work and

also gain support from local graduates and leading experts in this field to increase innovation, commercialisation and adoption of sustainable energy technologies.

These technologies will change the way we provide electricity, heat our homes, drive to work and travel around the world. Facilities at the University provide local business and developers of energy technologies, access to unique experimental opportunities for conducting research, development and demonstration.

By the end of the project 50 local businesses will have been helped to improve their performance through working with the team at the University, 8 new jobs will be created and 45 graduates will have been matched up and placed within businesses.



Blueprint is a local business located in Nottingham that delivers sustainable regeneration projects. Working with the project Blueprint recruited two graduates from Nottingham University: Denny Chan and Thomas Bennett. Both from the Built Environment Department, they supported the company in different projects: the Trent waterside regeneration, high-density housing concepts and the Green Street project in Nottingham.

Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Regional SME Design Support

Located at De Montfort University in Leicester, the Regional SME Design Support project provides an essential service for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) looking to develop and bring exciting products to market. Through the project 110 businesses have been helped to improve their performance by gaining specialised design support from product concept development through to production, combined with mentoring and techniques on concept evaluation. For one project, in conjunction with a Chartered Physiotherapist, the University undertook the development of an integrated leg and posterior support product for Spectrum Healthcare, minimising acute and chronic physical issues associated with kneeling tasks. Design support was provided throughout the development process, starting from the initial idea, through multiple prototypes to the manufactured product. The final product, The ErgoKneeler™, is an innovative, dynamic kneeling system providing comfort, support and ease of movement across a range of low working positions.



The "grow your own grub" is a new sustainable product line that gives people the opportunity to grow their own food and become more sustainable, without investing a lot of time.

Future Factory - Supporting Sustainable Design

Since 2009, local businesses have been given the chance to develop more efficient and sustainable ways of doing business by taking part in the Future Factory project, which brings together businesses, creative industries and academics. Focussed on improving the performance of businesses, and as a Product, Process and Service Design Centre, the project provides a doorway to specially tailored collaborations between the business, academics at Nottingham Trent University and other experts looking to create and take forward sustainable design projects. Located at the University and delivered through a variety of workshops and seminars, one to one support, marketing advice and specialised technology, the project has had a very positive impact on a large number of local businesses. Back in 2010, Derbyshire-based gardening company, Amberol, launched its first product onto the consumer market by altering the design of its products to make them more sustainable after receiving support. The project helped to test and market Amberol's new line of self watering containers for growing vegetables.

Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Environmental Technology Centre



One of the many success stories in this project is the business Joseph Clayton & Sons, which has operated a heavy leather tannery for over 160 years. Given the volume of solid waste produced by tanneries and sent to landfill sites, action was needed. Clayton asked the centre to carry out a free 5-day evaluation. The solution: purchasing two second-hand tanning drums and devising a system of reusing tanning liquors, with support from the ETC. These are now being used to provide economical tanning and has led to some new product lines and less waste.

Since 2008, local businesses in the East Midlands have been able to explore and learn about the latest developments in environmental technologies from the unique and innovative facilities at the Environmental Technology Centre (ETC) at the University of Nottingham.

The centre offers the winning combination of facilities which showcase and demonstrate emerging and established technologies in action, together with expert advice at the cutting edge of this field. This helps businesses to improve their financial and environmental performance and plan how to incorporate these into their own daily business activities.

Original support of £1.6 million of ERDF funding resulted in impressively high levels of success through the

support of over 200 businesses. An additional £2.2 million of funding has now been awarded which will enable the facility to continue to support more local businesses until 2015.



Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Innovation Advice and Guidance

The Innovation Advice and Guidance Programme, delivered on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council by ANGLE, has been providing support to Lincolnshire businesses since January 2010. With the main focus on identifying and pursuing innovation opportunities to encourage sustainability as well as increase efficiency, profitability and competitiveness, the programme is also aspiring to encourage a culture of innovation.

Support is offered through a number of ways including one to one mentoring, advice and guidance as well as innovation themed events and workshops. To date over 350 local businesses have received help through the programme.

Sam and Debbie Dantzie, partners in Dantzie Design and Consultancy Services based in Legbourne near Louth, contacted Innovation Advice and Guidance for help with the funding and marketing of their new Terrain Hopper.

The TerrainHopper was designed as a leisure product and reconfigured as an off-road electric scooter / wheelchair. It is capable of navigating various terrains from mundane to extreme in a safe way and is suitable for a wide range of ages and disabilities.

Funding through the project allowed the business to produce two pre-production prototypes of the TerrainHopper which were shown at recent events. The funding was also used to protect and register the patent of the product. With the TerrainHopper now ready for sale, the business is continuing their work with the team at the project on the marketing activities.



Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

iCon Daventry

EV Systems Ltd. is an excellent example of the iCon at work - supporting emerging green technologies, entrepreneurship and new jobs, and all from an environmentally cutting-edge building.



Four years ago £4.2 million of ERDF was awarded towards the build of a new state of the art national centre of excellence for sustainable construction and green technologies. Located in Daventry, and hailed as a landmark development, the iCon opened its doors to local businesses and residents in June 2011.

The building, which has won several awards for its environmental performance, contains an innovation centre with 55 small office units for businesses in the emerging market of sustainable construction, a conference hall for up to 300 people, as well as a public piazza and a café/restaurant. Positioned on a key gateway to the town centre, the facility is helping to attract new businesses, create jobs for local people, and is used by the local community.

The iCon is already home to many small businesses, some of which have already grown significantly, including Frost EV Systems Limited.

The company was set up by Richie Frost, who graduated from the University of Northampton with a degree in Engineering.



Frost EV Systems Limited is an engineering company that specialises in electric and hybrid vehicle systems and integration. They provide engineering services and parts to support both prototype and production vehicle programmes at all stages of development including feasibility studies, design, integration and testing.

Richie moved into the iCon and took one of the smaller, 2 person offices in September 2011. Since then they have grown strongly and Richie took on a 4 person office in June 2012 before taking a second 4 person office in December 2012, creating new jobs and employing new staff along the way.

Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Transport iNet

Established in 2009 and based at the Systems Engineering Innovation Centre within Loughborough University, the Transport Innovation Network (iNet) draws upon the research strengths, knowledge and networks of East Midlands Universities, companies and trade bodies to provide integrated advice, research, supply chain development and networking opportunities to local technology companies in the transport sector. With a toolkit of activities such as supply chain brokerage, events, collaborative R&D programmes, grants for innovation, and connection to the knowledge base of the region's Universities, the iNet provides a truly integrated range of innovation support. By the end of 2012 Transport iNet had worked with over 650 East Midlands transport businesses, including Derbyshire based Racetech Harnessing.

Established in 2007, Racetech Harnessing design and manufacture electrical parts for the professional motorsport industry. It also provides support to race teams and manufacturers at race circuits around the world. Looking to progress in this sector, Racetech Harnessing wanted to develop a new energy efficient, cost effective headlamp system using the latest LED technology with potential to revolutionise head lamp systems for endurance race cars.

The project provided Racetech Harnessing with funding to assist with product research and design and extensive research



was done specifically into the potential of LED technology at its current level for use in the motorsport industry and the legislation it would need to adhere to. They were also introduced to a collaboration partner by the Transport iNet who assisted in the development of a prototype system helping with optical and thermal design and lens manufacture. The company was given on-going advice and support throughout the project, plus links to potential partners and support schemes, as well as being introduced to industry bodies to help progress development and introduce the LED headlamp system to potential markets.

Through the support, advice and funding, Racetech Harnessing was able to develop a prototype of the LED headlamp system which was tested in both the motorsport industry and also for potential road vehicles. Testing was completed successfully, and to date Racetech Harnessing are the first company to have such a product on the market which could be universally fitted to race cars and road cars.

Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Enterprise Inc

Over £2.1 million of ERDF funding has been awarded to Enterprise Inc to provide support to budding entrepreneurial graduates emerging from East Midlands universities to get a new business venture off the ground.

Managed by the East Midlands Incubation Network, and following a successful pilot scheme run by Nottingham Trent University and the Universities of Derby and Lincoln, the initiative to date has helped over 200 graduates and students with their fresh ideas, helping to set up or improve over 100 businesses.

The initiative offers a structured programme of training, mentoring and support for students and graduates who opt for self employment including a bursary of up to £2,500.

Originally launched in 2008 and with additional ERDF funding securing the support to another 445 graduates through phase 2, the initiative has provided a truly valuable service.

Through the latest phase University of Derby, University of Leicester, University of Lincoln, De Montfort University, University of Northampton and Nottingham Trent University, are all working together to deliver this important service.

Hayley Powell started her business Forever Forged through phase 1 of Enterprise Inc at the University of Derby. As an Artist Blacksmith, Hayley creates bespoke pieces of functional artwork that focus on bringing blacksmithing to a new generation to preserve the craft for the future.



Although Hayley had knowledge in the area of Blacksmithing she had no previous business experience. Along with support and guidance, she was given all the tools needed to seriously consider what was involved in running a business. In addition Hayley had access to a great network, including past businesses that had received support, to share ideas and trade skills.

Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice



Creative Innovation Initiative

Over £428,000 of ERDF funding was awarded to the Creative Innovation initiative to help cultural businesses in the East Midlands to maximise the innovative growth opportunities resulting from the Cultural Olympiad.

Led by the Arts Council England, the initiative has helped to put the creative industries on the map through the provision of innovative support to new and existing cultural businesses in Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and the adjacent Counties.

From help with research and development and cultural collaborations with like minded businesses, to partnerships with higher education, and graduate placements, the project has helped local businesses to thrive and grow. Support was also provided through investing in the development of new products to showcase at major Cultural Olympiad events in the East Midlands. Elaine Lim-Newton is just one individual who has been helped through the project.

Elaine is a visual artist based in Derby City who specialises in the medium of ceramics with the addition of a variety of media. She applied for a grant from Creative Innovation to develop her new body of work entitled 'Biome'.

Biome is a number of illuminated ceramic sculptures, mounted on metal stakes, which have an interactive sound element using infrared sensors. The funding was used to develop an efficient LED lighting system for Biome, in association with a specialist lighting engineer. Not only did the funding enable Elaine to develop Biome as a high quality product ready to tour to venues across the region, it extended her own practice as she was able to experiment with a new form of lighting which she can use in other exhibitions. Since receiving the funding, Elaine has since drawn in further funding from Arts Council England and has exhibited her work at a number of events as part of the 2012 Cultural Olympiad Celebrations.

Priority axis one:

Increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice

Institute for Aerospace Technology

Based at the University of Nottingham, £2.6 million of ERDF has helped to create the Institute for Aerospace Technology. This flagship institute will help drive and secure long-term capacity of cutting-edge research and development and increase aerospace innovation within the East Midlands, retaining and growing its position as one of the leading areas for the UK aerospace industry.

The institute brings together research and development with innovation and leading industrial businesses working within the aerospace sector.

Work got underway on the build of the Institute in the summer of 2011, with the official opening in October 2012. Since opening many local businesses have benefitted from the facility.

Central Grinding Ltd is a rapidly growing company who provide precision-grinding services for components in aircraft engines and frames. With the development of higher-temperature lean-burn engines and as expectations for better performing aircrafts rises, the company needed to look at its grinding process to capture a greater slice of the

growing aerospace market. Specialist experts were able to help with this aspiration through the Laser Ablated Diamond Research project run at the Institute which looked into a number of grinding solutions that would suit the companies' needs. The support allowed Central Grinding Ltd to diversify and look at securing new and different business opportunities which would not have been considered before.



Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Leicester Business Women

Budding female entrepreneurs in Leicestershire have the opportunity to explore and develop new business ideas with help from the Leicester Business Women project.

Delivered by Skills for Enterprise and specifically designed for business women in disadvantaged and isolated communities, the £373,000 of ERDF support has enabled the Skills for Enterprise to establish a central women's 'hub' providing enterprise awareness, coaching and mentoring. On offer is also a series of workshops and events helping like minded women to meet and learn new ways of developing and taking forward their ideas.

Since the project launch in September 2009, 324 ladies have been helped to start a new business venture helping to create 119 new jobs.

Bina Sitaram of Eco Kids (Leicester City) Limited officially started her business in January 2012 after attending a training workshop. Eco Kids is a social enterprise, helping to educate children in an imaginative way to lead a greener and healthier lifestyle. 2012 saw Bina being featured on the BBC1 East Midlands News for her and her businesses role with a local school. Eco Kids also hold children's parties with new fun and exciting ways of being creative.



Sabina Kovacheva, Sabivo Design

After attending the Leicester Business Women training workshops, Sabina Kovacheva of Sabivo Design went on to successfully register her business in July 2012. Sabivo Design is a boutique publisher, specialising in handmade greeting cards, which in the first 6 months of trading now see Sabina's cards in many shops and stores.

Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Campus for Learning and Development Enterprise Plus Project

The 'Enterprise Plus' project forms part of the Campus for Learning and Development in Derby, YMCA Derbyshire flagship facility.

Officially opened in November 2010 and supported by just over £333,000 of ERDF funding, the building comprises a Campus Café and training kitchen, the enterprise zone workspace and interview space, a training / conference suite and a training office space.



The campus café



The flagship facility

The Campus Café is a vibrant space where young people are learning and working towards qualifications. The café is operated by trainees and volunteers alongside professional staff and services the residents, staff and visitors to the Campus. The conference facilities are being used by various local organisations for a range of different uses including agencies supporting fledgling entrepreneurs seeking to start their own businesses.

Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Destination Chesterfield

At the start of the East Midlands ERDF Programme, just under £100,000 of ERDF funding was awarded to Chesterfield Borough Council to set up a promotional campaign aimed at raising the profile of Chesterfield as a premier and contemporary business location.

Positioned as a desirable place to live, do business, invest and visit, the main focus of the Destination Chesterfield project is to attract new business investment to the Town and seek to keep existing businesses through reinforcing pride in the town. Work got underway on this through phase 1 with the creation of a brand for the Town.

Building on phase 1, an additional £617,000 of ERDF funding is helping to take forward the brand plans to secure, encourage and support business investment in Chesterfield. Activities will range from sponsorship activities of business events, inward investment activity and enhancements to the quality of public and business realm initiatives.



One of the many local shops in Chesterfield

Since the launch the town has seen major investment from a new Debenhams and TK Maxx stores to a National Distribution Centre for Andrew Page Ltd. The confidence generated by activity has built a proactive network of local businesses that are now working and trading together to support the local economy and promote Chesterfield.

As part of the project a marketing tool kit was developed to be used to promote the town based on the twist and patterns of Chesterfield famous crooked spire. In addition, three key campaigns are currently taking place - Inspired Investment, Warm Welcome and Celebrate Chesterfield. These campaigns are focussed on promoting investment in the town, improving perceptions and ensuring potential investors, visitors and residents enjoy the town and receive a warm welcome.

Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Tangent Business Hub



Supported by £3.7 million of ERDF funding, a new Business Hub has opened in Shirebrook helping to breathe new life into the area and kick start the local economy by attracting new businesses and encourage local enterprise.

Located at the heart of a growing business community on Brook Park in Shirebrook, and building on the areas existing strengths within manufacturing, distribution and the service sector, the Hub offers a mixture of conference facilities and accommodation with state of the art technology for budding businesses looking to expand and grow.

At the start of 2013 the exciting, state of the art baby furniture design company Babycotpod Limited, moved into the Hub marking the growth of this successful business. Shaun Millburn, one of the company directors and the brainchild behind the product was inspired by his time on paternity leave with his second child in 2008 and after watching an episode of Dragon's Den with his son in his Moses basket next to him, Shaun realised there was nothing on the market that was modern and design led when it came to newborn cots. So he decided to design his own.

Andy Crowell, joined Shaun in 2009 to provide commercial direction for the business and after 4 years of developing the Babycotpod they decided that the business could no longer function from warehousing and storage space alone.



The Hub provided the perfect opportunity for the business to move and with modern and flexible work space it allows the space to grow with the company.

Officially opened in September 2012, the hub is the first environmentally friendly building for Bolsover District Council achieving BREEAM 'Excellent' accreditation.

Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

ProHelp

Supported by just over £243,000 of ERDF funding, ProHelp offers a valuable one-stop shop resource providing professional support and mentoring to the voluntary sector. Based on the ethos of professional firms and business mentors wanting to make a difference and put something back into the local community and its people, ProHelp facilitates and supports community enterprises in need of professional advice and assistance.

Established originally in 1995 in Nottingham, and after receiving initial ERDF funding in 2009, the work of the project has spread rapidly across the East Midlands. Tailored support packages are offered to local social enterprises and voluntary groups who have an idea to take forward but not the appropriate resources to do so. Professional firms ranging from solicitors, accountants and architects, to marketing consultants, Health & Safety specialists and IT consultants, as well as individual business professionals – all give their time and expertise for free to help one off discrete community projects or more large scale strategic plans.

ProHelp support over 200 community projects, delivering around £400,000 of free professional support into the voluntary sector every year.

Home-Start Nottingham supports hundreds of local families with young children to stay together when they are experiencing difficulties. It is part of the national Home-Start network, but an independent charity which has to be financially self-sufficient.

Home-Start Nottingham receives some council funding for its work, but needs to strengthen its financial resilience by growing income from other sources. Through Nottinghamshire ProHelp, support was received to help them raise their public profile and increase fundraising.



The result was a marketing strategy which outlined a number of measures which the charity can implement. From advice on making their website more effective as a marketing tool, to help with proposals for a new business club, to generate a new source of income from corporate sponsorship, the support was essential.

The strategy which helped focus the charities mind as to the way forward is being implemented. It also helped draw attention to the areas of fundraising to focus their efforts on.

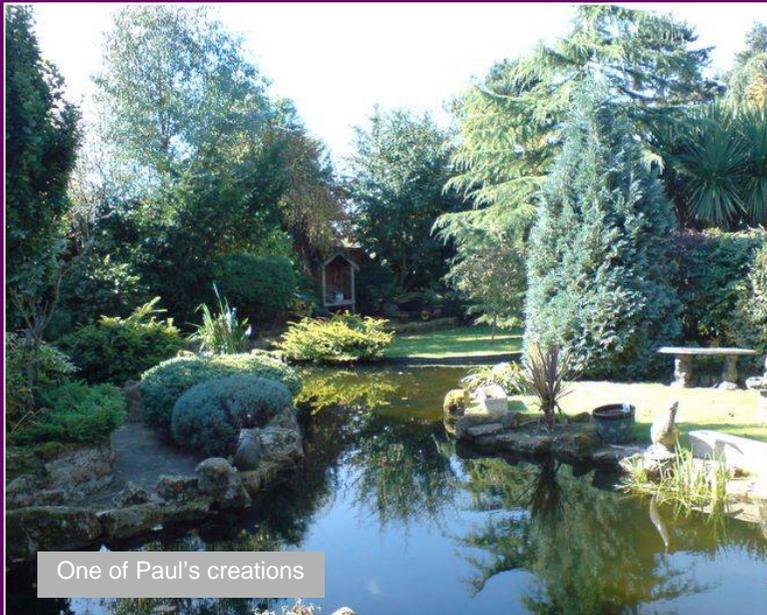
Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

The Hive

In October 2005 The Hive@Mansfield was established as an outreach project aiming to help local businesses in Nottinghamshire to develop ideas into successful and profitable business. To support this work in 2009 just over £255,000 of ERDF funding was awarded to develop a Proof of Concept Programme which provided local businesses and individuals in both North Nottinghamshire and North Derbyshire with the opportunity to assess and develop the commercial viability of their ideas.

Through the 12-week workshop Programme, help was on hand to new businesses through facilities at Nottingham Trent University and expert advice and training, helping them to evaluate the potential of their ideas, conduct market research and produce a market strategy, through to looking at the costs, cash requirements and profit potential. All this work helped the business to decide if the idea was commercially sound and the next steps needed to succeed.



One of Paul's creations

In 2012, an additional £241,000 of ERDF funding has been awarded to the project to ensure this essential support is available until the middle of 2015.

Local gardening company, Skim and Trim is just one business to have received help. Paul Wragg, owner of Skim and Trim attended the business Proof of Concept programme that provided a perfect all round introduction to both starting a business and continuing to run a business. After receiving help the business has gone from strength to strength almost doubling turnover and cutting waste costs considerably. Paul has been able to win new customers, identify waste, and unnecessary spending and is currently researching expansion into commercial work and taking on new employees.

Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Corby Enterprise Centre



Supported by £1.1 million of ERDF funding, the Corby Enterprise Centre provides local enterprise businesses and budding entrepreneurs in Corby and beyond a dynamic, innovative and inspirational hub with a range of high quality offices, small workshops and communal facilities, helping to get a new business venture up and running or expand an existing business.

With in-house business support designed to encourage business growth and development, local businesses are really benefitting from this flagship facility.

SpikeDM is a design agency with over 10 years experience in business to business and retail projects covering all aspects of online and offline marketing from email marketing and web and print design to marketing ideas. Looking after some of the country's biggest retailers such as Halfords, through to many smaller local businesses, SpikeDM originally worked from a home office and reached the point where they needed to take their first office space. The centre provided the perfect flexible solution with no long term commitment and since moving in has moved offices 3 times, each time taking larger and larger space.

Working from the Enterprise Centre has not only been beneficial to SpikeDM by providing a professional base for the business but over time they have built very good partnerships with other businesses in the Centre resulting in an increase in sales.



Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Vocational Heritage at Lincoln Castle

Back in 2010, £920,000 of ERDF funding was awarded to help protect the cultural identity of Lincoln through the creation of a new Heritage Skills centre within the 900 year old walls of Lincoln castle.

The historic architecture of Lincoln draws thousands of visitors to the county each year but tradesmen with the skills to maintain and restore the fabric of the city are thin on the ground. This is where the new centre plays its part.



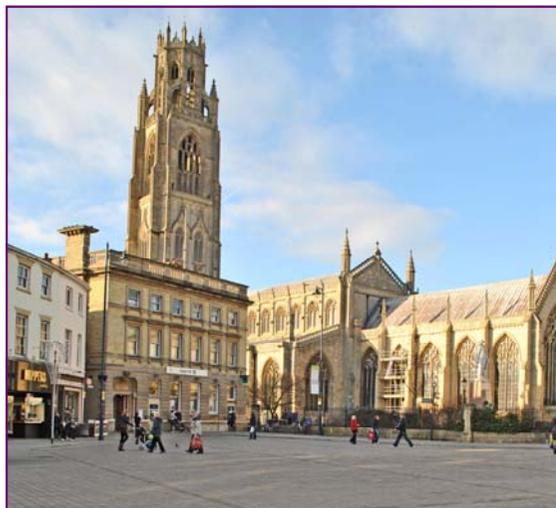
The new Centre of Vocational Excellence for Heritage

Called 'Building on the Past', and as the first new building to be developed here in 150 years, this architecturally striking centre provides both workshop and classroom facilities creating a training area for new recruits to learn bygone trades, and also a visitor attraction with public viewing spaces allowing visitors to see, for the first time, traditional skills such as stone masonry and stained glass work, and how they are being used to maintain historic buildings.

As a Centre of Vocational Excellence for Heritage, the project provides a halfway house between building site and classroom and a true investment in a whole education and business support network.

Priority axis two:

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Boston Market Place

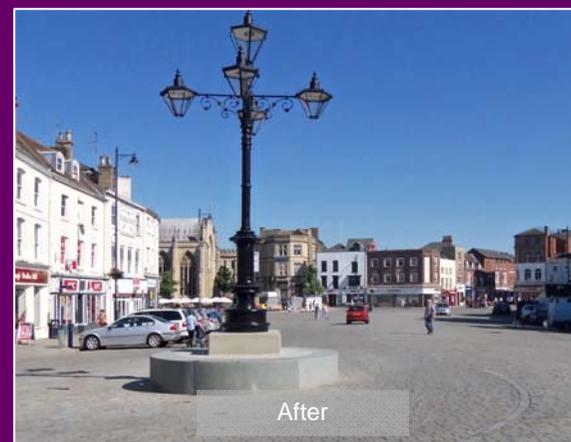
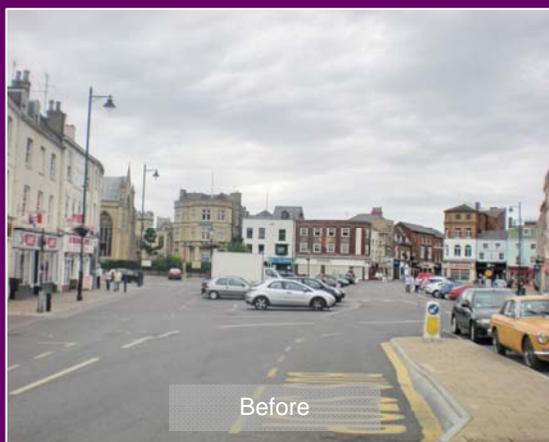
Praised by English Heritage at the National Heritage Champions Conference in 2012, the £1.1 million ERDF supported Boston Market Place refurbishment has really helped to transform the local area creating a hub of thriving activity.

The aim of the refurbishment scheme was to bring the heritage of Boston Market Place to life, transforming the area from what was essentially a busy car park to a multi-use space. Parking provision has been reduced to redress the balance with pedestrians, whilst enabling additional specialist markets, events and street cafes.

The Market Place now feels more spacious and is considerably more sympathetic to the historic environment, showcasing the surrounding architecture.

Bespoke features have been incorporated to enhance the special character of the Market Place – the centrepiece being the Five Lamps lighting column – a reproduction of an imposing 19th Century feature.

Led by Lincolnshire County Council with Strategic Partner Boston Borough Council, the initial regeneration of the area has already helped to kick start other improvement schemes which will encourage new businesses to locate and invest in the area and provide a boost to the local economy. The recently launched shop fronts and buildings grant scheme, funded by English Heritage and the Borough Council, is aimed at encouraging property owners around the market place area to restore the appearance of their own premises to complement the refurbished public realm.



Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Enterprise Coaching

Budding entrepreneurs in Corby are being helped to get a new business idea up and running through the Corby Enterprise Ecologies project. Delivered through the University of Northampton's Business School and supported by a total of £1.3 million of ERDF funding, coaching and workshops designed to remove barriers to enterprise and deliver practical solutions for success, such as support with business plans, are on offer helping to take those first important steps with a new venture. The support also continues for the first three years of trading helping to ensure survival rates.

With a focus on 16 to 24 year olds, long term unemployed, incapacity beneficiaries, lone parents, disabled clients and women, the first phase of the programme provided support to over 400 individuals and helped start up 15 new businesses in the local area. The figures are set to rise over the next couple of years with the aim of helping a further 140 local Corby residents start a new business, create 90 jobs and improve the performance of 90 further businesses to a value of £1million.



Enjoying the Danesholme Beach party

In August 2011 the Danesholme Beach Party event took place which followed on from the earlier Library Launch. This was an opportunity to let the community of the Danesholme estate know that Enterprise Coaching were working in the area to support them. The event was hugely successful with many people from the community attending to enjoy the fun activities and food on offer. At this event there were many support agencies providing advice to the local community as well as some of the businesses that Enterprise Coaching has supported to set up.

Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Disabled Entrepreneur Project

The Disability Direct Enterprise Centre is a business centre with a difference – with the goal to provide the perfect working environment for disabled entrepreneurs to turn their budding business ideas into reality.

Supported by £384,000 of ERDF funding, the centre based in Derbyshire is the ambitious end result of the Disabled Entrepreneur project which initially got started in 2009.

The centre offers local businesses enterprise units, training space, conference facilities, and access to business experts, all aimed at helping local disabled people to develop existing businesses or set up new ventures at a realistic and manageable cost.

Social enterprise
Wellbeing Works was created in January 2010 by a group of people living with challenges such as chronic physical or emotional issues and carers. The aim is to support people to improve their health and wellbeing through peer support interventions.



Wellbeing Works moved to the Enterprise Centre in early 2011 searching for some professional office space at competitive rates within an accessible environment. The building offered all the facilities required to grow the business and links to the support and services of the Disability Syndicate which have been extremely useful, providing highly competitive and professional services with an understanding of the voluntary and charity sector.

Moving to the Centre has helped to attract new business and funding and enabled the business to expand and develop. In each of the 2 years since locating at the centre the revenue of the business has grown by over 200%.

Priority axis two:

Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities

Business Link Outreach Support Project

Over £8.7 million of ERDF funding from the East Midlands Programme was awarded to the Business Link Outreach Support Project - a targeted programme of activity aimed at helping local businesses and entrepreneurs gain access to the support they need to grow their business.

Designed to provide help to those people and groups who historically have struggled to gain access to business support, the success and impact of the project is huge. Through a mixture of grants and guidance from specialist advisors, by the end of the project 2,154 businesses had been assisted to improve performance, a further 1,857 people assisted to start a business and over 750 new jobs created.

Claire and Tony Matthews from Sutton on Sea in Lincolnshire, run one of the many local businesses who received help.

Their first business, the Cafe & Cream started in 2010. Proving a big hit, they branched out and set up Cafe & Cream Catering. During the expansion, they worked with the project team who helped them successfully apply for a grant to purchase kitchen and catering equipment. With a successful coffee shop and catering business, the couple decided to create a Cafe & Cream Bistro, offering food into the early evening. Again they contacted the team who were able to offer additional funding to set the new venture up.

This is an excellent example of how local people with big ideas can receive help to get them off the ground.

Chesterfield Market Hall

As a recent setting for an episode of Heston Blumenthal's 'Fantastical Food', Chesterfield Market Hall is now undergoing a dramatic transformation thanks to £1.8 million of ERDF support. Originally built in 1857 'for the shelter and safeguard of market people', the upper floors of this impressive building located in the heart of the town centre are being turned into modern office accommodation for the benefit of local businesses, together with the overhaul of the Assembly Rooms which will provide much needed conference and function facilities, and a revamp of the market trading area funded by the Council, this really will be the place to be.



More information

Any enquires regarding the East Midlands European Regional Development Fund Programme contact the Department for Communities and Local Government team in Nottingham on:

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