

Case study:
Enterprise Renewal
Business Grant

Region
Denbighshire

Sector
Tourism

Project value
£6,898

GRAIG ESCAPES

A glamping company has invested to create a safer working environment that's also a springboard for growth.

Dean Irvine, director of Graig Escapes, is a man with a vision. In just two years he and his family have created a multi-faceted tourism business with big plans for the future.

From a spectacular site at Pentre Celyn with views stretching towards Snowdonia, they don't just offer luxury stays in a holiday cottage, shepherd's hut and stunning Scandinavian cabins Dean is building himself. They also clean and manage 25 holiday properties across North Wales and provide unforgettable walks and meet-and-greets with their very own group of alpacas. They even manufacture traditional shepherd's huts for other tourism operators through their Graig Glamping brand.

With all parts of the business taking off, Dean and his staff were kept busy in their workshop. Just one problem – the building had no door and no sides. Not ideal on a rugged Welsh hillside where the winters are long and hard. It also meant lots of wasted time setting up the tools each morning and removing them at the end of the day.

Thanks to his Enterprise Renewal grant, Dean was able to install a galvanised roller shutter door and box profile metal sheeting to make the walls. It also paid for pallet racking, a band saw to curve timber and metal into bespoke shapes and a dust extractor to keep the newly sealed workshop safe. Now they can even separate the wood shavings from the dust to use as cosy bedding for the alpacas. It's transformed the operation.

"We can work longer hours in a better environment and the staff are happier," says Dean. "It's allowed us to come into the workshop in the morning and get straight on the tools. We can also work on two huts at the same time, which is brilliant because it means we can decrease lead times, maximise sales and employ more staff as growth continues."

Just as importantly they've created an impressive space to host potential clients, offering a real insight into the level of workmanship – and the chance to follow key stages as their bespoke shepherd's hut comes to life.

"It would have been very difficult for us as a company to make this investment alone and it would certainly have taken us a lot longer," adds Dean. "As a developing business we need to manage our cashflow carefully and the Enterprise Renewal grant has been really helpful."

