

# ENTERPRISE RENEWAL

*Business grant case studies*



# INVESTING IN BUSINESS INNOVATION



The Enterprise Renewal project saw micro and small businesses in rural Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham receive advice, mentoring and financial support to help them recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Organisations could apply for a 50% grant up to a maximum project value of £10,000 with a focus on innovative technologies, new products and different ways of doing business. Cadwyn Clwyd approved 43 grants to both existing businesses and start-ups with a total spend of more than £324,000.

"It was great to see the range of participating businesses and the many different ways they took advantage of the grant to expand, diversify or modernise their operations," said Business Partnerships Officer Donna Hughes. "It underlined the resilience, enthusiasm and creativity of our small business community."

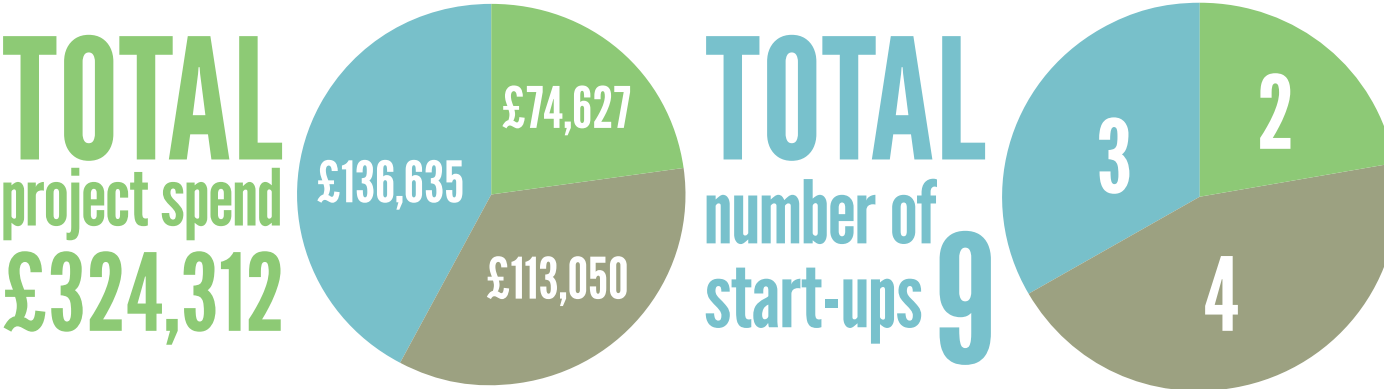
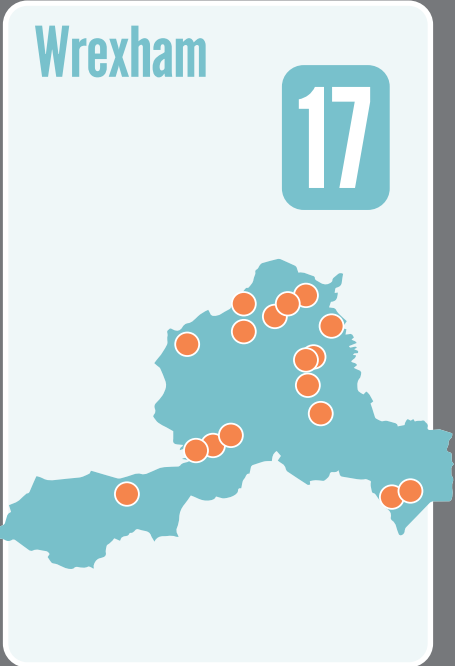
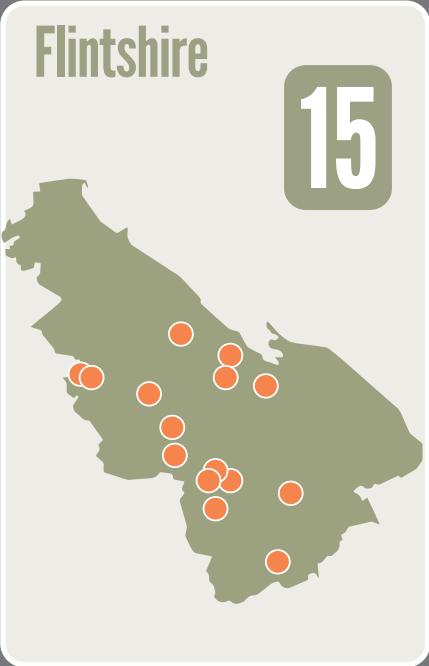
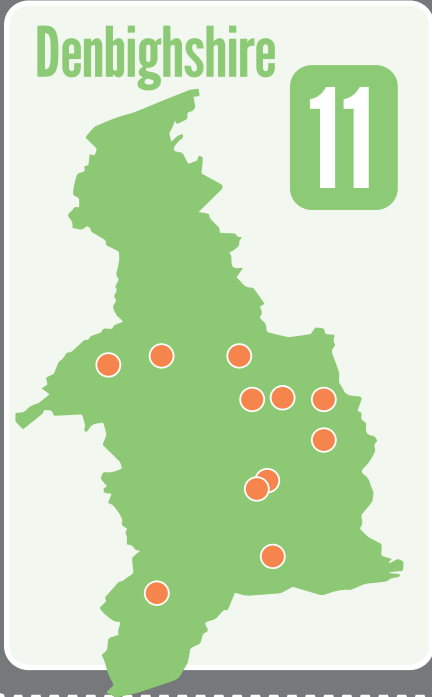
These case studies demonstrate how such organisations were able to improve productivity, profitability and market share thanks to their Enterprise Renewal grant.

The Enterprise Renewal project received funding from the LEADER scheme, a fund for rural areas in Wales to explore innovative new approaches and experimental technologies to tackle poverty, create jobs and drive sustainable economic development. It is part of the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is financed by the Welsh Government and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

# ENTERPRISE RENEWAL



## TOTAL GRANTS 43



## BUSINESSES BY SECTOR



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Denbighshire

**Sector**  
Retail

**Project value**  
£7,227

## SNOWDONIA CANDLES

*A new workshop has helped a young entrepreneur turn her hobby into a thriving business with eyes on the international market.*

When Sky Irvine was revising for her recent A-level in Business, she may have had a slight advantage over many other candidates. After all, it wasn't just theory to her. She was already running a successful business.

Her company Snowdonia Candles makes a range of hand-poured soy wax candles and melts, all vegan-friendly and cruelty-free, with fragrances inspired by the North Wales landscape. With gift boxes entitled Cariad, Cartref, Diolch and Hiraeth, these are candles made with love and a strong sense of Welsh identity.

Like many great ideas, it began in the kitchen at home. "My Mum and I loved candles and I thought I could make some for her – that's where it started. Then family and friends said they liked them and I thought this could really be the beginning of a business," says 18-year-old Sky, of Pentre Celyn.

Stockists from across North Wales quickly came on board. Soon there were boxes of candles all through the house, not always in places that were easy to find. Lack of room meant making candles on demand instead of building up stock levels. Sky's Enterprise Renewal grant took her business to another level – from cramped kitchen to purpose-built outside workshop with pallet racking to store and display stock.

"Thanks to the grant I can generate around 50% more sales by producing more stock in a better organised way," says Sky. "It means I can respond to orders more quickly, increasing customer satisfaction and resulting in more repeat sales. It also gives me the capacity to meet the demand from retailers and my online shop."

Now she has the space to develop new fragrances with a commercial melter capable of producing 400 candles at a time. She's already created two new scents at the request of an estate farm shop in Denbighshire – White Lavender and the seductive-sounding Rose and Wild Berry. Plans are afoot to launch a baby powder-scented candle as a baby shower gift.

Entrepreneur Sky, who plans to take a year off before university to grow her business, is already thinking big. "My current customer base is local and regional," she says. "But going forward I think we can break into the international market because the Snowdonia name is known all around the world."





**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."



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Denbighshire

**Sector**  
Retail

**Project value**  
£8,653

## BLUSKY BRANDS

*A salon-exclusive hairdressing brand is breaking into new markets thanks to a launch that projected a real sense of luxury.*

Tony Cripps of Blusky Brands has been involved in hairdressing for 40 years. He's been a colourist, salon owner, educator, sales consultant, distributor and importer. So he knows what's needed when you launch a product into this highly competitive market.

Above all, you need style. "Hairdressing is very much an image industry," he says. "You'll never get anywhere without a strong brand and real visual appeal. You have to present your product at a very high level to break through."

Together with his Australian based partner Sean Cassar, Tony had been working for four years on a salon-exclusive range of cleaners and restorers they called Mane Tribe. Their aim was to offer "affordable sustainable luxury" – everything was vegan-friendly, paraben-free and cruelty-free with recyclable packaging. The final piece of the jigsaw was to ensure the presentation matched the quality of the product.

An Enterprise Renewal grant meant Tony could turbo-charge the launch of Mane Tribe. It paid for professional photography, high-end presenter leaflets and in-salon merchandising and display. They also filmed top-quality videos of the products in action for the newly built Blusky Brands website. It all struck exactly the right note.

"The feedback from salons has been fantastic," says Tony, of Glyndyfrdwy. "They love that it's really exclusive – a lot had given up on retail. They were finding that they invested in a product and promoted it to customers, who then went away and bought it cheaper online."

"The Mane Tribe range means they can compete with chemists, supermarkets and the internet and can start putting haircare sales back where they should be – in salons, recommended by the professional stylist."

With Mane Tribe and the male haircare range Jack the Barber now firmly part of the Blusky Brands portfolio, the company is going from strength to strength. Their turnover is on a strong upward trajectory and their salon customers are making more money too.

"Our grant meant we could achieve real traction with our launch," says Tony. "It's greatly helped with brand recognition and awareness – and not just in the UK. We've just secured our first overseas distributor in Cyprus with numerous other enquiries from central Europe and the USA. We're more than grateful for the benefits it's given us."



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Denbighshire

**Sector**  
Tourism

**Project value**  
£5,264

## ANTUR RUTHIN

*An adventure company had to move rapidly to install the very first waterside inflation station for stand up paddleboards.*

Not every small business has the chance to score a world first in a highly competitive industry. So when you see a big opportunity, you need to act fast.

An Enterprise Renewal grant enabled Arwel Phillips of outdoor adventure company Antur Ruthin to do just that. His plan was to take advantage of the massive growth in stand up paddleboarding fuelled by the Covid-19 pandemic.

He'd seen the canals, rivers and lakes of North Wales become thronged with people launching their own paddleboards (SUPs) – most of them inflatables. But many were just not being pumped to the right pressure.

"Most boards come with a single or double chamber pump and can take more than 10 minutes to blow up to the right psi," explains Arwel. "You'll see so many people lakeside pumping away, getting to half the recommended pressure and running out of puff. They head out onto the lake and it's like paddling a banana."

"There are also electric pumps that plug into cars but they struggle to pump up several boards back to back, they're extremely noisy and not massively reliable. There had to be a better way."

Acting on behalf of the outdoor education centre where he works, Arwel asked an air technology company to supply a garage forecourt-style compressor. They told him no such product existed – but with his expert guidance they were happy to make one. The result is a completely unique device: a pay-at-pump SUP inflation station that's guaranteed to blow up your board to exactly the right pressure, every time.

It's already won the endorsement of one of world's biggest paddleboard manufacturers, who have acquired 50 of the ground-breaking units. But Arwel got there first through his Antur Ruthin microbusiness.

His Enterprise Renewal grant helped him to buy a pump, along with a laptop to manage the online transactions, and install it at highly popular Alderford Lake near Whitchurch. Now he has another 10 carefully chosen waterside locations in his sights in the first year.

"Time was of the essence," says Arwel. "My unique position and relationship with the manufacturer gave me a head start to secure placements and vending contracts. The grant was a massive godsend – an opportunity to get something out there that was completely different. It's been brilliant."





**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Flintshire

**Sector**  
Tourism

**Project value**  
£9,944

## TREE TOPS AND TRAIN TRACKS

*It's camping but not as we know it. High up in the trees in a Flintshire woodland is a genuine close-to-nature experience.*

In 2018 Seb Willis and wife Hannah bought an 18-acre woodland near Nannerch, bordered by a disused railway and old sand quarry. They were looking for a different, more family-friendly lifestyle.

"It was silent and forgotten, untamed and unloved," says Seb. "But we saw a space of diverse trees, native flowers and a flurry of woodland animals that could become something unique."

Climbing a tree gave Seb the idea for what became Tree Tops and Train Tracks, a sustainably managed woodland and eco-campsite with a major twist launching in summer 2023. "Being up in the canopy of trees is something quite spectacular and special," he says. "It was an experience I wanted to share with lots of people."

He achieved his vision with the help of an Enterprise Renewal grant, acquiring a set of three Tentsile tree tents. Suspended by straps between the trunks of oaks and elms, these dramatic "portable treehouses" are a very rare sight in the UK.

The biggest three-level unit with hammock, meshed social space and sleeping area connected by a ladder rests up to 20 feet high in the canopy. A true close-to-nature experience, it towers over their six ground-level camping pitches and an outdoor kitchen, toilet and shower area built from timber felled on the land.

"The grant has been brilliant, absolutely amazing," says Seb. "Without it we'd only be able to offer the standard pitches, so we couldn't have created this unique and innovative camping site. This would hugely affect our turnover as the tree tents can be offered at premium rates."

It also paid for a consultation with the Greener Camping Club, who were impressed enough with the company's eco-credentials to certify the site. Tree Tops and Train Tracks employed a camping and glamping specialist to build their brand, design a logo and create a website with a sophisticated channel management system to handle bookings.

"This makes it user-friendly and easy to book for our guests and reduces our admin to a minimum, so we can focus our attention on building the business," says Seb. "Further down the line we'll be looking at some even more exciting stuff up in the trees."

"It was always the idea that we wanted to be different and adventurous. We're going to start applying for planning permission next year for some pretty unique dwellings."





**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Flintshire

**Sector**  
Tourism

**Project value**  
£4,548

## DOG FRIENDLY DESTINATIONS

*This online travel directory for dog lovers is building a trusted brand in both the physical and digital worlds.*

Launching a travel business in the teeth of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 wasn't a job for the faint-hearted. Co-founders of Dog Friendly Destinations Rachel Southern and Lauren Jones did wonder if they were doing the right thing. But their timing turned out to be perfect.

The mission of their online magazine and travel directory was to seek out and share the UK's best places to stay, eat and go where dogs were not just permitted – but thoroughly welcomed. Their "no dog left behind" message struck a real chord.

"Lots of people got dogs during the pandemic and we helped their owners dream about getting out and about again," says Lauren. "We had the time to engage on social media and build a real community of dog owners, trying to get people to see the positive side of lockdown and explore locally whereas in the past they might have gone farther afield."

With more than 60 paying properties already signed up to their website and an incredible 50,000-plus social media followers, the Flint Mountain-based company is clearly going places. But their ambitions could have stalled without their Enterprise Renewal grant.

Instead, by working with a local design agency, they've added iCal functionality to all their property listings, so visitors can check availability without clicking off the site. It means they stay longer, look at more pages and make more enquiries.

They've also created a printed map of "tail-wagging trails and paw-fect pit stops" around North Wales and Chester for their loyal customer base. It's being sold via a newly developed ecommerce platform with branded notebooks, mugs and prints next in the pipeline.

"The map has been a huge success," says Rachel. "We held an Instagram competition to find our canine cover stars with thousands of entries and we asked for suggestions for favourite walks, user-generated content and feedback to build a buzz around it. We love print – I'm a firm believer that people want something to hold, it's an extension of our brand."

"It would all have taken a lot longer without the grant. We'd have had to delay the ecommerce platform by at least a year with no efficient way to sell the map, losing a year of sales from an audience who were ready and waiting to buy from us. It would have had a big impact on us becoming a more well-known and trusted brand outside of social media."



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Flintshire

**Sector**  
Tourism

**Project value**  
£9,296

## MOLD GOLF CLUB

*Solar power is driving a green revolution at an historic Flintshire golf club – not to mention a fleet of buggies.*

The buggies at Mold Golf Club are a great way of getting around this stunning 18-hole uplands course in the shadow of Moel Famau. But they also use a lot of electricity.

Until recently this wasn't good news for the environment – or for the club's energy bill. Now a 12-kilowatt solar panel system on the clubhouse roof, funded by an Enterprise Renewal business grant, has changed all that.

It doesn't just provide power when the sun is shining. Combined with a battery storage unit installed with a grant from Wales Golf, it stores excess energy that can be used overnight. Perfect for recharging those buggies ready for an early morning start.

"Going solar was something we'd been talking about for a long time," says manager Deborah Barton. "We wanted to improve our long-term sustainability and reduce our energy bills and impact on the environment. But we realised it would be a significant financial commitment.

"It's been a very tough time for all businesses in recent years. As a golf club we're doing very well but we've had to be prudent and prioritise our spending. The Enterprise Renewal grant gave us the confidence to move forward with solar far quicker than we would otherwise have done."

Early signs are that the 32 solar panels have helped reduce energy consumption by 25%. It underlines the benefits of the club's drive to de-carbonise their operation.

"We're trying to be more eco-friendly both on the course and in the clubhouse," says Deborah. "We look at all aspects of sustainability – water management will be the next big project for us in the future. We're very aware of our responsibility to do the right thing."

The club may have been founded more than 100 years ago but it certainly doesn't live in the past. It has one of the largest junior academies in Wales and a strong membership with more young people joining than ever in the wake of the pandemic. They're right behind the solar revolution.

"We've had a very positive response from our members, they think it's the sensible and responsible thing to do and they can see the long-term benefits," stresses Deborah. "It's good for business and a positive investment in the infrastructure here. We like to think we're a forward-thinking club that's happy to embrace change."



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Flintshire

**Sector**  
Retail and Hospitality

**Project value**  
£6,093 and £5,504

## AFONWEN CRAFT AND ANTIQUE CENTRE AND EDENSHINE RESTAURANT

*A renowned visitor destination is proving an historic building is no barrier to creating a sustainable future.*



You can lose yourselves for many happy hours in Afonwen Craft and Antique Centre. Over the last 32 years this family business has become a must-see destination with its extensive collection of antiques and collectables, demonstrations and workshops from visiting artists, well-stocked gift shop and restaurant specialising in fresh local produce.

Its waterside location inside a converted textile mill is all part of the charm. But running a business from an historic building brings its own challenges, especially when you're looking to reduce running costs and burnish your eco-credentials. In winter the centre was hard to heat and was packed with inefficient strip lighting. An Enterprise Renewal grant allowed owners Janet Monshin Dallolio and husband Adrian to install a set of double-glazed entrance doors to stop frigid air rushing up the corridor. An electrician took on the massive task of replacing all the light bulbs and fittings with LED lights.



The result was a warmer, more welcoming building with better-lit displays – and a 14% reduction in electricity costs. "In this uncertain economic environment, it's important to concentrate on energy efficiency and the sustainability of the business," says Janet.

It's why they applied for a separate grant for their Edenshine Restaurant, where Janet and her team serve up freshly cooked dishes including their signature beef and ale pie. They upgraded four windows including two in the kitchen that didn't previously open, creating better heat retention in cold months and improved air flow in summer. An upright freezer and three microwaves were replaced with more energy-efficient models.



The grant also meant they could deploy a brand-new electronic point of sale (Epos) system with upgraded till and tablets for taking orders – that worked perfectly on outside tables even in the glare of the summer sun.

"Now we're seeing faster ordering, more efficient service from the front of house and kitchen, and smoother communication between all staff," explains Janet. "It makes for a better customer experience and reduced stress levels for our loyal team. Our Enterprise Renewal grants have enabled us to do all this work more quickly than we could otherwise have done – and see the improvements with instant effect. It's also given us the flexibility to consider investment in other sustainable projects."



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Wrexham

**Sector**  
Service

**Project value**  
£9,888

## GATEWEN TRAINING

*Collaboration has been the Key to success for a training company's mission to create a local workforce fit for the future.*

Businesses don't always exist solely to make a profit for themselves. They can also make a big difference to the entire local economy, especially if they work in partnership with others.

Gatewen Training is operating seven days a week to plug a national shortage of about 100,000 LGV and HGV drivers. In particular they're gearing up North Wales to take advantage of a future Holyhead freeport – and establish the region as a major logistics hub.

But their aim of training hundreds of new drivers was being hampered by the lack of a dedicated reverse area for part 3a of the practical driving test. Working with the MOD they identified a suitable site at Hightown Barracks in Wrexham.

An Enterprise Renewal grant paid for fencing and the accurate line painting needed to allow candidates to "drop and catch" their trailers, manoeuvre round cones and perform dogleg reverses. It means Gatewen is no longer dependent on the official test centre at Llay.

"There's a national shortage of examiners," says director Julian Hughes. "By creating our own reverse area we've been able to train our instructors to do this part of the test in-house. It shows that we can all achieve more by working collaboratively. It's an amazing example of real joined-up thinking where partners are working towards a common goal."

The rest of the grant was spent on creating a new office at the company's 7,500-square feet head office at Llay fully equipped with laptops and tablets – allowing instructors to deliver training session electronically and work remotely if necessary.

It also funded a striking new trailer livery providing invaluable free advertising as Gatewen's trainees negotiate the roads of North Wales.

"The new facility at Hightown and the other improvements have allowed us to increase our capacity substantially, employ four new members of staff and treble our turnover in the last 12 months," says Julian. "We might have made the investment ourselves but it would have taken us a lot longer."

"We all need to work together to create a local workforce that's fit for purpose. The help and support provided to small businesses in Wales by organisations like Cadwyn Clwyd is a game changer."



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Wrexham

**Sector**  
Food and drink

**Project value**  
£3,183

## MOUNTAIN PRODUCE

*A trailblazing culinary oil producer squeezed maximum benefit from an investment in new filling and labelling equipment.*

For 10 years Chris Boyle of Mountain Produce has been supplying pubs, restaurants and cafés with leafy salad crops from his small farm 1,200 feet up in the hills of Minera. Grown hydroponically in nutrient-rich water, his lettuce, watercress, peashoots and edible flowers are famous for their freshness and flavour.

Looking to expand his product range, he began producing cold-pressed culinary oils: a rich, nutty and smooth rapeseed oil and a light, delicate sunflower oil. They were a big hit not just with his hospitality customers but also retailers such as local farm shops and delis. No surprise because this was a trailblazing move. Mountain Produce are thought to be the only UK producer of cold-pressed sunflower oil and just the second Welsh producer of cold-pressed rapeseed oil.

"Refined oil is chemically stripped and goes through at much higher temperature," explains Chris. "Cold-pressed oil is just squeezed, like an extra-virgin olive oil. Nothing is added so you get much more flavour. One local chef told me he used to use olive oil for his sauces and aioli, and goose fat or beef dripping for his roast potatoes. Now he's just using our rapeseed oil for everything and says it's the best thing he's ever done. It produces a lovely crisp potato, is a lot better for you – and it's cheaper."

Demand was taking off but Chris was still filling and labelling his bottles by hand – a highly time-consuming and inefficient process. Having invested heavily to set up his cold-pressing plant, there was no spare capital to smooth the operation. An Enterprise Renewal grant enabled him to buy a semi-automatic labelling machine, a vacuum filler, food-safe bench scale and other equipment – so he could fill his bottles more easily and supply an innovative 10-litre "bag in box" for refill shops. This was supported by a social media campaign, point-of-sale materials and a new tablet to keep online marketing up to date.

"We've seen a big impact for a relatively small amount of money," says Chris. "The grant allowed me to access a new market in the most efficient way possible and make our business more resilient and sustainable."

"As a direct result of the new equipment I've been able to supply 21 new retailers and one distributor and turnover has increased significantly. We're out there promoting our cold-pressed oils at food fairs and markets and are thinking about expanding the range to include flavoured oils and vinaigrettes."



**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Wrexham

**Sector**  
Service

**Project value**  
£9,952

## NORTH WALES BEDS

*An ambitious marketing campaign was the key to success when the region's top bed retailer launched their very own mattress brand.*

"Fall in love with your sleep again." That was the bold claim of Gwersyllt-based North Wales Beds when they launched their very own Cariad mattress brand.

With pocket springs for support, body-hugging comfort and cooling technology, this hybrid range was already proving popular under the banner of its manufacturer Mlily – a global mattress giant. But North Wales Beds wanted to bring things a little closer to home. Now in their 33rd year of trading, the leading specialist bed and mattress retailer in the region has built up plenty of credibility with their customers. When they say they're impressed with a mattress, people tend to believe them.

"We wanted to put our own personality on it," explains director David Griffiths. "We came up with the name Cariad, which means sweetheart in Welsh, and decided to promote it as product we believed in. We've been here a long time, customers do believe what we say, and branding it under our own name acts as an endorsement."

Underlining their confidence, the company extended the standard five-year mattress guarantee by a further three years and there are plans to offer a 60-night free trial. It's a great deal but North Wales Beds knew they had to get the message out loud and clear. Their Enterprise Renewal grant meant they could pull out all the stops with an integrated marketing campaign featuring in-store merchandising, local press and radio advertising, social media posts and large-format digital advertising. They even mounted a "playful pets" online competition with a Cariad mattress as the prize – and the response was huge.

"The whole campaign was more ambitious because of the grant, it gave us the confidence we needed," says David. "With our previous radio and press advertising we'd never focused on a single product. We've learned that it can work really well. Last year Mlily, the manufacturers of Cariad, were our fourth biggest supplier – now they're number one. Sales are up by 40% and we're selling about 24 Cariad mattresses every month, at a price that's more than £100 above the store average.

"Because the mattresses come to us vacuum packed, it saves on storage, helps with difficult access on deliveries and enables customers to collect in person if they wish. These are all long-term benefits. In a difficult trading period for beds and furniture retail, the successful launch of our Cariad brand has made a real difference."





**Case study:**  
Enterprise Renewal  
Business Grant

**Region**  
Wrexham

**Sector**  
Food and drink

**Project value**  
£8,102

## MAPLE GREEN FINE FOODS

*Investment in new equipment has helped an innovative pizza maker boost production and future-proof their business.*

Successful small companies have to keep adapting. They need to roll with the punches and seize every opportunity to stay ahead of the game.



When the Covid-19 pandemic hit Phil Kalkwarf and wife Helen of Maple Green Fine Foods were running a thriving coffee shop and bistro in Holt. For almost a year they had to rely on the takeaway trade and discovered their most popular offering was pizza.

They were making so many that ever-resourceful Phil developed a method of making pizza bases in advance and storing them in bags in the fridge. When an order came along he simply cut open the bag, added cheese and sauce and put the pizza in the oven to cook. Phil realised he was onto something big.

Pretty soon, as Wedoughit4u, they were supplying pizza-making kits straight to families at home still trapped in lockdown. "It was restaurant-quality hand-stretched pizza that puffed up perfectly," says Phil. "We got 5,000 boxes made, put it out on social media and business went crazy overnight. We were sending pizzas to Scotland, the Isle of Man, London, even to France and Italy.

"Then the pandemic started easing and people didn't want pizza at home anymore – they wanted to go out. We needed to adapt again and work out how to keep the product moving."

The answer was a shift away from the consumer market towards the hospitality sector. Restaurants and pubs, hotels and casinos, student kitchens, office canteens, theme parks and cruise ships – they all wanted to offer their own no-fuss pizzas.

Instead of sending out one pizza at a time Phil was supplying boxes of 30 bases, four kilos of cheese and three kilos of their home-made sauce. Suddenly the company was striving to cope with a peak demand of 2,500 pizzas a week and a shortage of space at their coffee shop.

Thanks to an Enterprise Renewal grant they invested in a new heavy-duty mixer capable of working 10 kilos of dough at a time, extra stainless steel tables, an additional pizza roller and a huge stick blender to mix the pizza sauce. They also created a dedicated space for packing and sauce-making.

"The grant meant we could vastly increase our production," says Phil. "It's helped us to future-proof the business and made us realise how we needed to operate. It's been so successful we're now moving to bigger premises to put all our focus on the pizzas."





*supporting projects in rural communities*