

Highline Extreme

Awarded £90,000 under Measure 312 : Micro enterprise creation

Highline Extreme Ltd was set up in 2004 by managing director Colin Hawes who wanted to introduce young people to his passion for climbing. Through his role as a scout leader he knew that these activities are extremely popular and provide a great way of engaging young people. Surveying the market he found no mobile climbing equipment that met his aim of providing the widest possible range of experiences and decided to start from scratch and develop the highline mobile climbing wall. Two years later after being alerted to a similar lack of quality equipment in the skate-sport market he developed the highline skatepark™, an innovative solution to ensure that skate-sports can be made available to all. Using the experience gained in the production of mobile versions the company has expanded into the traditional climbing wall and skatepark production.



The company saw demand for its products grow to the point where their production capacity could no longer meet that demand. The main issue was the manufacturing centre, based in an outbuilding at Colin's home, it was no longer capable of providing the manufacturing space required. To enable the



company to increase its productive capacity Colin purchased a piece of land on St John's Business Park in Downham Market with the intention of constructing a new purpose designed and built manufacturing plant of around 5,000 sq feet and a purpose built office unit of 1,000 sq feet with cad-cam capabilities linked to the production space.

The Fens Adventurers Local Action Group agreed to invest £90,000 towards the construction of this £428,000 manufacturing centre. This investment resulted in the creation of 5 new jobs for local engineers and a resulting benefit for numerous other businesses who supply materials into the business.

The Fens Adventurers Local Action Group (LAG) has committed over £1.5 million to some 44 enterprises since it started in 2009, with £1 million left to spend until December 2013. Decisions made to provide a grant are determined by the LAG, a locally based public/ private sector partnership with a range of expertise and differing perspectives.

Fens Adventurers Local Action Group is a Rural Development Programme England (RDPE) initiative delivered through the Leader approach, managed by Cambridgeshire County Council & Cambridgeshire ACRE and supported by Defra, Local Authorities & the EU's European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas.

The Fens Adventurers LAG invests in existing and new local businesses and community enterprises which contribute to the following priorities; Sustainable Food & Farming, Rural Business Development, Sustainable Rural Tourism and Enterprising Communities. The aim is to ensure that any grant made adds value locally and supports the overall strategy to strengthen the economy, increase job opportunities and enhance the quality of life for people living in the Cambridgeshire and West Norfolk Fens.



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