

# SUPPORTING LOCAL GROWTH 2020



**Supporting  
local  
businesses**

**Responding to  
COVID-19**

**Supporting  
the visitor  
economy**

**Reopening our  
high streets  
safely**

**Delivering  
through a  
changing  
economy**

**ENGLAND EUROPEAN REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT FUND 2014-2020**

# Introduction

Welcome to the 2020 edition of Supporting Local Growth. In what has been an extraordinary year, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2014 to 2020 programme in England has continued to play a key role in supporting growth in places through a wide range of projects - from helping businesses start, sustain and develop, creating new or improved infrastructure, to supporting local communities, and our environment.

COVID-19 has been a dominant factor during 2020. As the Managing Authority for ERDF, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), has worked closely across government, with national and local organisations and with the European Commission to develop measures that have played an important part in helping communities respond to pressures created by the pandemic. These have included an £80million ERDF package of investment for our businesses and places, supporting the safe reopening of our high streets and businesses in the visitor economy and other sectors.

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The Department has also worked hard to maintain the flow of ERDF payments to our grant recipients, whilst also supporting a range of emergency government COVID-19 responses.

We worked closely with projects to adjust and/or repurpose their project activity to respond to emerging needs and adapt to delivering services online.

Read on to find about the real difference ERDF funding has been making to people, businesses and the environment during this difficult year.

# Delivering through a changing economy

Local teams and partners across the country have been continuing to support businesses to start up, grow and expand across all sectors. Help has also continued to drive the sustainable growth of local areas and their communities.

Creating exciting and vital new facilities also continued to be a key focus of investment, alongside help to improve the environment and provide a range of grant, debt and equity investment through Financial Instruments.

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Community & Places

Environment

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## Community & Places

Economic growth happens in places – communities each have distinctive comparative advantages and barriers to local growth. Getting funding and support to local areas, supporting our communities to thrive sustainably, is essential. These projects showcase the impact that this funding has had in helping to regenerate places, through to specific initiatives such as Community Led Local Development (CLLD), and projects that involve upgrading roads and improving habitat to improve public access.

**£58.2 million - Value of ERDF funding supporting sustainable growth of places**

**49 - Community and place projects awarded ERDF funding**

Here are a few examples of investment.....

**Community & Places**



# Primrose Lodge Blue and Greenway Project

This ambitious project is converting the redundant Primrose Mill Lodge into a public open space. The site has long been identified as requiring improvement, both environmentally and for public access.

Developments are helping to improve the habitats, provide public access, and connect the river habitat. Once completed the works will help boost the diversity of wildlife and help to stimulate economic growth and wellbeing by providing an attractive place for people to explore and enjoy. As well as benefiting the town, the works will help to improve water quality and contribute to reducing downstream flood risk.

**Lancashire £500,768**



## A30 Carland Cross to Chiverton Cross Development Phase

**Cornwall and Isles of Scilly £8m**



Funding has been used to take forward the development phase of a larger construction project to upgrade 12.5km of existing single carriageway road to dual carriageway, reducing transport time and congestion on the main transport route into Cornwall.

To make the larger project a reality a series of planning tasks were needed, including carrying out a variety of surveys, traffic assessments, consultations, route options, road design and environmental assessments.

# Staffordshire Rural Enterprise Programme

## Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire £5m

Little Aston Farm launched their meat-based bakery brand after receiving support from the Staffordshire Rural Enterprise Programme which offers support to local businesses and start-ups.

The Wissage Bakehouse was established, selling premium quality meat pies locally and have since been steadily building a brand.



## North of Tyne CLLD

### North East £896,580

Some of the most disadvantaged communities in Newcastle and Wallsend, are being helped to develop their entrepreneurial and business ideas.

North of Tyne CLLD were awarded a grant to help set up Millin Charity. The business launched its 'A Chance to Trade' project, which supports new businesses, specifically owned by women who face a multitude of barriers, to start-up.

Businesses owned by local women, often from diverse ethnic minority backgrounds, have access to accredited support, enterprise workshops and tailored business advice.



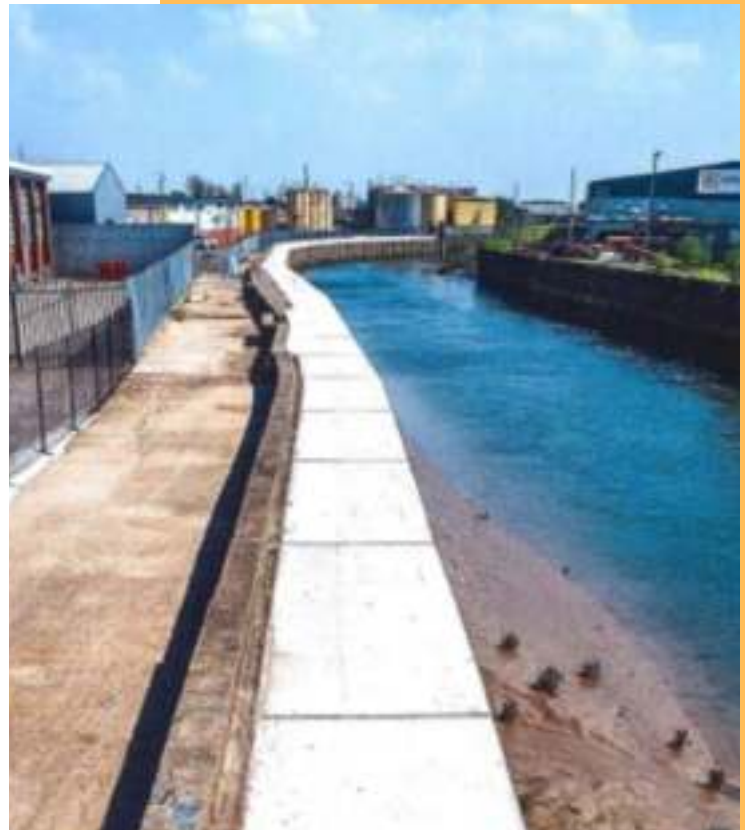
## Community & Places

# River Hull +

## Yorkshire and Humber £2.8m

This project provides a comprehensive system of flood defences along the River Hull to protect existing businesses and act as a catalyst for economic growth and regeneration in the riverside area.

By the end of the project the aim is to have reduced the flood risk to 2,055 local businesses and properties along the river side.



## Environment

Low carbon growth is at the heart of ERDF – delivering high-quality, sustainable development that is helping to mitigate environmental risks and remediate our environment. Projects are helping businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, create more energy efficient homes and reduce flood risks.

**£565.7 million - Value of ERDF funding contracted to projects supporting clean growth**

**188 - Clean Growth projects awarded ERDF funding**

**319,700 tonnes - Reduction in greenhouse gases delivered by ERDF projects**

**Community & Places / Environment**



# St Austell Resilience Project

## Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly £7.8m

With the aim of reducing flood risk to communities living and working in the St Austell Bay area, the project is protecting over 500 homes and 275 businesses.

The work includes additional upstream flood storage and flood defences, the creation and strengthening of existing priority habitats, and improved management of flooding water through the urban area. Key locations including a World Heritage site, the Eden Centre and links to Padstow on the north coast, will all benefit from the work delivered.



## CREST - Centre for Research into Environmental and Technology

### The Marches £2m

Voidfill Packaging Ltd - UK leaders in innovative, environmentally friendly, in-the-box packaging solutions - gained help through CREST and their 'Fab Lab' to bring their latest packing innovation EcoNutz to market through testing and development.

CREST at the University Centre in Shrewsbury helps to develop and increase productivity of environmental science and technology businesses in the local area.



# Aura Innovation Centre

**Humber £4m**

Helping to shape the future of low carbon innovation, the Aura Innovation Centre in Hull is supporting local businesses to get their carbon reducing ideas off the ground.

Forming part of the first phase of the Aura Low Carbon Technology Innovation Quarter, part of 'Project Aura', a transformative renewable energy initiative in the Humber area, businesses can access a range of support, expertise and facilities designed to help them grow their low carbon plans.



## Black Country Retrofit Wrap

**Black Country £385,604**

This project builds on the pioneering work of the Accord Housing Association's Low Carbon Timber Frame factory supplying new build homes, to bring new home emission standards to existing properties.

The project is improving 22 social housing properties which have been identified as some of the worst performing in terms of energy efficiency. A range of innovative and standard retrofit measures are being carried out to bring the properties up to new build performance standards. Energy advice is also being provided to over 10,000 homes in the area.





# Low Carbon Opportunities Programme

## Worcestershire £1.1m

Low Carbon Opportunities Programme is helping businesses to access grants enabling them to install renewable energy systems or launch low carbon projects.

Manik Ventures received support to develop The Home Energy Resources Unit which enables the generation of hot water from everyday objects which previously would have been discarded as waste.

The ground-breaking technology can reduce the household fuel bill by up to 15%, helping to address fuel poverty and reduce carbon footprint.



## BEE Anglia

### New Anglia £4.1m

BEE Anglia is an energy efficiency programme providing support, grants and accreditation to help be more energy efficient.

Great Yarmouth-based Goodchild Marine is at the forefront of sea vessel technology which has helped lead to a contract to build the first hybrid pilot boat in the UK.

BEE Anglia helped them upgrade the boiler and install LED lighting throughout the workshop - helping to future proof the business. This helps the business reduce its carbon footprint by nearly 15% and cost savings of £3,500 a year.



# Innovation & Enterprise

Providing the right environment, support and facilities for businesses to strive forward new innovations and technology is a key focus for the ERDF Programme. Such facilities foster innovation by providing an essential platform for business collaboration, while providing opportunities for ideas sharing and access to research and state of the art equipment.

**£617.1 million - Value of ERDF funding contracted to projects driving Innovation and Enterprise**

**278 - Innovation and Enterprise projects awarded ERDF**

Here is a selection of projects that are taking technology to the next level and thriving thanks to targeted grants, and pushing forward the future of research and innovation.

## Proto Emerging Technologies Centre



**North East £3.2m**

Bringing ideas and innovation together, the PROTO Emerging Technologies Centre is taking the technology of local businesses to the next level - the future is already here.

PROTO is Europe's first dedicated centre for emerging technology and is fast becoming a base for the North East's most trailblazing businesses. It offers contemporary office space and co-working space at its base in Gateshead.

The Centre is a state-of-the art research and development facility open to businesses looking to explore emerging technologies.

**Innovation & Enterprise**

# Northampton Cultural Hub

**South East Midlands**  
**£3m**

Local cultural and creative businesses in Northampton are being helped to grow and thrive with new essential facilities, office and workshop space at the Northampton Cultural Hub.

The existing historic and Grade 2 listed buildings and the development of a new block is focussed on accommodating and nurturing new and growing SMEs.



# Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre

**Sheffield City Region**  
**£905,000**



Sheffield Hallam University is home to the multi-million-pound Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre, also supported by the Department of Health and Social Care.

It is the most advanced research centre in the world for developing innovations that will increase physical activity and improve population health.

The centre forms the centrepiece of the Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park - dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of the population through innovations that help people move.

**Innovation & Enterprise**



# North Devon Enterprise Centre

**Heart of the South West**  
**£2.9m**

At the end of 2020, the new North Devon Enterprise Centre will be open for business offering high quality office and collaboration space together with tailored support for entrepreneurs and businesses that have potential for high growth and innovation.

The building has been designed to be environmentally sustainable and will be built to achieve BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent status.



# National Horizons Centre

**Tees Valley £3.1m**



An exciting new research, teaching and training facility is bringing to life breakthrough ideas through collaborative research and innovation for the bioscience industry.

Graduate talent is being harnessed ready for the bioscience industry, and research and development businesses have access to specialised world class facilities supporting new ideas and improvements in productivity.

The current UK market for industrial biotechnology alone is £34bn with the Darlington-based NHC sitting at the heart of an ecosystem of life sciences excellence.

**Innovation & Enterprise**

# Innovation Support for Business

**Oxfordshire £3.66m**

Hutano Diagnostics Ltd. and their CEO Atherton Mutombwera worked with Innovation Support for Business (ISfB) to take forward their work in diagnosing diseases and predicting their spread.

A grant helped them to achieve proof of concept, gain research materials, facilitate testing and buy vital equipment. ISfB Phase 2 is a £7.3m project delivered by OxLEP in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, University of Oxford, Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.



## Productivity and Innovation Centre

**Lancashire £586,465**



The Productivity and Innovation Centre is a business centre of excellence, focussed on product and service innovation.

The Innovation Sprint Programme is one service on offer at the centre where businesses are helped to overcome challenges.

Door4 received valuable help through the programme providing the confidence to go ahead and develop a new service and re-position themselves as an e-commerce agency with plans afoot to launch a new website with a clear plan, enhanced service and clarity of target audience.

**Innovation & Enterprise**

# Digital Business Grow Programme

**Leicester and Leicestershire  
£4.6m**

Businesses in Leicester and Leicestershire are benefiting from a range of support activities helping them to develop and introduce new digital technology within their activities.

Fully funded workshops, financial help and free one to one business advice is all on offer. Champions, a local marketing and communications agency, received support with staff learning key digital skills in search engine optimisation, website development and social media advertising.



## Investing in Business Growth

Businesses are the engine of the economy, creating jobs for local people and boosting the economy with new ideas and products. High-growth businesses, particularly those developing and utilising new technologies, contribute significantly to productivity, growth and jobs. However, accessing finance can be difficult, and is a major constraint on local growth.

**£1.1 billion - Value of ERDF funding supporting  
fund initiatives**

**348 - Business growth projects awarded  
ERDF funding**

**30,430 - Local businesses supported by  
fund initiatives**

Read on to find out how ERDF funding has been used to support businesses with Access to Finance and fill that much needed investment gap.

**Innovation & Enterprise / Investing in Business Growth**



## Red Sift

**Total awarded to  
Greater London  
Investment Fund  
£35m**

Investment has helped this data-driven cyber security business, that uses machine learning to analyse data from business processes, such as email, to help its global customers better manage its online security.

The company was named as a finalist in the UK Business Tech Awards - celebrating innovative and exceptional applications of technology.



## Sign Solutions

**Total awarded to Midlands  
Engine Fund £78.5m**

Specialists in providing communication support services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the public and private sector, Sign Solutions are using funding From the Midlands Engine Fund to develop and increase awareness of its British Sign Language (BSL) video interpretation service 'Interpreters Live'.

The business is using digital to ensure more public and private sector organisations are accessible to people who use BSL as their first or preferred language.



**Investing in Business Growth**

## Fresh Couture

**Total awarded to North East Fund £58.5m**

Premium men's sports and urban wear company Fresh Couture from North Tyneside are using investment from the North East Fund to take forward new IT systems and build their brand through marketing activities.

As a result, the company is expanding its product range, introducing denim and outerwear products which is increasing sales across the globe from Newcastle to Australia. New staff are fulfilling specialist areas of graphic design and garment technology.



## Cocogreen

**Total awarded to Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund £140.4m**



Cocogreen® is a leading international brand of speciality coir substrates for edible crops. With headquarters in Manchester the business operates and manufactures in Sri Lanka, India, the Far East, Asia, USA, Europe, Australia and Africa and is rapidly growing bespoke commercial products across the globe.

They are the first and only growing media producer externally recognised for its Sustainability, Social, Ecological and Environmental Assurance - traceable from beginning to end. Support from the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund enabled the firm's ambitious expansion plans through a capital injection to help provide infrastructure.

**Investing in Business Growth**

# ERDF responds to COVID-19

Projects supported through the ERDF programme have been adapting and changing to respond to COVID-19. Through the use of innovative methods, processes and technology, ERDF projects are continuing to deliver benefits and impact across England and helping to tackle the challenges that COVID-19 brings to local areas, businesses and people.

As well as helping places to restart, MHCLG is working with partners to target remaining funding to support longer-term recovery.

This vital programme of investment will continue to play an important role in helping to revitalise local economies over the next three years.

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## Our COVID-19 Response

Visitor Economy

Growth Hubs

Reopening High Streets  
Safely Fund

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## Our COVID-19 response



Responding to the Coronavirus crisis and adapting our programmes to help address and support our partners and stakeholders became the focus of our priorities this year.

Local teams have been supporting partners and projects in response to COVID-19 as we focus on economic recovery, and the impact of the crisis.

Here are some examples of projects that have risen to the challenge including helping to address PPE shortages, creating innovative tools to help stop the spread of the virus as well as technologies to fight the pandemic.

## Our COVID-19 Response



# Sustainable Advanced Manufacturing Programme

**North East £2.6m**

ERDF helped support manufacturing specialists at the University of Sunderland to create a tool that could help reduce the spread of COVID-19 across NHS sites. Staff developed two 3D-printed prototypes in the bid to reduce the risk of infection in hospitals and other facilities when opening doors allowing staff to use their forearms instead of their hands.

Through funding, the University established the Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Advanced Manufacturing (CESAM) delivering intensive innovation support to North East businesses.



## High Value Manufacturing Advisory Programme

**Heart of the South West £1.1m**



Marine sail and boat cover manufacturer EXE Sails & Covers, diversified their product range to respond to the need to produce PPE and scrubs for the NHS.

After initially producing gowns, scrubs and face shields for a hospital in Exeter, the demand has grown further. They purchased a number of 3D printers with 150 outworkers tasked to turn material into the gowns.

The ERDF Manufacturing Advisory Programme supported them with a business review, and they are now looking at opportunities for a new market.

**Our COVID-19 Response**

# Dorset Growth Hub

**Dorset £9.2m**

Dorset Growth Hub became an online sensation during lockdown hosting online events including an inaugural all day online business summit.

In one month the Hub hosted 14 online events with over 900 businesses joining live and hundreds more watching on catch-up.

A variety of speakers, all experts in their field covered topics from business support to cyber security and marketing and PR.



## Supporting Innovation and Growth in Healthcare Technologies



**Solent £843,149**

SIGHT - a business support programme developed by the University of Portsmouth – is providing help and guidance to businesses in the healthcare technology sector.

Exhalation Technologies Ltd has been supported to identify laboratory space for rapid trial deployment opportunities of new COVID-19 related technologies.

They are also working with several companies to explore the accelerated trial of technologies at Portsmouth Technologies Trials Unit to help fight the pandemic.

**Our COVID-19 Response**

# Manufacturing Growth Programme 2

## Greater Birmingham and Solihull £11.8m

West Yorkshire manufacturer Kirkstall Precision Engineering began making ventilator components at cost when their order book halved due to COVID-19.

Manufacturing Growth Programme 2 helped them create a plan to respond to the Government's call for support from the medical sector and Kirkstall decided to support Rolls Royce with the components to manufacture ventilators at cost value.

This helped boost revenue, secure jobs and help with the crisis.



# Strategic Business Growth Programme

## Leeds £1.1m

Haigh's Bakery (Guiseley) Ltd in Leeds, provides commercial catering on a wholesale basis to suppliers which were closed and resulted in loss of income.

ERDF support enabled the company to sell products online to a new market, providing supplies to supermarkets establishing bread hubs / deliveries at butchers and grocers in remote local communities to support those most vulnerable.

It also set up a new product around baking for kids, which sold over 50 units in the first half an hour of going on sale.



## Our COVID-19 Response



# SoLSTICE

## Leicester and Leicestershire £612,502

SoLSTICE has helped the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust and Spirit Healthcare to provide digital remote monitoring support for vulnerable patients with respiratory and heart failure conditions from their homes. Funding has helped Spirit Digital's remote monitoring platform CliniTouch Vie to be completed nearly two months sooner than expected to help the NHS.

The technology connects patients and nurses delivering care easily and safely and flags to medical teams quickly when a person exhibits health deterioration so they can intervene earlier.



## Responding with new funding



### Reopening High Streets Safely Fund

Funding: £50 million ERDF

This project helped councils to safely reopen their high streets, supporting high street enterprises and local businesses with advice and extra social distancing measures, as towns and cities restarted after the lockdown.



### Kick-starting Tourism Package

Funding: £10 million ERDF

Funding provided to local area Growth Hubs to help businesses reliant on the visitor and tourism economy to trade safely, in line with guidance provided.



### SME Restart and Recovery Funding: £20 million ERDF

Additional funding allocated to Growth Hubs to provide support and grants to small and medium sized businesses at a wider level who are in need of help to recover and restart.

## Our COVID-19 Response

# Visitor Economy

An additional £10 million of ERDF funding was announced to help Growth Hubs provide extra support for companies operating in the visitor economy, who have been particularly hard-hit by the economic impact of COVID-19.

The extra funding is ensuring Growth Hubs are playing a major role in providing essential support to businesses, delivering a wide range of grants and specialist advice to companies, including new products designed to help tackle the current economic challenges.



**Jubilee Pool, Cornwall**

**£32 million**

Already supporting infrastructure developments and helping visitor economy businesses in local areas

**Over £50 million**

Further support planned for infrastructure changes and visitor economy businesses in this sector

**£10 million**

Additional funding made available to support visitor businesses to respond to COVID-19

**Visitor Economy**

# Visitor Economy

Businesses across all sectors have been hard hit by the impact of COVID-19 with many closing or pausing activities to assess how they would work in this new environment.

This has been the case for local areas, particularly in coastal areas, where businesses rely on visitors and tourism to survive.

The fund will help a range of projects, for example creating more multi-use trails and increasing opportunities for cycling to work, while driving up the quality and profitability of visitor economy businesses.

Improving road infrastructure in tourism hotpots and developing green infrastructure to increase physical activity and improve health and wellbeing is also key.

Making more use of geothermal heating to provide ultra-low carbon, creating EV charging points and developing interventions to manage flood, coastal and climate risks are all potential ways to help this hard-hit sector.



Whitby Piers Coast Protection Scheme



Fix the Fells, Lake District



# Growth Hubs

An additional £20 million of ERDF funding was announced to help Growth Hubs provide the support needed to local businesses to help them respond to the impact, immediate needs and challenges of COVID-19.

Growth Hubs play a major role in providing crucial support to businesses with the focus switching to adapting, recovering and finding new ways of working.



J.A Harrison

**£20 million**

Additional funding made available to support businesses to respond to COVID-19

**£142 million**

Already providing vital support to businesses through Growth Hubs

**29,000**

Local businesses will be helped through Growth Hubs activities already funded

**Growth Hubs**

# Growth Hubs

Growth Hubs across England provide vital support, advice and guidance to businesses across all sectors to address barriers and challenges ensuring businesses can progress with growth and development plans. They are playing an integral role helping businesses to recover from COVID-19 by:

- Offering 1-2-1 specialist advice to address immediate needs including HR, finance, digital
- Providing grants ranging from £1,000 to £5,000 – typically £3,000
- Helping to buy minor equipment allowing businesses to adapt or adopt new technology to diversify

Funding is being used to help SMEs over a range of activities including:

- \*technology adoption and digitisation
- \*digital marketing and e-commerce
- \*website development and search engine optimisation
- \*accountancy and HR support
- \*manufacturing equipment to diversify
- \*business planning and development.

This has been facilitated through the £10m Kick Starting Tourism and £20m SME Restart and Recovery Funds, administered by the Growth Hubs.



Fishy Filaments



Uncle John's Bakery

# Reopening High Streets Safely Fund

An extra £50m of ERDF funding was unveiled to help ensure high streets were able to safely reopen during the pandemic by introducing a range of safety measures with the aim of kick-starting local economies, get people back to work and customers back to the shops.

Funding was allocated to support a range of practical safety measures including new signs, street markings and temporary barriers, helping businesses trade safely, not only in high streets and town and city centres, but also in other public spaces like beachfronts and promenades.

Money was allocated to all local authorities in England with responsibility for managing high streets with the amount available to each local authority based on the size of their populations. A minimum grant of £30,000 was set to ensure those areas with very low populations do not get nominal amounts of funding.

## Allocation of grants to local authorities per region

South East	£8.1m
North West	£6.5m
East Midlands	£4.3m
South West	£5.0m
East of England	£5.5m
London	£8.0m
Yorkshire and the Humber	£4.9m
West Midlands	£5.3m
North East	£2.4m

## Reopening High Streets Safely Fund



# Reopening High Streets Safely Fund

Councils are using their allocation to enable social distancing across their town centres and assisting businesses in being Covid secure.

Many are also delivering a communication campaign to their residents, ensuring they know about the measures in place to support the safe reopening of their high streets and other commercial areas.

Here are a few examples of notices that have been appearing on our high streets in recent months.





# Projet de résilience de St Austell

## Cornwall et les îles Scilly 7,8 M £

Le projet vise à protéger plus de 500 maisons et 275 entreprises dans le but de réduire les risques d'inondation pour les communautés vivant et travaillant dans la région de St Austell Bay.

Les travaux comprennent la construction de défenses contre les inondations et de zones de stockages des eaux de crue supplémentaires en amont, la création et le renforcement des habitats prioritaires existants et une meilleure gestion des eaux de crue en zone urbaine. Les sites importants de la région, notamment un site du patrimoine mondial, l'Eden Center et les jonctions routières vers Padstow sur la côte nord bénéficieront tous des travaux réalisés.



## Programme de Développement Stratégique des Entreprises

### Ville de Leeds 1,1 M £



À Leeds l'entreprise de boulangerie Haigh's Bakery (Guiseley) Ltd, un grossiste qui fournit des distributeurs locaux, a subi une perte de revenus suite à la fermeture de ces derniers.

Le programme FEDER a permis à l'entreprise d'étendre la vente de ses produits en ligne à un nouveau marché, leur permettant ainsi de fournir les supermarchés locaux, d'établir des points de vente de pain dans les boucheries et les épiceries locales dans des territoires isolés et d'apporter un soutien aux communautés les plus vulnérables.

Cette initiative a aussi permis de développer un nouveau produit d'activité de boulangerie-pâtisserie pour les enfants qui s'est vendu par cinquantaine dans les premières trente minutes de sa mise en vente.

## Exemples français

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