

# Chance to Change

Take a chance. Make a change. Change your life.



## Welcome to Chance to Change

Whether it's your first step or you've already made progress, we hope that you'll take inspiration and valuable learning away with you.

And you'll appreciate that you're not alone - even though starting a business can be a lonely place at times.

Please take the opportunity to meet interesting new people, start conversations and make connections that could lead you in the direction you need to take the next steps.

We know from experience that entrepreneurs do stuff - they listen, they absorb, they learn and they take action.

This workbook is intended as a simple guide to help you take stock of your own situation, reflect on the issues and challenges you face and work out what action you need to take.

There are no right or wrong answers - and nobody is going to tell you exactly what you should or shouldn't do. But by exposing yourself to a wide variety of perspectives, we hope that you'll be able to relate the experiences of others to your own situation and develop a clear understanding of the opportunities and possibilities open to you.

## Our Speakers

### Guy Browning

Dubbed the David Attenborough of the business jungle, he combines a keen eye for commerce with a rapier-like wit and a wealth of entertaining anecdotes. Guy is an expert in his ability to cut through the mass of business clichés to sort out what really matters from what really, really doesn't.

**Paul Campbell, founder and CEO Amazing Group, Entrepreneurs' Forum Board Member**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Paul-Campbell](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Paul-Campbell)

**Chris Baxter, founder and director GENI – Entrepreneurs' Forum member**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Chris-Baxter](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Chris-Baxter)

**Fiona Cruickshank, founder and director SCM Pharma**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Fiona-Cruickshank](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Fiona-Cruickshank)

**Charlie Hoults, serial entrepreneur – recently joined the family business, Hoults Estate in Newcastle**

**David Johnson, founder and director Venture to Think – Entrepreneurs' Forum member**

**Nickie Gott, founder and director She's Gott It – Entrepreneurs' Forum member**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Nickie-Gott](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Nickie-Gott)

**Chris Quickfall, founder and MD Ingate – Entrepreneurs' Forum member**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Chris-Quickfall](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Chris-Quickfall)

**Tim Hutchinson, founder and director Outpace – Entrepreneurs' Forum member**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Tim-Hutchinson](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Tim-Hutchinson)

**Ali McLean, founder and director Activities Abroad – Entrepreneurs' Forum member**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Alistair-McLean](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Alistair-McLean)

**David Wilson, founder and director NE Money – Entrepreneurs' Forum member**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/David-Wilson](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/David-Wilson)

**Sarah Newell, founder Savarins**

[www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/SarahNewell](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/SarahNewell)

**Meryl Dodd, founder and director Actif**

[www.actif.uk.com](http://www.actif.uk.com)

**Jane Shaw, founder and director People into Enterprise**

[www.peopleintoenterprise.com](http://www.peopleintoenterprise.com)

**Iain Scott, founder and director Enterprise Island**

[www.enterpriseisland.com](http://www.enterpriseisland.com) and [www.enterprisecafe.tv](http://www.enterprisecafe.tv)

**Nick Devitt, founder and director Innovation Scout**

[www.innovationscout.co.uk](http://www.innovationscout.co.uk)

## About the Entrepreneurs' Forum

The Forum is made up of entrepreneurs - passionate about what they do - who have experienced the ups and downs of business life. They are willing to share this experience for the benefit of others.

It provides unique access to a wealth of collective experience creating real value for your business through a variety of mentoring and instruction from the practitioner's perspective. This is brought to life through an events programme which creates networking opportunities and a range of educational and business tools.

Our simple aim is to help and inspire entrepreneurs in the North East to grow the most successful business possible.

## About 'If we can, you can'

'If we can, you can' is inspired by and built on the principles that underpin the Entrepreneurs' Forum - the best way to fast-track your progress in business is to talk to and learn from someone who has already been through the experience.

It's all about encouraging a spirit of entrepreneurship in the North East - inspiring people to set up businesses, grow them faster, have vision, grasp opportunities, and recognise that people of all backgrounds have become successful entrepreneurs.

For those who are already running a business, developing a business idea or about to turn an idea into reality, it's an opportunity to share experiences with a growing online community of like-minded business people.

The campaign is centred around [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk) and a growing online community.

The site contains a huge bank of user generated content – stories, experiences, mistakes, success, and pearls of wisdom learnt along the journey. It provides a huge amount of knowledge and inspiration, and acts as a significant resource to anyone who is thinking of starting a business or who is looking to develop an existing business. A variety of functions embedded in the website allow users to create connections with others in a similar position.

## The 'If we can, you can' Challenge



Now in its third year, the 'If we can, you can' Challenge launches on March 8th.

The Challenge aims to seek out and recognise emerging entrepreneurial talent from across the region and showcase the drive, dedication, vision, aspiration and ambition of those who enter.

Once again our media partners are backing the competition and making it their own - which provides huge benefits, creating valuable publicity for entrants and promoting the entrepreneurial spirit of the North East.

The competition is all about you – yes, you've got to have a business or an idea that's viable but you don't have to have achieved staggering success or be turning over millions.

You'll be judged on your vision, passion, determination and you'll prove to us that, whatever the challenges, you'll do everything you can to make your dreams a reality.

When you enter, we'll ask you to share your story - what makes you tick, what's brought you to this point in your life, what drives you, the challenges you've faced and the ambitions you're working towards.

**Hartlepool Mail**

**The Northern Echo**

**Gazette**

**Evening Chronicle**

**Evening Gazette**

**Sunderland Echo**

**HEXHAM COURANT**

## Session 1 - Networks and Support

When Michelle Taylor was looking to start her own lingerie business she realised that she would need to lay the foundations and create connections early on in the process.

Alongside the development of her brand she made use of the connections she'd made in the industry in her role as designer at Playboy Intimates - not only did she make contact with potential suppliers but she also picked up freelance work to allow her to generate some cash to pay the bills and keep her head above water.

She also visited exhibitions as a delegate and spoke to potential stockists as well as key media contacts.

Her efforts are paying back now that she's launched - orders are starting to come in, her Tallulah Love range is stocked in Fenwick, amongst others, and she's getting great coverage in the media. You can follow Michelle's journey through Tears and Triumphs - a documentary series soon to be available to view on the ifwecanyoucan online TV site. Find out more about Michelle's story @ [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Michelle-Taylor](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Michelle-Taylor)

### Some of the things you should think about.

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"I would really advise going out and talking to as many people as possible about your idea, preferably individuals who've been there and done it, because if you can get even one inspirational gem of advice, it will all have been worth it. Your business will start to seem less an idea and more as something that would be really worth pursuing and going for."

Mark Ions - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Mark-Ions](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Mark-Ions)

"When I came to the North East, I fell in love with it. Setting up a business in the North East is one of those things that are incredibly well supported by the different support agencies. There's people who will provide you with subsidised office space, or people who will help you with a capital grant to purchase a couple of computers for your office, or people who will help you find equipment or perhaps a new website. Also, most of the universities up here run graduate schemes, and you can take on graduates at an incredibly low cost. Setting up a business in the North East is strangely easy; just because there are so many people out there who can help you."

Ross Cooney - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Ross-Cooney](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Ross-Cooney)

## General notes / observations

How can I relate what I've heard to my own situation?

What action am I going to take? (Tomorrow!)

## Session 2 - Confidence and Motivation

When it became clear that the business she worked for was reaching the end of the road, Sarah Parkin had a decision to make – stick it out to the bitter end or take the plunge and start her own venture.

She loved her job and had built a reputation for providing good, honest and reliable advice. And she hated the idea of having to tell customers that there was nowhere for them to go.

Kids Deserve the Best is now a year on, but Sarah still talks about her business with the same enthusiasm as when she started.

She is convinced that if you believe in yourself then you will do well! Her passion for the service she offers is appreciated by customers on a daily basis and that's given her the confidence to succeed.

Find out more about Sarah's story @ [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Sarah-Parkin](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Sarah-Parkin)

### Some of the things you should think about.

Are you an optimist?

When you're doing something you enjoy, do you work hard at it?

If you become involved in a project do you like to see it being done well?

Are you a control freak?

Do you take responsibility?

Do you get upset when you've done something and done it well but few people acknowledge the work, effort and commitment you've put into it?

When you've done something, do you reward your achievement?

Do you have the desire to achieve?

Write down a list of 6 things that are stopping you from starting and 6 reasons why you should start.

Think about your strengths and the things you like doing – not just what you'd put down on a CV.

How would you sell yourself to others?

You'll have to do things that you're not very good at so think about how you'll get around that – find out how to do it or find someone else who can do it for you?

How well do you know your proposed business? And your potential customers?

Do you know enough to convince others that your ideas will work?

"The only problem was that I hadn't a clue about running a business. I was "unconsciously incompetent" as they say. Meaning that I was so bad I didn't even know how bad I was." Writing proposals and applying for funding is not much different from writing a business plan; to say that we'll reach these milestones and we'll deliver all these things. I had a complete lack of understanding of what the business world was, but I didn't realise that I had very good skills which I could transfer into that area like the ability to explain complex ideas in an easy to understand way. Gaining the confidence to just go ahead and do it was a tough thing to go through though."

Max Robinson - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Max-Robinson](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Max-Robinson)

"The first day in the office was pretty bizarre. I was always used to phone calls and general chatter in the office but it was just silent. When there's no phone calls coming in you've got to tell yourself that it's not because no one likes you, it's just that they haven't heard of you yet. You need to believe that it will happen; you can drive the business the way you want and the phone will start to ring. It takes a bit of time, but it will happen."

Mark Ions - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Mark-Ions](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Mark-Ions)

## General notes / observations

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## Session 3 - Ideas (and finance)

When Matt Stirland was first thinking about setting up a business – he had a great idea. A soft play area for kids with structured fitness. The perfect solution to tackling childhood obesity, providing a safe and fun environment for parents to entertain their children and get some great health benefits.

The main stumbling block was finance – the investment needed to set up the business was huge and Matt was making no progress. He met with one of the region's senior entrepreneurs – perhaps in the hope that he might receive a generous cheque to get him started!?

No such luck – but Matt did benefit from a new perspective and the wisdom that comes from years of experience. The result was a complete change in the business model – and the mobile service Streetlife Youth Fitness was born for a fraction of the cost. Matt also made connections with his local PCT and education authorities because the essence of the business hadn't changed, his agenda was theirs. (Matt's now started a second business, the Military Fitness Group, and he still works as a firefighter!)

Find out more about Matt's story @ [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Matt-Stirland](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Matt-Stirland)

### Some of the things you should think about.

Do you really need an original idea?

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Where do ideas come from anyway? Your skills? Your talents? Your passions? Your perspective and the perspectives of those around you on the world?

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Actually, the idea is probably not the starting point. Think about the problem.

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Thinking about the problem will help you focus on market need.

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By doing this you'll focus on your potential customers.

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Who can you share the ideas with (in a 'safe' way that won't compromise what you hope to achieve) – and are they likely to be customers (think back to the session on networks!)

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You might find that your original idea doesn't quite work but by testing it you'll find what customers want. And you'll work out the right business model – that's how you're going to make money from your idea.

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Is the basic idea or the essence of the idea right but the way you plan to execute it flawed?

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"I started with a blank sheet of paper. I didn't have an expertise in anything really, but I had a whole lot of ideas which I thought might be business worthy, so I just wrote them all down. My criteria was that it couldn't need a lot of working capital because I simply didn't have any, it needed to be a growth business, and it needed to be one where I hoped I could have fun. One idea I had was to be an undertaker. I'd done a bit of research: the margins were good and it was a nice, steady business. My dad was a joiner so he could make the coffins. But it failed on the third criteria of having fun."

John Hays - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/John-Hays](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/John-Hays)

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"I never had a vision to be self employed, but that was before I realised I was, in actual fact, unemployable. There does come a time when you realise you just can't work for anybody but yourself. I was sat in my parent's house with no money, no job and no prospects. I decided to get a blank piece of paper and just write down what I liked doing. I was thirty years old and thought my destiny should be defined by now. On the top of my list were travel and adventure sports. I enrolled on a travel and tourism management course at Northumbria University, after which I got a couple of jobs with some local tour operators. I set up my own travel firm in Newcastle in 2000."

Ali McLean - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Alistair-McLean](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Alistair-McLean)

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"The biggest challenge in business is identifying what customers value, and what they don't. It's more difficult than it sounds. Actions speak louder than words, so market research and focus groups can be useful, but people don't always do what they say they do.'

John Elliott - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/John-Elliott](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/John-Elliott)

## General notes / observations

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## Session 3 - (Ideas) and finance

Will Dracup admits that nobody in their right mind would have wanted to support the kind of venture he had in mind. But he managed to talk a guy who used to be his personal banker into lending him £5,000 (which was probably to stop him blathering on about his business plan – and wouldn't happen today!).

Further attempts to secure finance from the banks proved fruitless – until after a rejection in one bank's business section he spotted a poster inviting him to borrow a load of money to buy a shiny new speedboat. Success! A creative although technically fraudulent way to raise money but it did the job.

Looking back, he realised that he should have been looking for risk capital or equity – and that's not what the banks are about as they lend money against assets.

Find out more about Will's story @ [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Will-Dracup](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Will-Dracup)

### Some of the things you should think about.

If you need more money than you have, can you change the way you're planning to get the business off the ground.

Recognise that the way you think the business will work probably isn't exactly how it will work - it will evolve as you test your ideas.

The best sources of finance are customers – especially if you can get them to pay up front!  
But salesmen are expensive.

Do you have customers lined up? Understand your revenue streams - i.e. where the money will come from.

Think about why anyone would want to lend you money – most of them want to see a return or at least get their money back. How can you prove that you've taken every possible step to ensure that you'll do this?

Think about how much you need – now halve that amount and think about ways to make it work anyway.

"As well as having money from consultancy we were fortunate to win some grants from Business Link and City of Sunderland Council. They were only a couple of thousand pounds each which doesn't sound a lot compared to £100,000, but it did make a difference. Then we just tried to keep out overheads very low. We don't have to have company cars in the early days; we don't have to have huge office. We DO need to keep the costs low, and by doing that we can spend a lot more on development and end up with a better product before we get the revenue from our customers."

Jonathan Wells - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Jonathan-Wells](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Jonathan-Wells)

"When we started, our biggest competitor, the one who was turning over £5.5m, came after us quite aggressively, more aggressively than I calculated they would. We were stealing less than 5% of his business away from him but he dropped his prices by 35%. It was just to try and kill us off straight away..... we bankrolled the company on credit cards for a while, hoping that he would pull off from the attack. After four months his prices went back up which allowed us to start making money again."

Chris Quickfall - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Chris-Quickfall](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Chris-Quickfall)

"Over the past 20 years, I don't think there's a way that I haven't funded the business, be it from bank money, debt, a little bit of family money, or credit cards. But what I've learned is that you fund your business appropriately, and you always need your umbrella even if the sun's shining."

Roy Stanley - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Roy-Stanley](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/Roy-Stanley)

## General notes / observations

How can I relate what I've heard to my own situation?

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## Support, connections and signposting

There are many organisations across the North East who offer enterprise and business start-up support.

Whilst we can't guarantee the details below or that you will find exactly what you are looking for, we hope that it provides you with a useful starting point and saves you some time researching all of the opportunities.

We would urge you to speak to others about the support they have received – how they found out about it and how they made the most of it. A little prior knowledge can be immensely helpful.

We're also in the process of building 'intelligent referrals' into [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk) (through the Partners section) – where members who have had a successful experience with a specific support organisation share some details about their experience. This is a work in progress and relies on the ongoing co-operation of partners but we believe that in time it will be invaluable for anyone in a similar position.

"Talk to people who have been through the experience, they can often just point you in the direction of others but it will fast track your progression."

Graeme Lowdon - [www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/](http://www.ifwecanyoucan.co.uk/Entrepreneurs/) Graeme- Lowdon

## FUNDING AND SUPPORT

### ONE NORTH EAST

As Regional Development Agency for the North East, and funding organisation of the Chance To Change event, One North East are involved in funding a suite of successful projects as part of the Enterprise Journey being delivered by a variety of experienced Enterprise and Business Support Partner organisations across the Region. The Enterprise Journey is currently being developed into Enterprise 2010 and will address a number of key priorities and offer a range of opportunities throughout the Region.

[www.onenortheast.co.uk](http://www.onenortheast.co.uk)

Tel: 0191 229 6200

### BUSINESS LINK NORTH EAST

Business Link is a government-funded service designed to help businesses start up, survive and grow.

The Business Link service is delivered right across England, however here in the North East we have a high quality and responsive team with local knowledge, experience and understanding to work with you to get the best from your business.

Research shows that a business that accesses external advice is likely to increase its turnover and profitability more than one that doesn't.

We recognise that when you are running a business you often don't have the time to research the best solutions for developing your business. Our aim is to provide you with relevant services from the broad range of public and private sector business support services at a national, regional and local level

[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

Tel: 0845 600 9006

## CONNECTIONS AND SIGNPOSTING

A number of delivery partners work across the North East to provide enterprise programmes – many are funded by One North East and some are funded by the councils (see section on Councils).

Many of the delivery partners are amongst the exhibitors at Chance to Change:

### Ideas Bank

For those looking to kick start a new business as the UK economy begins to emerge from recession, help and inspiration is at hand for first timers and serial entrepreneurs alike.

The Ideas Bank is an innovative new North East website that has been set up to provide an array of live, ready made new business opportunities in a range of key sectors, along with insights into potential new products and services that could be developed and brought to market.

The IdeasBank is free to use and free to join.

[www.theideasbank.co.uk](http://www.theideasbank.co.uk)

### Enterprise Island

Enterprise Island is a company which specialises only in enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Created eighteen years ago by Iain Scott, the company was one of the very first in the UK to pioneer work in the enterprise and regeneration field. The original concept - to undertake the research design and delivery of entrepreneurship programmes - has not changed.

[Andrew@enterpriseisland.com](mailto:Andrew@enterpriseisland.com)

### Innovation Scout

We believe that competitive advantage is born out of innovation. And innovation is born out of solving great problems. Great problems, great innovation, poor problems, poor innovation.

Innovation Scout scours the world to find exciting problems for innovators to solve.

Tel: 0845 519 4082

### Actif

Actif is a research and delivery consultancy specialising in entrepreneurship and leadership. We aim to inspire and engage clients to realise their potential through research, executive support, strategy development and implementation, enterprise animation and corporate entrepreneurship

Actif Evolve Business Centre, Houghton-le-Spring

Tel: 0845 481 8148

### Enterprise UK

Enterprise UK is an organisation that provides and delivers programmes that encourage enterprising activity amongst 14-30 year olds. They aim to reach out to people of all ages and backgrounds, fresh thinkers who spot opportunities, apply entrepreneurial talents and overcome the obstacles to make ideas happen.

Enterprise UK North East, c/o One NorthEast, Riverside House, Goldcrest Way, Newburn Riverside, Newburn, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 8NY

Tel: 0191 229 6413

email: [amelia@enterpriseuk.org](mailto:amelia@enterpriseuk.org)

## **TALENT ATTRACTION**

### **NRG**

#### **Re:action**

Re:action stimulates and nurtures people in Northumberland to be more enterprising more often in more places. Our forthcoming programme includes Town Challenges, Masterclasses led by local entrepreneurs and private sector led enterprise coaching. Re:action is an independent Community Interest Company limited by shares and controlled by Northumberland County Council.

For more information contact: 01434 610 452 [angela.hill@reaction-online.org](mailto:angela.hill@reaction-online.org)

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#### **Tynedale Enterprise Project**

We offer a free and confidential management coaching service to anyone living or working in west Northumberland. This helps our clients clarify their goals and find the resources required to realise those goals. Tynedale Enterprise Project works in association with reaction and is led by a panel of local businesses and community representatives.

If you would like an appointment to discuss your business ideas, please contact our Enterprise Facilitator, Mark Read.

Tel: 07765 272 759

e-mail: [mark@tynedale-enterprise.co.uk](mailto:mark@tynedale-enterprise.co.uk)

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#### **North East Enterprise Agencies Ltd (NEEAL)**

NEEAL is a consortium of enterprise agencies delivering programmes across the North East and consists of:

##### **Enterprise Agency Teesdale & Wear Valley**

The Agency is a not for profit organisation offering a range of support services, business counselling, advice, training and consultancy. We deliver models of best practice and skills development to start and improve enterprises.

Contact:

Teesdale area: 01833 696 600

Bishop Auckland area: 01388 776688

[www.theenterpriseagency.co.uk](http://www.theenterpriseagency.co.uk)

##### **Shildon & Sedgefield Development Agency (SASDA)**

Why not attend one of SASDA's FREE Workshops. Please either visit their website or contact 01325 310730 or email [tracey.davis@sasda.info](mailto:tracey.davis@sasda.info).

[www.sasda.info.co.uk](http://www.sasda.info.co.uk)

##### **Derwent Enterprise Agency (DEA)**

Our aim is to support anyone starting a business, already in business or considering moving a business into Derwentside. Either directly, with services we can deliver in-house, or by sign-posting you to the most appropriate source of support for your particular needs.

Tel: 01207 580 011

[www.derwentsideenterprise.co.uk](http://www.derwentsideenterprise.co.uk)

#### **Chester-le-Street & City of Durham Development Agency (CDEA)**

OA business support organisation offering tailored advice and support to new and existing businesses in the districts of Chester-le-Street and City of Durham, continues to provide expert advice to new and existing businesses in the area.

Offering a combination of training, one to one support and consultancy the Agency is able to draw on a massive amount of collective knowledge and experience to ensure that all clients get the service they need.

Tel: 0191 384 5407 (Durham)

Tel: 0191 389 2648 (Chester-le-Street)

[www.cdcbp.org.uk](http://www.cdcbp.org.uk)

#### **TEDCO**

TEDCO helps new and established businesses by providing information and advice on every aspect of running a business, including business start-up, survival, success and growth. TEDCO also manages three business centres in South Tyneside and one in Northumberland offering a range of workshop, manufacturing and office space with flexible terms

Tel: (0191) 428 3300

Email: [enquire@tedco.org](mailto:enquire@tedco.org)

[www.tedco.org](http://www.tedco.org)

#### **North East Business & Innovation Centre (BIC)**

The BIC is an organisation which exists to service businesses of all sizes at all stages. Our experienced advisers help hundreds of businesses to start up each year, and the 14-acre BIC site can accommodate over 160 companies in purpose-built offices and work spaces.

We also offer an array of technical resources and support services, as well as superb meeting / conference facilities fitted with the latest video conferencing equipment.

Tel: 0191 516 6200

[info@bic.co.uk](mailto:info@bic.co.uk)

[www.ne-bic.co.uk](http://www.ne-bic.co.uk)

#### **Five Lamps**

The Five Lamps Organisation is one of the largest community led social enterprises within the North East.

Five Lamps provides a holistic approach to economic and social renewal. The Five Lamps is also a registered charity.

The Five Lamps Mission is: "To transform lives, raise aspirations, remove barriers and offer choice to families, business and communities"

The Five Lamps works hard to transform the lives of everyone, but particularly those living in the most disadvantaged communities. All of our work is underpinned by our commitment to 'Making People Matter'.

Tel: 01642 608316

[www.fivelamps.org.uk](http://www.fivelamps.org.uk)

#### **Northumberland Business Services (NBSL)**

TAs an Enterprise Agency, NBSL exists to help create and grow businesses in Northumberland and across NE England.

We have skilled, experienced Business Advisers with whom you can work confidentially, whether you are just thinking about setting up a business, are ready to start your business, or are already in business and need a little extra help.

Tel: 01670 813 322

[www.nbsl.org.uk](http://www.nbsl.org.uk)

### Entrust

Entrust provide an extensive range of services which are designed to help your business start-up, grow, thrive and survive in the North East. They offer everything from getting your business off the ground with our specialist Start-up Support Team, to growing your business with funding support and graduate recruitment.

Tel: 0191 244 4000

[www.entrust.co.uk](http://www.entrust.co.uk)

### Project NE

PNE Group has been designing, building and managing innovative projects that help enterprising people and communities develop their ideas, and create wealth and employment.

The purpose of the PNE Group is to develop sustainable organisations globally through people, performance and place. We regard ourselves as social entrepreneurs doing challenging things throughout the world.

Our success is based on a sound understanding of best practice, married with practical experience of working with small businesses and community projects.

PNE Enterprise

Business Support tel: 0191 230 6409

[bss@pne.org](mailto:bss@pne.org)

### Loan Funds

Tel: 0191 230 6401 / 230 6403

[loans@pne.org](mailto:loans@pne.org)

[www.pne.org](http://www.pne.org)

### Northern Pinetree Trust

NPT are an organisation whose core objects are to support people with a broad range of disabilities or people who are disadvantaged by their circumstances and who benefit from 1;1, personalised or additional support needs. We offer a full range of business and enterprise support programmes from enterprise awareness, business ideas generation and evaluation, an introduction to self employment, business planning through to business start up and beyond. We also have a specialist business loan programme providing access to business start up finance and assistance identifying a range of sources of grant and loan finance.

We work with a wide range of people from different circumstances, people with a physical, sensory, learning disability or mental ill health. We also target other communities such as homeless, offenders, veterans, 50+.

We work closely with Prince's Trust providing enterprise support and loan finance to young people.

Our work has been recognised through the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion, The National Federation of Enterprise Agencies Customer Focus Award for designing and delivering bespoke programmes specifically for individual communities and RBS Social Enterprise top 100, for the social impact of our work.

Tel: 0191 4928215 or 01914928219

[www.northernpinetreetrust.co.uk](http://www.northernpinetreetrust.co.uk)

### Enterprising Futures

Enterprising Futures works with you to generate and develop new business ideas, giving you free independent business start-up advice. Enterprising Futures can give advice on:

- grants and loans
- training on finance
- book-keeping
- marketing and management

Tel: 0191 525 5953

Email: [Craig.toft@gentoogroup.com](mailto:Craig.toft@gentoogroup.com) or [Anneline.Watts@gentoogroup.com](mailto:Anneline.Watts@gentoogroup.com)

[www.enterprisingfutures.org](http://www.enterprisingfutures.org)

### Durham Enterprise Associates Limited (DEAL)

Deal was formed in early 2005 by former employees of the Small Business Centre at Durham University Business School to carry on the tradition of delivering pioneering work in the field of enterprise development. Deal offers a range of training programmes for business brokers, skills brokers, SMEs exploring growth strategies and undertakes consultancy projects in all aspects of enterprise development.

Geoff Potts [geoff@durham-enterprise.com](mailto:geoff@durham-enterprise.com) tel: 01912 816346

John O'Brien [john@durham-enterprise.com](mailto:john@durham-enterprise.com) tel: 01670 791034

Karen Langdon [karen@durham-enterprise.com](mailto:karen@durham-enterprise.com) tel: 01913 038155

[www.durham-enterprise.com](http://www.durham-enterprise.com)

### Enterprise Made Simple

Enterprise Made Simple is a company dedicated to enterprise and business. We work with people who want to start a business, and grow successful enterprises. We offer a full commercial service through access to public funding and grant support.

Tel: 0800 954 9915 [info@enterprisemadesimple.co.uk](mailto:info@enterprisemadesimple.co.uk)

[www.enterprisemadesimple.co.uk](http://www.enterprisemadesimple.co.uk)

### RTC North

RTC North is an independent company delivering initiatives and providing services to support economic growth. Our consultants excel in the areas of technology transfer, commercialisation, business growth and open innovation and have worked with thousands of local companies since 1989 to create jobs, wealth and a better quality of life for the people of Northern England.

RTC North is a trusted delivery partner of business support, innovation and enterprise programmes on behalf of regional development agencies, the European Commission, local authorities and central government.

Tel: 01915164400. Email: [enquiries@rtcnorth.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@rtcnorth.co.uk)

[www.rtcnorth.co.uk](http://www.rtcnorth.co.uk)

### SES

SES works with existing businesses to help them grow and specialises in grass roots business start-up support. Business support is vital to boost the chances of all forms of businesses in hard pressed areas to start-up and grow.

SES has successfully facilitated a model of enterprise development that targets, captures the imagination of, and meets the needs of those most hard-pressed. It is a pro-active, holistic and integrated approach – deliberately "activist" in nature as opposed to being "passive or neutral".

For all business start-up and on-going business support contact:

Tel: 0191 272 8571

[www.ses.coop](http://www.ses.coop)

### InBiz

InBiz focuses on enterprise creation and neighborhood regeneration mainly with start ups, micro businesses and small and medium enterprises (SME's). Through the development of specific projects, InBiz aids individuals and groups to develop their enterprise skills and set up and run their own businesses. InBiz is involved in an extensive range of enterprise support programmes throughout the region including work with Jobcentre Plus, One North East, Business Link North East. All of the Councils across the region offer support for people who are looking to start a business. Support ranges from grant funding and premises through to enterprise coaching with a wide variety of courses, workshop and programmes. Many of the councils also contract with a range of delivery partners to provide enterprise services.

## COUNTY & LOCAL COUNCILS

### NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

#### Business Grants

A range of financial assistance may be available to support your business. They can depend on how large your business is, which area of work you're in or your business location. To check out eligibility or get up to date information on the latest grants, please get in touch. Newcastle City Council's Enterprise Support Team provide up to date information on available funding for new and expanding businesses.

We encourage people to become entrepreneurs by supporting new businesses to start up and existing businesses to grow. We work with a wide range of partner organisations to develop and deliver initiatives that we hope will make a real difference to businesses and have a positive impact upon local communities.

Get in touch with us if:

- You are thinking of setting up a new business (whether as a sole trader, limited company or social enterprise)
- Need to know about possible funding opportunities
- Require information and advice on premises

Contact Jim Thompson

Phone 0191 211 5684

E-mail [jim.thompson@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:jim.thompson@newcastle.gov.uk)

If you'd like further information on the Business Centres, contact :

Manager: Diane McElligott

Phone: 0191 275 5000

E-mail [diane.mcelligott@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:diane.mcelligott@newcastle.gov.uk)

### SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL

#### Business Support

Whether you are considering setting-up or expanding in Sunderland, the right support package is available to help your business maintain its competitive edge.

The range of support available includes grants and advice, as well as practical help with issues such as identifying premises. Direct support from Sunderland City Council is normally targeted on manufacturing companies and some related service industries, although we can signpost other businesses to appropriate sources of help.

The range of support available is continually evolving, so contact the Business Investment Team for up-to-date information on how we can help.

Business Investment Team

Tel: 0191 561 1210

e-mail: [business.investment@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:business.investment@sunderland.gov.uk)

### STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### Grant Assistance Packages for Businesses

Financial assistance packages are available via Stockton Council's Business Development Team to help new and existing businesses in the Borough.

**There are three different packages available:**

#### 1. Start-up Grant

This grant is intended to promote and support new business entrepreneurship in the ERDF target areas of the Borough, with limited support outside these areas. The grant is available to businesses that are in the process of starting up. The grant is subject to available funding and up to a maximum of £1,000. Applicants will be expected to have sourced support through the Neighbourhood Enterprise Gateways or a recognised Enterprise Agency.

#### 2. Capital Grant

The grant is available for businesses which have been trading less than 3 years. This grant can be used to help buy capital items that are essential to grow the business. Funding from the council is available from £1,500; up to £5000 on a 50/50 basis i.e. a business must match any grant award. The business must be creating at least one job (full time).

#### 3. Capital Plus

This grant has been established to encourage and support the growth of indigenous businesses, encourage job creation and promote new technology within businesses. The grant is available to businesses that have been trading for more than three years. Funding from the council is available up to £5000 on a 50/50 basis i.e. a business must match any grant award.

How to apply:

Talk to a Business Development Officer at Stockton Borough Council by contacting:

Tel: 01642 528 384

E-Mail: [business.enquiries@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:business.enquiries@stockton.gov.uk)

Website: [www.stockton.gov.uk/business/financialassistance](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/business/financialassistance)

#### Business Development & Enterprise Support

Our support services include help with:

- Access to finance through the Stockton Business Grants Scheme for eligible start up businesses;
- Promoting self-employment as an option to return to the labour market, particularly to those under threat of redundancy;
- Signposting to appropriate self employment support organisations, for example, Business Link; HMRC and Enterprise Agencies such as The Five Lamps, Inbiz, Enterprise Made Simple;
- Pro-active Business Engagement to identify key issues and follow up on actions, or to signpost to other support organisations;
- Business Registration Scheme - This is a website-based database which Council officers can use to identify local businesses when seeking quotations for a wide range of contract opportunities.
- Routes into Enterprise - Development of three Enterprise Gateways within Stockton to provide a one stop shop for residents considering self employment as a viable option.

Contact Stockton Business Development Team

Tel: 01642 528 384;

Email: [business.enquiries@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:business.enquiries@stockton.gov.uk)

### REDCAR & CLEVELAND COUNCIL

The Enterprise Team supports businesses in the following 16 wards across Redcar & Cleveland : - Teesville, South Bank, Ormesby, Normanby, Grangetown, Eston, Skelton, St Germain's, Loftus, Lockwood, Brotton, Saltburn, Newcomen, Kirkleatham, Dormanstown, Coatham. Support provided includes financial support regarding capital expenditure or support in marketing, promotional or security enhancement.

The Enterprise Team in conjunction with HMRC run workshops on a monthly basis which covers all clients needs with regard to tax. All details for dates are available on the "This Is All Yours" website. Throughout the year there are regular events in which the enterprise team either run or support that provide sale platforms for clients, who are up and running in business with products to retail as well as events that can simply provide clients with the opportunity to network. Other events/ activities will be provided if there is a client demand for it.

Tel: 01642 495 707

Email: [darren\\_rudd@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:darren_rudd@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)

Visit: [www.thisisallyours.co.uk](http://www.thisisallyours.co.uk)

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### DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

County Durham Development Company is the inward investment and local business support arm of Durham County Council. The Company reinforces the Council's long-standing commitment to economic regeneration, promoting County Durham as a place to live work and do business.

<http://www.wherebusinessgrows.com/>

Tel: 0191 370 8680

[enquiries@wherebusinessgrows.com](mailto:enquiries@wherebusinessgrows.com)

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### NORTHUMBERLAND COUNCIL

Northumberland County Council provides a range of services for the business community, including business advice, and works closely with other organisations to provide complementary assistance.

We can help businesses to find suitable factory, workshop or office premises, consider an expansion project and the scope for public sector support; help businesses wishing to tender for public sector contracts or signpost you to a more appropriate organisation to assist you in your circumstances.

#### Investment Support Service

The Investment Support Service is designed to help existing or start-up businesses with investment proposals, which create or help maintain employment in the County. It is a free service to Northumberland firms wishing to set up or expand.

#### Inward Investment Service

The Business Centre is the gateway for all strategic inward investment into Northumberland. Any information required by companies to assist them in the decision making process to determine a business location is provided as required on an individual basis. Once established, on-going advice and support is provided as required.

Contact Graham Adams, Business Development Manager

Tel: 01670 533 925

Email: [Graham.Adams@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Adams@northumberland.gov.uk)

Bev Begbie, Small Business Liaison Officer

Tel: 01670 533 928

Email: [Bev.Begbie@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Begbie@northumberland.gov.uk)

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### DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Council through the Economic Regeneration section provides a range of business support services to attract new business, help existing businesses to expand, and in partnership with private and public sector partners, promoting Darlington as a business location.

The Business Engagement Team works closely with other partners and agencies to support businesses within Darlington and those wishing to relocate or start-up within the town.

For further information please contact the Business Engagement Team

Tel: 01325 388 687

e-mail [business.support@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:business.support@darlington.gov.uk)

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### HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Business Support section of the Economic Development Team offers a range of advice, support and assistance services designed to meet the needs of individuals:

- Starting up a new business
- Expanding an existing business
- Relocating a business to Hartlepool

The team can provide professional advice on the financial assistance schemes and grants available to businesses, as well as accessing specialist business advice on a range of topics including financial management, exporting, effective recruiting and workforce development.

The Enterprising Hartlepool local networking group can also provide vital support from local entrepreneurs who are successfully running businesses in the town and can provide valuable advice and guidance based on their experiences.

The team also has a business directory available online that lists details of local businesses what activity they are involved in and the services they provide together with their contact details.

For further information click on [www.investinhartlepool.com](http://www.investinhartlepool.com)

Contact the Economic Development Team on (01429) 523 511

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### MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

There are a number of financial incentives available from Middlesbrough Council towards new business start-ups, existing indigenous businesses, and new inward investors.

#### Start Up Grant

The grant is available to new businesses that are in the process of starting up or are in their first four weeks of trading. The grant is subject to available funding and up to a maximum of £500.

#### Capital Grant

The grant is available for businesses based or planning to move to Middlesbrough and which have been trading for less than three years. This grant can be used to help buy capital items that are essential to grow the business. Funding is available between £1000 and £5000 on a 50/50 basis i.e. your business must match any grant award. The business must be creating one new job.

Tel: 01642 729 007

e-mail: [businesssupport@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:businesssupport@middlesbrough.gov.uk)

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## GATESHEAD COUNCIL

Gateshead Council is committed to providing a top class service to both residents and businesses and is currently focused on driving the commercial agenda in the North East.

At Gateshead Council we are also committed to helping entrepreneurs thrive and grow through our dedicated advice service for new and existing businesses. We can help guide you through the process of setting up a business in Gateshead and provide expert advice on funding, grants, planning and all aspects of starting or growing your business.

Economic Development team:

Tel: 0191 433 2078

Email: [economicdevelopment@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@gateshead.gov.uk)

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## NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

### Business Support

North Tyneside Council's Business and Employment Team is committed to delivering a comprehensive programme to support your business. We offer business start up advice, grant funding, recruitment support and assistance with locating premises.

To apply for a grant or request further information, please contact us on:

Tel: 0191 643 6403

Email: [business@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:business@northtyneside.gov.uk)

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## SOUTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

### South Tyneside Means Business

If you've got an idea, if you want to work for yourself or grow your business in South Tyneside you've come to the right place. South Tyneside Means Business is the place to bring your ideas; we're here to help you make them happen.

South Tyneside has always been a place where people make their ideas happen. What's new is the amount of help and support that's now available right here in South Tyneside, making the future a very exciting place to be.

So, whatever your idea and whatever stage you're at, we're ready and waiting.

Tel: 0845 460 3333

(Lines are open Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

email: [ideas@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:ideas@southtyneside.gov.uk)

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## OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

### The North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC)

NECC champions, connects and develops member businesses, and their people, to win more business, become better businesses and enjoy better conditions for business within North East England and around the world. With over 4,000 members and a third of the region's workforce, NECC is one of the largest Chambers of Commerce in Britain.

### Funding

NECC can advise you on funding and support available to assist you in building and developing a team. Many training opportunities such as apprenticeships are fully-funded.

Find out more about the benefits of belonging at [www.necc.co.uk/belong](http://www.necc.co.uk/belong) call 0300 303 6322 or email [enquiries@necc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@necc.co.uk)

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### The Prince's Trust

Funding and support to help young people start their own business. Young people aged between 18-30 are eligible if they are unemployed, are unable to raise all the finances to start-up a business from other sources or have a viable business idea and the will to make it reality

The Prince's Trust offer:

Start-up finance

- test marketing grants up to £250
- start-up loans of up to £4,000 for a sole trader or up to £5,000 for a partnership
- start-up grants of up to £1,500 in special circumstances
- Start-up services
- assistance with putting together a business plan
- volunteer business mentor for two years
- start-up support for three years
- self-help kits, seminars, free advice lines and other marketing support

Freephone 0800 842 842

[www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)

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### Institute for Digital Innovation

#### Fellowship Scheme

The DigitalCity Fellowship Scheme is funded by European Regional Development Fund, over a period of up to six months Fellows are supported in carrying out research, portfolio, product or commercial development to a stage where the project is either commercially viable, reaches an industry standard or is able to attract additional funding.

During that time, they will be mentored by industry experts and have access to the University's outstanding facilities as well as an enviable network of like-minded businesses and individuals thanks to Teesside's fast-growing digital cluster.

Applicants should be based in the North of England, not have previously been awarded a Fellowship, and whose projects are not yet commercialised or otherwise privately funded.

For further information please contact:

Cheryl Evans, Project Manager

Tel: 01642 384 324

[c.evans@idi-uk.org](mailto:c.evans@idi-uk.org)

[www.digitalcityfellowships.org](http://www.digitalcityfellowships.org)

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### Newcastle University - Careers Advice & Guidance

Any Newcastle University graduate can access our Rise Up services and support to help them develop a business idea and start-up (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/careers/riseup/>).

Drop-in is from 10am to 4:30pm on Level 1 of King's Gate or an appointment with a business adviser can be made by calling 0191 222 7748 or emailing [riseup@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:riseup@ncl.ac.uk).

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### Teesside University - Careers Advice & Guidance

Teesside University are happy to help you with CVs and application forms, but we do not provide a CV writing service and cannot spend time correcting your spelling and grammar. You can get advice from a careers adviser by email, at a drop in session or by booking an appointment.

If you want to find out more about the careers service, call 01642 342 260 or email [careers@tees.ac.uk](mailto:careers@tees.ac.uk).

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### Durham University - Careers Advice & Guidance

Durham Business School graduates are highly employable individuals. As part of DUBS commitment to their MBA students they offer numerous facilities, services and resources to help you realise your career aspirations and goals.

Further online support is available via the university DUO system which provides up to date and relevant career guidance and access to DBS resources.

Tel: 0191 334 5200

[www.dur.ac.uk](http://www.dur.ac.uk)

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### Sunderland University - Careers Advice & Guidance

The University's Careers and Employability Service offers career planning and job search support to current students and graduates for up to 3 years after completion of their programme of study and provides recruitment services to employers.

Contact us for:

- advice about career and study choices
- help with CVs/Applications
- help with preparing for interviews
- online vacancy service: student and graduate entry jobs
- short-term paid and voluntary projects
- company and career presentations
- comprehensive range of careers and employer information.

Careers & Employability Service 0191 515 2920

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## LOCAL ENTERPRISE GROWTH INITIATIVE (LEGI)

There are four Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) areas in the North East – each delivers a range of support for those who are looking to start a business.

### Be Enterprising – Durham County Council

Be Enterprising can help you with everything from finding the right workspace for your company to helping you build strong relationships with suppliers, starting your business on the path to success. Experienced business coaches are always on hand to work with you and share their expertise. If you want to 'test drive' your business before you commit, we can even help you to do that - in a virtual world!

Tel: 0800 030 4134

[www.be-enterprising.biz](http://www.be-enterprising.biz)

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### Go Wansbeck – Wansbeck Council

We can help you to get the skills you need through our Young Entrepreneurs Skills scheme, or you could find out more about franchising by attending our Inspired Enterprise workshops.

Enterprise coaches can work with any Wansbeck resident with a business idea to help them make sure that they're properly prepared to start their business with the best possible chance of success.

If you need some financial support the Wansbeck Community Finance Initiative may be able to help with a loan, or when you're ready to start your business you can apply for a grant from our Flexible Funding scheme.

Tel: 01670 842 888

[www.gowansbeck.co.uk](http://www.gowansbeck.co.uk)

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### Redcar & Cleveland LEGI – Redcar & Cleveland Council

The Enterprise Team supports businesses in the following 16 wards across Redcar & Cleveland : - Teesville, South Bank, Ormesby, Normanby, Grangetown, Eston, Skelton, St Germain's, Loftus, Lockwood, Brotton, Saltburn, Newcomen, Kirkleatham, Dormanstown, Coatham. If you live in one of these wards contact our team to see what assistance we can offer or if you do not live in one of these wards we may be able to point you in the direction of other assistance available.

The Enterprise Team in conjunction with HMRC run workshops on a monthly basis which covers all clients needs with regard to tax. All details for dates are available on the [www.thisisallyours.co.uk](http://www.thisisallyours.co.uk) website. Throughout the year there are regular events in which the enterprise team either run or support that provide sale platforms for clients, who are up and running in business with products to retail as well as events that can simply provide clients with the opportunity to network. Other events/ activities will be provided if there is a client demand for it.

Tel: 01642 495 707

Email: [darren\\_rudd@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:darren_rudd@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk) or [legi@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:legi@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)

[www.thisisallyours.co.uk](http://www.thisisallyours.co.uk)

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### South Tyneside Means Business

If you're thinking about working for yourself in South Tyneside you've come to the right place. Why? Because South Tyneside Means Business is here to help you get your idea off the ground.

There are lots of ways we can help - from inspiration, information and advice to a range of practical support.

In fact, there has never been more help available to you than there is right now.

Which makes South Tyneside today not just the right place but also the right time for anyone who's ever wanted to work for themselves. It's an exciting place and an exciting time, so why not take a look around the site and find out more about what's involved and how we can help you get your business started? Whatever you want to do, make sure South Tyneside's the place you do it.

Tel: 0845 460 3333

[www.southtynesidemeansbusiness.co.uk](http://www.southtynesidemeansbusiness.co.uk)

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## FUNDING AND FINANCE

### The North East England Investment Centre

The North East England Investment Centre (NEEIC) is here to help new and existing businesses to develop and grow by investing public funds in projects that need advice and support.

If you think you could benefit from our help, firstly, please phone Business Link on 0845 600 9006 for more information. A Business Link adviser will assess your needs. If you are eligible, they will support you through the application process.

Over and above financial support, Business Link can provide you with help, advice and information on a range of business topics. The team of expert advisers can assess your business needs and recommend appropriate solutions. You can pick their brains, benefit from their thinking and experience and put your plans into action.

For more information about the range of support available,

Tel: 0845 600 9006 or email [enquiries@businesslinknortheast.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@businesslinknortheast.co.uk)

visit [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

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### North East Finance

Over the next five years, Finance for Business will invest £125million into a broad spectrum of businesses located in the North East through loans and equity investments designed to drive business growth.

The funds include:

North East Seed Fund

Aimed at companies and start-ups in any eligible business sector this fund invests in growth businesses at an early stage of their development.

The North East Seed Fund is managed by NorthStar Equity Investors

Tel: 0845 301 1496

[www.northstarei.com](http://www.northstarei.com)

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### North East Proof of Concept Fund

Early stage businesses in the technology sector can tap into this fund which will work in parallel with the region's Universities, Centres of Excellence, individual entrepreneurs, technology start-ups and SMEs to develop new businesses.

Finance will be available for innovative projects which have the potential to create significant new commercial opportunities.

The Proof of Concept Fund is managed by NorthStar Equity Investors

Tel: 0845 301 1496

[www.onenortheast.co.uk/page/proofofconceptfund.cfm](http://www.onenortheast.co.uk/page/proofofconceptfund.cfm)

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### North East Angel Fund

This fund has an active focus on working with business angels interested in backing exciting regional companies. It will invest in growth businesses in most sectors and predominantly at the early of development. It may also join business angels in later stage deals.

This fund is managed by Rivers Capital Partnership

Tel: 0191 230 6370

[www.riverscap.com](http://www.riverscap.com)

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## EXHIBITORS

Sunderland Council

South Tyneside Council

Newcastle Council

Enterprise UK

The Ideas Bank

Actif

People into Enterprise

Enterprise Island

The Prince's Trust

Institute for Digital Innovation

Ifwecanyoucan.co.uk

Entrepreneurs' Forum

North East Business & Innovation Centre

Business Link

Be Enterprising

NRG – Talent Challenge

Northern Pinetree Trust

Project North East

HSBC

Re:action

NEEAL

InBiz