

Objective One case study business support



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The Objective One Business Task Force's vision is to 'Make Cornwall the place to do business in the 21st Century' and its aim is to 'establish Cornwall as a model for sustainable prosperity by creating foundations that support innovation and best practice'.

The projects in the Business Support investment cluster provide support, advice and investment for mainly, but not exclusively, small and medium sized businesses.

This cluster also includes a number of funds that provide tailored services to individual small and medium businesses to assist them with development and growth.

Small and medium sized businesses are essential to the development of the economy of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Cockwells Modern and Classic Boatbuilding

Turnover has tripled in just two years at a Cornish boat building firm. Cockwells Modern and Classic Boatbuilding, of Ponsharden, Falmouth, has also expanded to 11 employees, including three new boatbuilding apprentices.

Cockwells are renowned specialists in the bespoke construction and restoration of wooden yachts, both power and sail. They use time-honoured skills and craftsmanship in tandem with modern techniques to fulfil their customers' requirements.

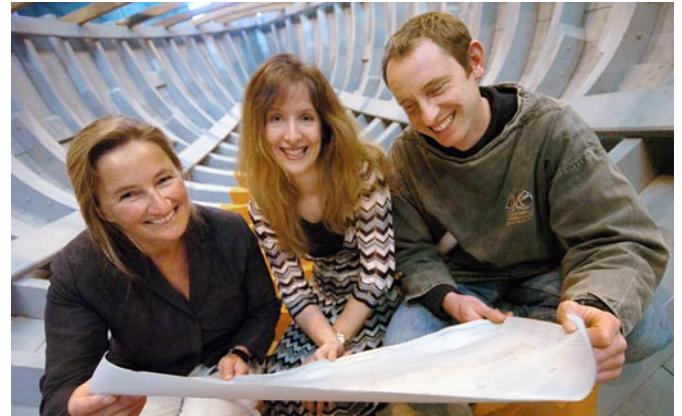
The expansion has been supported by Objective One investment via both Business Link Devon and Cornwall and Cornwall Marine Network.

Set up in Cornwall by Dave Cockwell in 2002, they were recently supported by Business Link to attend both the London and Southampton Boat Shows which resulted in several orders and on-going enquiries along with excellent networking contacts. Business Link personal business adviser Clare Whitney also carried out a diagnostic review of the firm and referred in a health and safety specialist.

"As a company committed to growth, producing a high quality product, and developing our employees, we value Business Link's help in supporting our aims," said business manager Jenny Cockwell, the founder's sister.

Cornwall Marine Network, based at the new Marine Skills Centre at Falmouth Docks, has also been involved with substantial financial, marketing and training support.

Cockwells are currently (December 2006) building the new 60ft St Mawes passenger ferry, a Bristol Channel pilot cutter replica and a 37ft classic



Business Link personal adviser Clare Whitney (left) with Jenny Cockwell and Dave Cockwell.

motor launch tender for a super yacht. As an example of skills diversification the company also recently constructed impressive teak decking around a customer's private swimming pool in London.

Unusually, the business has an in-house designer, Mash Derrick, and its own sawmill. "From his knowledge and experience of which timber makes the best boats, Dave sources trees while they are still standing, ensuring that only the best and most durable materials are used," explained Jenny.

"He prefers to choose sustainable woodlands in Cornwall where oak is plentiful but travels to Scotland to select larch. From design to completion of the boat, we control the whole process at every stage."

Sustainability and the environment are key words in the company's vocabulary. Cockwells are looking into planting trees in Cornwall to meet the needs of future generations of boat builders and is also investigating ways in which its waste products such as sawdust and wood parts can be converted and re-used as a renewable energy source.

"It can take 100 years to grow a quality tree and we expect our newly built boats to last at least that long, which we feel makes our business environmentally sound within the industry," concluded Jenny.

For more information about Business Link Devon and Cornwall, visit www.bldc.co.uk.

For more information about Cornwall Marine Network, visit www.cornwallmarine.net.