

A supportive environment to grow

One of the most prominent characteristics of the economy in the Rural Regeneration Zone is one of significant entrepreneurial activity, despite a dependency on traditional industries such as agriculture and manufacturing.

In order to support this activity, the Zone entered into a £16 million partnership with developers Evans Easyspace to create a network of enterprise centres in key positions across the Zone.

The Rural Enterprise Centre Network is a series of centres where small businesses can take advantage of easy-in, easy-out flexible rates on high-class office and workshop accommodation.

It is anticipated that the network could eventually create more than 1,000 new jobs and give hundreds of companies the chance to set up and grow in a supportive environment.

The first centres to open were Leominster and Ludlow in September 2007, followed by Hereford and Shrewsbury in June 2008.

Among the customers already doing business from the centres are SuperYacht, which specialises in the transportation of sailing boats around the world, and Pulse Health and Fitness, a dedicated personal training centre, both of which are based at Ludlow.

And at the Leominster centre one of the first tenants was Pure Cleans, a ladder-less cleaning company that uses only pure water to clean windows.

Peter Pawsey, Chairman of the Rural Regeneration Zone, said: "Supporting the economy in the Zone is a major challenge and with the Rural Enterprise Centre Network we have approached it from the bottom up.

"These centres offer a platform for small businesses to grow and we have gone to great lengths to ensure that it is not just an office or a workshop – we need to make sure companies have access to business support."

Tom Stokes, Chief Executive of Evans Easyspace, said: "I firmly believe that the partnership between ourselves and the Rural Regeneration Zone is one of the best examples of public-private sector partnership working.

"The Evans Easyspace concept of providing high quality, small workspaces tailor made to suit growing businesses is already a proven success throughout the UK and, I am pleased to say, is already having a real impact on the economy of the Rural Regeneration Zone."

PROJECT Rural Centre Enterprise Network SUPPORTED THROUGH Rural Regeneration Zone



Nick Jackson, Owner of SuperYacht, based at Ludlow Rural Enterprise Centre; (inset) the Leominster Enterprise Centre.

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