

Heads of the Valleys Business Collaboration Secures the Future

Five firms from the Heads of the Valleys and South East Wales are securing their future by working together to help boost business and increase awareness of the expertise available in the region.

Secure Wales, which brings together five like-minded businesses involved in the security sector, have just won their first contract worth £15,000 and are focused on further opportunities to improve their competitive edge.

The businesses provide one point of contact for a wide range of specialist advice, products and services on any aspect of security from CCTV, intruder alarms and security lighting, to security gates, doors and fences, man guarding and fire protection engineering, as well as identity card printing, biometric security, IT security and e-crime consultancy.

The cluster developed from an innovative idea originated by HOVIP, the Heads of the Valleys Innovation Programme. HOVIP Manager Phil Burkhard explains, “When we reviewed the businesses we were working with, it was evident that several had skills, services and contacts that were complementary and that whilst they were not all in the same sector, by working together they could increase their commercial potential.”

“One of my colleagues, Mike Warren, progressed the idea and facilitated a project through HOVIP working with the founder members of the cluster.”

Vince Price, lead member of Secure Wales, takes up the story, “As a group of diverse businesses we all wanted to access new markets and new opportunities but were struggling to find the best way to do it. Mike Warren from HOVIP worked with us to focus on what we wanted to achieve and how we could work together. HOVIP and Mike have provided tremendous support to help us develop a viable commercial cluster. The result is Secure Wales.”

The cluster is also the first successful application to the new National Enterprise Networks Fund from the Welsh Assembly Government. Funding of £10,000 has enabled Secure Wales to formulate joint bids, undertake market research to identify emerging products, services and markets, develop a shared database of key contacts and design a corporate identity and website, as well as undertake measures to improve operational efficiency.

“The development of this cluster of security businesses is very exciting.” said Ian Mabberley, Programme Manager for the National Enterprise Networks Fund. “Clustering represents a new way of thinking about business and can bring a wide range of benefits to both the participating businesses and the wider community.”

“Secure Wales demonstrates how firms in Wales are positioning themselves to be competitive in the future. We look forward to working with HOVIP to develop other innovative projects.”

Phil Burkhard, HOVIP Programme Manager, said, “HOVIP is delighted to have initiated and supported the creation of Secure Wales. It is an excellent example of how an innovative idea can lead to commercial success, proving that doing things differently can secure the future.”

Notes to Editors:

1. About Secure Wales

Secure Wales is a collaboration between the top providers of security and fire protection in Wales. The five business that comprise Secure Wales are:

- **Cynon Valley Crime Reduction Services Ltd** - a social enterprise based in Trecynon, Aberdare, providing CCTV, intruder alarm systems, security lighting and systems and training development.
- **Design & Manufacture Ltd** - based in Merthyr Tydfil, providing a wide range of security doors, gates and fences.
- **Spectrum Positive Identity & Training Ltd** - based in Cwmbran, providing bespoke plastic and identity card printing and biometric security.
- **Rockfield Safety Ltd** - based in Caerphilly, providing fire protection engineering and safety solutions and training.
- www.creatingmedia.co.uk - based in Llanharry , Rhondda Cynon Taff and Portskewett near Monmouthshire, providing web design, IT security and e-crime consultancy.

For more information visit www.securewales.co.uk or call 01685 886366 or email info@securewales.co.uk

2. About HOVIP

The Heads of the Valleys Innovation Programme (HOVIP) aims to increase the capacity for innovation in businesses in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen. HOVIP2 is a regional business development programme hosted by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and supported by the Welsh Assembly Government Heads of the Valleys Regeneration initiative. It is also supported by Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen County Borough Councils.

For more information visit www.hovip.org.uk or call Phil Burkhard on 01685 725469 or email: phil.burkhard@merthyr.gov.uk

3. About the National Enterprise Networks Fund

National Enterprise Networks Fund is part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Flexible Support for Business

<<MORE FROM IAN MABBERLEY>>

For more information, contact Ian Maberley on 01443 845894 or email ian.maberley@wales.gsi.gov.uk

4. About The Works, Ebbw Vale

The Works is the regeneration project to redevelop the former Ebbw Vale steelworks site - a vibrant and distinctive development in the heart of Blaenau Gwent, South Wales. For more information, visit <http://wales.gov.uk/theworks/home/?lang=en>