

*August 14, 2007*

## **Gloucestershire businesses get help after the floods**

More than £350,000 in grants has been offered to businesses in Gloucestershire through the Flood Recovery Scheme funded by the South West of England Regional Development Agency (South West RDA).

In the last 14 working days, more than 390 calls have been taken from businesses ranging from riding schools to antique shops seeking help. A large proportion has been from the agricultural sector and retail and tourism are also strongly represented.

The £2 million scheme developed in conjunction with Gloucestershire First and Business Link, is being well received by businesses but the South West RDA is urging more Gloucestershire firms to get in touch. They can do this by ringing **0845 6009006**.

Ian Thompson, South West RDA director of operations in the north of the region, said: "So far, 182 visits by Business Link advisors have been completed and another 55 are planned this week. We are pleased with the response but we still urge businesses to contact us."

Eligible businesses are able to claim up to a maximum of £2,500, which could include clean up costs and materials and alternative temporary accommodation. Longer term items such as business continuity planning and marketing and business advice will also be covered. All types of businesses are eligible including farms, sole-traders and tourism companies.

Last week, the South West RDA announced a £50,000 investment in the tourism industry to promote Gloucester and its attractions. The campaign will run alongside the £2 million flood recovery package.

**Guidance and application forms are also available on the following websites/pages:**

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

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

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

**Affected businesses should call 0845 6009006 and arrangements will be made for them to be contacted by a business advisor.**

**Ends**

#### **Notes to editors**

Larger companies (over 250 employees) who require advice and support as a result of flooding will be dealt with directly by Gloucestershire First and South West RDA on a case by case basis. These companies should ring Gloucestershire First on (01242) 864190.

The Partners in the Flood Recovery Scheme for Business

1. The South West of England Regional Development Agency was established by government in 1999 to promote the long-term economic success of the region. It does this by working with others to give people the skills they need, encouraging enterprise, improving infrastructure, helping communities with regeneration and promoting the strengths of the region.
2. Gloucestershire First is the countywide Strategic Economic Partnership established to develop and support the economic well being of the County. It brings together partners in the field of economic development to contribute to an overall strategic plan for the county.
3. Business Link provides the information, advice and support needed to start, maintain and grow a business. It provides information and advice to help customers make the most of opportunities. Rather than providing all the help itself, it fast-tracks customers to the expert help they need. The Business Link service is a crucial part of the government's campaign to promote enterprise.

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