

The information below outlines the services available to local businesses supported by Worcestershire County Council and also provides links to relevant district council support, as well as the support put in place by Central Government. The information is current as of 14th October 2020. For the latest information please follow the links to the relevant websites.

We are working closely with Worcestershire's Growth Hub, Worcestershire Business Central (WBC), to create a central point of contact for all local businesses. If businesses would like to know more about these schemes or any others, please refer them to WBC via the contact details below.

Tel: 01905 677888 **Email:** info@business-central.co.uk **Website:** www.business-central.co.uk

	Project	Description	What is available?	Who is eligible?
Grants available	Here2Help Business Grants	<p>A range of support to help Worcestershire businesses recover, adapt, develop and support future resilience in response to COVID-19.</p> <p>Grant support is offered on a 50% match funded basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain & Grow grant (up to £25,000 capital and revenue) • COVID-19 Response grant (up to £100,000 capital only) • Agriculture & Horticulture grant (up to £10,000 capital only) • Graduate Development grant (up to £10,000) 	<p>Applicants must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating within Worcestershire and have a Worcestershire business address • A small/medium sized enterprise (SME) • A limited company, a sole trader or partnership (trading over 12 months) <p>They must be also in the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing (including science and medical, food and drink) • Information technology (cyber security, digital) • Business and professional services (B2B and non-brokerage services only) • Agri-technology • Construction • Transport and logistics

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Grants available	Proof of Concept	Grant funding to support SMEs to investigate, advance, commercialise and protect innovative early stage business ideas.	Grants of up to £30,000 (up to 40% of the total cost of a project) for businesses with innovations that have significant economic potential.	<p>Applicants must: (Continued on p2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be situated in and trading from Worcestershire • Be defined as an SME and employ fewer than 250 employees • Have a turnover of less than the equivalent of €50 million per annum or a balance sheet of less than €43 million • Trade predominantly B2B (70%) <p>Eligibility may vary across projects. Full European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) eligibility criteria also applies.</p>
	Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP)	Free energy efficiency assessments which could lead to grants for businesses who wish to reduce costs and improve environmental credentials. Available to SMEs in eligible sectors.	<p>Support</p> <p>Free energy efficiency assessments to assess equipment, premises, processes and performance to find opportunities for improvements in energy usage.</p> <p>Grant</p> <p>Up to £20,000 (up to 40% of the total project cost) for businesses who wish to use their energy more efficiently.</p>	
	Low Carbon Opportunities Programme (LOCOP)	Free renewable energy or low carbon innovation assessments and grants to SMEs in eligible sectors.	<p>Support</p> <p>Free renewable energy or low carbon innovation assessments.</p> <p>Grant</p> <p>Up to £100,000 for capital projects, £50,000 for revenue (up to 40% of the total cost of a project) for businesses to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install renewable energy systems or • To develop and bring to market a low carbon innovation product or service (for example developing a wind turbine prototype). 	
	Enterprising Worcestershire	Different support options to enable start-up and early stage enterprises to develop and prosper.	<p>Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-start: For individuals to explore new business ideas and ensure they have the tools & fundamentals in place to successfully start a business. <p>Grant</p> <p>Revenue and capital grants from £1,000 to £15,000 available on a competitive basis (up to 40% of the total cost of a project) to provide funding to support initial set-up and business development.</p>	

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Grants available	Natural Networks	Grants and advice to projects which aim to create or restore wildlife-rich habitats.	<p>Support Free professional biodiversity surveys carried out by the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.</p> <p>Grant £2,000 - £200,000 (representing 45% of the total project cost)</p>	<p>To qualify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects sites need to have free and ongoing public access or applicants must be willing to offer permissive access for the lifetime of the project. • Small and medium businesses, parish councils, charities, voluntary groups and public bodies. • You must be a recognised legal entity. • Grants are aimed at land/projects that are ineligible for the Countryside Stewardship award. • Total project costs must be a minimum of £4,500.
	Kickstart Scheme	Funding to employers to create new 6-month job placements for young people who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment.	<p>Funding for each job placement will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week • The associated employer National Insurance contributions • Employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions <p>There will also be extra funding of £1,500 per placement to help you support young people during the Kickstart Scheme.</p>	<p>Any organisation, regardless of size, can apply for a placement/s. The job placements created with Kickstart funding must be new jobs.</p> <p>They must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace existing or planned vacancies • Cause existing employees or contractors to lose or reduce their employment
	Apprenticeship Grants	In response to the challenges faced by businesses during COVID-19, until 31st January 2021, employers will be eligible to receive a new incentive payment for hiring a new apprentice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers can receive £2,000 for each new apprentice hired under the age of 25, and £1,500 for each new apprentice hired over the age of 25 • The employer will still receive the additional £1,000 incentive for 16-18 year olds (or 16-24 with EHC) as before. • On top of this, Local District Grants are also available between £1,000 - £2,100 depending on sector and eligibility, to support employers taking on a new apprentice. 	<p>Employers must allow apprentices to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards an approved apprenticeship. Their training must last at least 12 months. • Be employed in a real job that gives them the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills they need to pass their assessment. <p>Find out more about hiring an apprentice here.</p> <p>Eligibility for Local District Grants applies, find out more here.</p>

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Grants available	Traineeship Grants	A skills development programme that includes a work placement, allowing employers to design a programme that suits both the needs of the business and the trainee.	Employers can receive an incentive payment of £1,000 per learner, for up to 10 learners, to help with administration, equipment and set up costs for example.	Employers must provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minimum of 70 hours of work experience - but no more than 240 hours for benefit claimants - over the duration of the traineeship (maximum of one year) and as agreed with the traineeship provider.
	Apprenticeship Levy Support	A scheme designed to pay apprenticeship training contributions of businesses which address skills shortages in the region. This will also create apprenticeships for disadvantaged groups, whilst enabling community and voluntary organisations to enhance stability within their workforce.	A further £250,000 funding has recently been made available to help young people gain employment in Worcestershire.	Businesses must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be paying Worcestershire Business rates Have an application that supports Worcestershire's growth agenda.
Support available	Worcestershire Business Central	A service dedicated to supporting Worcestershire business with local support in one place This is a central point of contact for all businesses within the county, making it simple and accessible for businesses to access and find the help they need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Browse the free online business directory for Worcestershire, dedicated to raising the awareness of professional services in the area. 	Available to all businesses based in Worcestershire.
	Here2Help Adapt Business Support	Flexible and free support in critical areas to enable Worcestershire businesses to move forward and grow in the post pandemic economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinars and workshops One-to-one business advice One-to-one business consultancy 	Webinars, workshops and one-to-one business advice: All businesses based in Worcestershire are eligible to sign up. One-to-one business consultancy:

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Support available				SMEs who meet the ERDF eligibility criteria can benefit from in-depth bespoke business consultancy to address any strategic long-term considerations for their business.
	Elevate	Enabling established SMEs in Worcestershire to achieve their growth potential.	High quality, specialist growth support to restart, reshape and grow established businesses to the next level. On completing the support, businesses will be able to apply for grant funding (up to 40% of the total cost of a project) to continue their growth and business development	Applicants must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be situated in and trading from Worcestershire • Be defined as an SME and employ fewer than 250 employees • Have a turnover of less than the equivalent of €50 million per annum or a balance sheet of less than €43 million • Trade predominantly B2B (70%) Eligibility may vary across projects. Full European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) eligibility criteria also applies.
	WINN Innovation Launchpad	Creating a community of innovative individuals and businesses, wherever they are within the business life cycle, to ensure they have access to all areas of relevant support.	A two-part programme offering expert advice and support to local SMEs who want to take their business ideas to the next level.	
	Worcestershire Works Well	A free accreditation scheme designed to support businesses to improve the health and well-being of their employees.	Accreditation for employers who recognise the importance of improving the health and wellbeing of the work force.	Available to all public, private and third sector organisations located in Worcestershire that have a minimum of 5 employees.
	Business and IP Centre	Worcestershire libraries provide a business support and signposting service for local pre-start, early start and growth businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free business webinars • Online reference information • Specialist business titles and • Links to trusted third party resources 	Available to all individuals and businesses based in Worcestershire.
	One Worcestershire	Raising the profile of Worcestershire regionally, nationally and internationally by supporting local business, attracting inward investment and encouraging tourism.	Become a member to join a network of people working together to promote the county regionally, nationally and internationally. You will also gain exclusive access to useful news, information and resources.	Available to all businesses based in Worcestershire.

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Useful Online Tools	Funding Finder	A comprehensive, regularly updated directory of funding information.	Available to all businesses based in Worcestershire.	
	Events Portal	Find a range of events designed to support your businesses, including interactive webinars.		
	WINN Innovation Platform	Online platform where individuals can sign up, set up a profile, develop a business profile, begin conversations with likeminded innovators and respond to challenges.		
	Regulatory Services	A shared service delivering environmental health functions, including regulatory responsibility around COVID-19 and licensing administration on behalf of the six district councils in Worcestershire		
	GOV.UK Business Support	Find advice and financial help from government-backed schemes.		

Support is also available from local district councils:

- [North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration \(Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest\)](#)
- [Wychavon](#)
- [Malvern Hills](#)
- [Worcester City](#)