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**Case study**

December 2019

For immediate release



**Meringue company enjoys sweet taste of success thanks to Marches Growth Hub help**

***“The purchase of innovative new chocolate-making machinery with the support of the Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin has helped us to expand our product range, allowing us to remain competitive and boost our market share as we strengthen our relationship with big name retailers as well as look to secure new contracts.”*** ***Brian Crowther, Flower & White***

* £80,000 ERDF Business Growth Programme 2 grant will help create eight new jobs by March 2020
* Support will help company double output of their chocolate product
* Earlier £72,000 ERDF Business Growth Programme grant helped purchase specialist chocolate making equipment to support new product range
* Recruitment support and help from Telford & Wrekin Council’s Enterprise Telford – the specialist delivery team at the Growth Hub

**About**

Telford-based meringue manufacturer Flower & White is a remarkable success story.

Launched ten years ago in a garden shed by Brian and Leanne Crowther, the company now produces one million meringues a day from its new Telford production site and employs 40 people.

It continues to see rapid year-on-year growth of between 40 and 50 per cent and has recently completed a £500,000 investment in people, equipment and infrastructure.

Its products – all handmade using British free range eggs and natural flavourings – can now be found in the likes of Selfridges and Harvey Nichols and the company is firmly on track to becoming the UK’s number one meringue manufacturer in 2020.

**How the Marches Growth Hub helped**

The Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin, which is delivered by Telford & Wrekin Council, has worked alongside Flower & White throughout much of its success story.

The Hub’s specialist team of business advisors and experts, led by Enterprise Telford’s Account Manager Liz Wakeham-Jones, have built a strong working relationship with the Crowthers, helping pave the way for the expansion the company has enjoyed.

As the fledgling company started to take off – and demand for the handcrafted meringues soared – the Crowthers realised they needed a bespoke production facility to realise their own ambitions for the brand, and contacted the Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin for help.

After a two-year search aided by the team suitable premises were found at a 13,500 sq ft unit at Halesfield 11 in Telford.

With further support, the firm was able to secure a £72,000 grant through the ERDF Business Growth Programme to assist with the move.

The grant helped the company install state-of-the-art chocolate-making equipment and infrastructure designed to maximise productivity, efficiency and growth capability.

This year, a second grant of £80,000 was secured from the ERDF Business Growth Programme 2 (BGP2) to help purchase a new packaging machine, tempering machine and panning machinery.

And following introductions to local universities, they have also invested in a placement student from Harper Adams University on the edge of Newport.

The team at the Growth Hub have also supported Flower & White with their recruitment processes, made introductions to the supply chain locally and to Aston University in Birmingham for expanded SME support.

**Impact**

Flower & White’s success story over recent years speaks for itself.

The company now employs 40 people and is continuing to expand as annual revenue hits the £2million mark.

The investment in the new factory and equipment has been essential to helping it meet its 40 per cent growth forecast, develop new products and firmly establish itself as a leading UK innovator in the confectionary world.

The latest BGP2 grant has further strengthened the company's ability to expand and develop its range and will help it double production of chocolate products, boosting revenue and putting its target to be the UK’s number one meringue manufacturer well and truly in reach.

Part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and managed by Birmingham City Council, BGP2, which replaced the original fund, is offering grants of between £2,500 to £1,000,000 for small to medium sized businesses throughout The Marches area.

**Future help**

Flower & White will continue to utilise the expert help and support offered by the Enterprise Telford team at the Growth Hub as its success story enters a second decade.

Company owner and director Brian Crowther said the move to new premises and investment in state-of-the-art machinery was part of a long-term plan to grow the business.

“We’re confident the move will ensure we achieve our ambitious growth plans for the business. The purchase of innovative new chocolate-making machinery with the support of the Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin will also see the expansion of our current product range, allowing us to remain competitive and boost our market share as we strengthen our relationship with big name retailers as well as look to secure new contracts.”

**ENDS**

Caption: TBA

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**About the Marches Growth Hub**

* The Marches Growth Hub brings together all national and local business support in one place for the first time and is fully aligned to the Government’s ‘Business is GREAT’ campaign.
* A comprehensive business support website – [www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk](http://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/) – and dedicated enquiry line – 0345 6000 727 – provide businesses across the whole Marches region with access to funding, support and advice. All resources are available to enterprises of all sizes, from start-ups to large employers.
* This is supported by physical hubs in Telford at the University of Wolverhampton’s Telford Innovation Campus, at Skylon Park in Hereford and at the Food Enterprise Centre in Shrewsbury.
* The Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin is a collaboration between Telford & Wrekin Council, The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership, and the University of Wolverhampton Business Solutions Centres.
* The Hub is home to the Councils Enterprise Telford Business Support team that provides FREE support to all Telford and Wrekin businesses

*The Business Growth Programme 2 is receiving up to £8.19m of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit* [*https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding*](https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding)*.*

 