



- **Two Business Growth Programme grants boost Shrewsbury coffee company**
- **Bespoke roasting machine bought to create unique speciality coffees**
- **Three new jobs created**

## Roasters raise toast to business grant funding

A speciality coffee company in Shropshire is enjoying the real taste of success following a £50,000 cash injection.

Iron & Fire has been roasting coffee beans and supplying the wholesale market from its roastery, showroom and training centre at the Castle Business Park in Shrewsbury since 2016. It also serves the public from its coffee shop and bean outlet in Station Approach.

Co-owned by Kevin Burrows and Joanna de Rycke, the company is being supported to grow its business further thanks to grant funding from the Business Growth Programme (BGP2).

Iron & Fire grew out of Kevin's passion for coffee and his design engineering and science background, which he put to good use when developing the business.

Kevin said initially he wasn't sure there was a market in the UK for decent coffee - but realised the opportunity when neighbours started requesting his blends.

Iron & Fire started as a typical kitchen table start-up before growing into its current home in Shrewsbury, from where the couple now create 20 perfectly roasted and crafted coffees from around the world.

Joanna said: "We had reached a point in the business where we needed to invest in capital equipment in order to support growth and improve our efficiencies. We were also looking at taking on new staff.

"The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership's business support service, the Marches Growth Hub, told us about the BGP - which unlike a loan is funding which we don't need to pay back - and we decided to make the application."

Joanna said an initial £30,000 BGP grant supported the purchase of the company's first bespoke bean roaster in 2018 which allowed Kevin to develop the unique speciality coffee roasts. The second grant of £20,000 paid for a new website and ordering system which has helped streamline processes and improve efficiency.

She advised any business needing investment to grow their business to contact the Marches Growth Hub to discover what options are available, with support delivered by the LEP's partners Shropshire Council.

“There is an awful lot of support through the Marches Growth Hub. The teams there are fantastic - they go through your application with you and anything that’s not quite right, they’ll support you to make sure everything is as it should be before the final application is made.

“My advice to any company looking for funding is definitely to go to the Marches Growth Hub website where you can find out about funding and other types of support.”

Part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and managed by Birmingham City Council, the Business Growth Programme offers grants of £2,500 to £1,000,000 and is designed to strengthen supply chains, stimulate innovation and help businesses grow. The programme is available to both start-ups and existing B2B SMEs in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

Grant funding is limited and subject to availability for companies which meet the eligibility criteria.

For more information about Iron & Fire, visit <https://ironandfire.co.uk>

For information about the Business Growth Programme and other business support available through the Marches LEP, visit <https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/>

**ENDS**

## **Notes to editors**

### **About BGP**



### **European Union**

European Regional  
Development Fund

*The Business Growth Programme 2 has received £23.5m 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>.*