

7 February 2008

## Business Link helps land based businesses grow

A major Business Link contract to bolster the flow and provision of information to the region's farmers, growers and other land based businesses has been awarded by the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) to Brown & Co, in a consortium with Andersons and Ipl.

The new initiative with the consortium runs for two and half years and will raise awareness of Business Link services to help land based businesses grow and develop. Business consultants from Brown & Co, Anderson and Ipl have been funded by *emda* to deliver this element of the Business Link service. This includes the provision of information, identifying business issues and finding appropriate solutions.

John O'Reilly, *emda's* Director of Business Support said: "We are working hard to streamline all of our business support services through a single provider – Business Link East Midlands. Land based businesses are very important to the region's prosperity, as over 1.2 million people live and work in the countryside. Through this Business Link programme, we aim to help our rural economies flourish."

Simon Mountjoy, partner of property and business consultants Brown & Co, said: "Although there is a wealth of support available, much is currently under utilised. We are working with *emda* to get the message across and help land based businesses make the very best use of what is on offer."

Business Link provides access to a wide range of services for all businesses. Financial, environmental, ICT, skills and marketing are just a few of the areas of help available to businesses. A programme of seminars and workshops covering mainstream subjects such as business management, environmental stewardship and other topical events aimed at land based businesses are planned.

Having exhibited at the recent Lincolnshire Agricultural Machinery Manufacturers Association (LAMMA) event at the Newark and Nottinghamshire showground, the Business Link branded consortium will have a presence at rural events throughout the year including the Lincolnshire Show in June and more specialist equestrian and rural trade events.

The new contract coincides with the introduction of major new funding for the region's rural businesses. Earlier this month, *emda* announced £60 million of new EU and defra funding to help support farming and other land based businesses. Allocated through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) scheme, qualifying businesses can apply for grants to help with activities from farm restructuring and diversification to rural renewable energy projects. Grant aid is available for £25,000-£250,000 and a maximum of 50% of project cost.

For further information, please contact Business Link 0845 0586644 or visit [www.businesslink.gov.uk/eastmidlands](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/eastmidlands).

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For further information, please contact

Simon Mountjoy

Brown & Co

07768 465727

[s.mountjoy@brown-co.com](mailto:s.mountjoy@brown-co.com)

Sue Jupe

SMJ Communications

01603 614319 / 0780 390 6356

[sue@smjcommunications.co.uk](mailto:sue@smjcommunications.co.uk)

## Notes to editors

The three consortium members are farm business consultants Andersons, agricultural and business transfer consultants Intellectual Property Link (Ipl) Limited and property and business consultants Brown & Co.

**Brown & Co** is a firm of independent rural property, land and business specialists operating from ten offices in the East of England, London, Poland and St Lucia.

Specialist services include:

- Land Agency
- Residential Agency and Lettings
- Commercial Property
- Agricultural Business Consultancy
- Estate Management
- Planning and Development
- Building Services and Surveys
- Auctions
- Overseas Consultancy Services
- Dispute resolution.

## About *emda*

- East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) is one of nine Regional Development Agencies in England, set up in 1999 to bring a regional focus to economic development.
- Working in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations the aim is to deliver the 2006 Regional Economic Strategy (RES) '*A Flourishing Region*', which sets out regional priorities until 2020.
- The RES, coordinated by *emda*, highlights the themes of productivity, sustainability and equality and builds on the previous two strategies; '*Prosperity Through People*' and '*Destination 2010*'.
- In early 2007 the National Audit Office announced *emda* had received the highest possible grade of 'performing strongly' in an independent assessment of our work - scoring 22 out of 24.
- For more details visit [www.emda.org.uk](http://www.emda.org.uk)