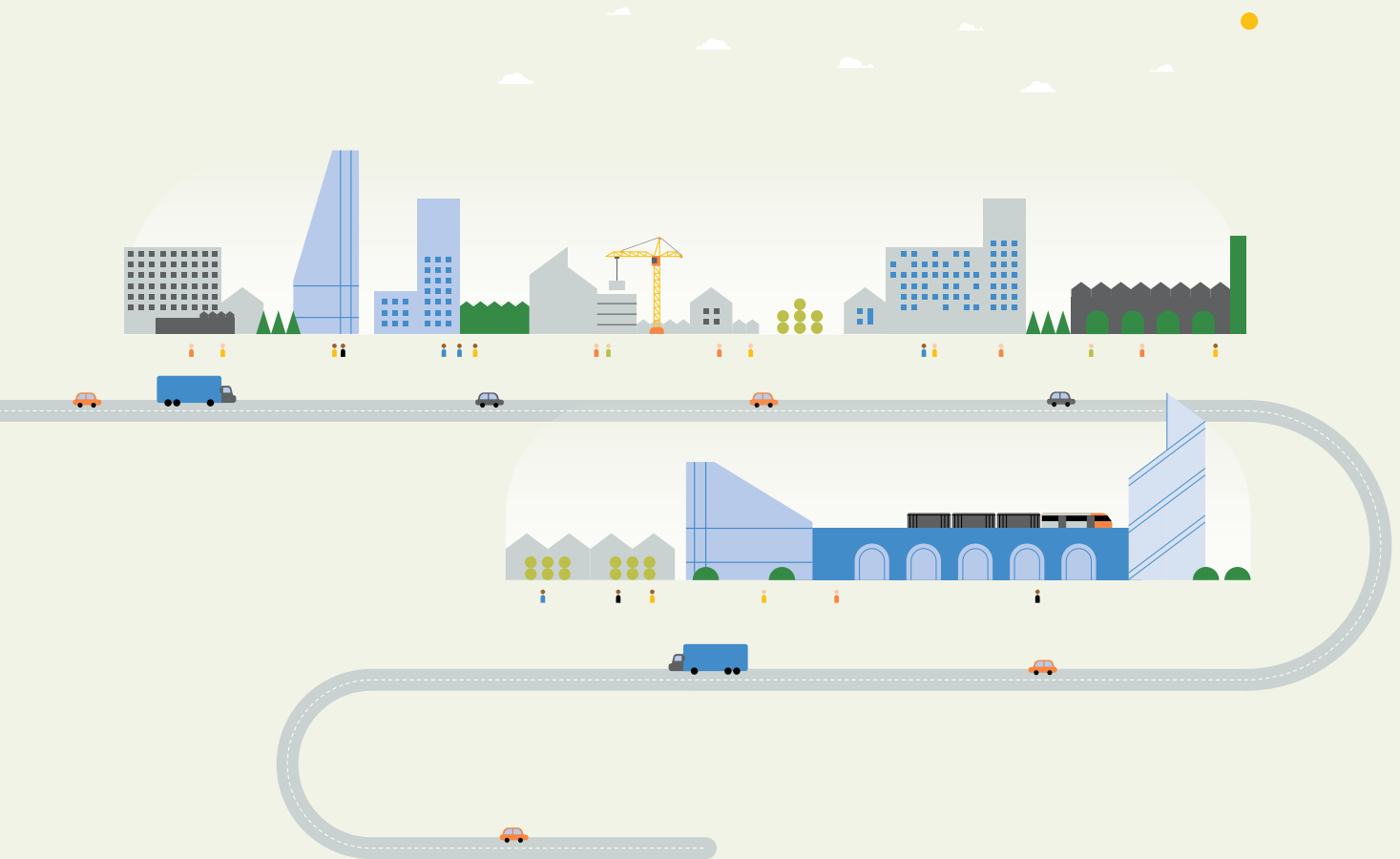


Additional Restrictions Grant

West Cheshire Business
Support Programme



Additional Restrictions Grant West Cheshire Business Support Programme



“
Over 39,000
payments via 16
different grant
schemes.
”

Since the start of COVID19 Cheshire West and Chester Council has delivered several projects aimed at supporting businesses to survive and adapt the impacts of the pandemic and Brexit. The Council has also co-ordinated and managed 16 different business grant schemes, distributing over £140m of grants and made over 39,000 payments to businesses in retail, leisure, hospitality, and wider supply chains.

In 2021, as part of a £2.6m ARG top-up, the Council was provided with an opportunity to use just over £1m of the top-up grant to develop, design and deliver a business support programme. The programme was aimed at supporting businesses to recover, grow, adapt, diversify, or expand through direct support, workshops, and bite-sized training, including grants for eligible businesses.

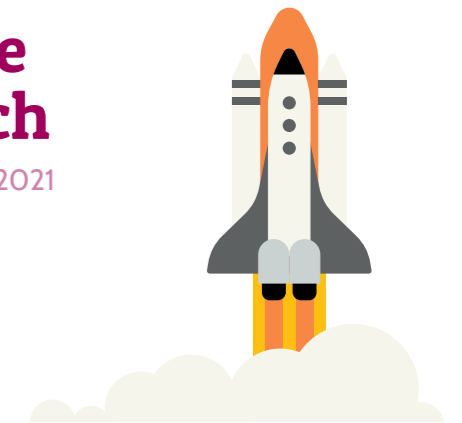
The West Cheshire Business Support Programme

Launched on the 2 December 2021 and completed end of March 2022, was supported by two main delivery partners, Blue Orchid and West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce.

“
The programme
activities were shaped
using evidence
from a survey of
500 businesses,
consultation with
partners and existing
enquiry pipelines.
”

Online Launch

2 December 2021



Over 500 Businesses

Surveyed

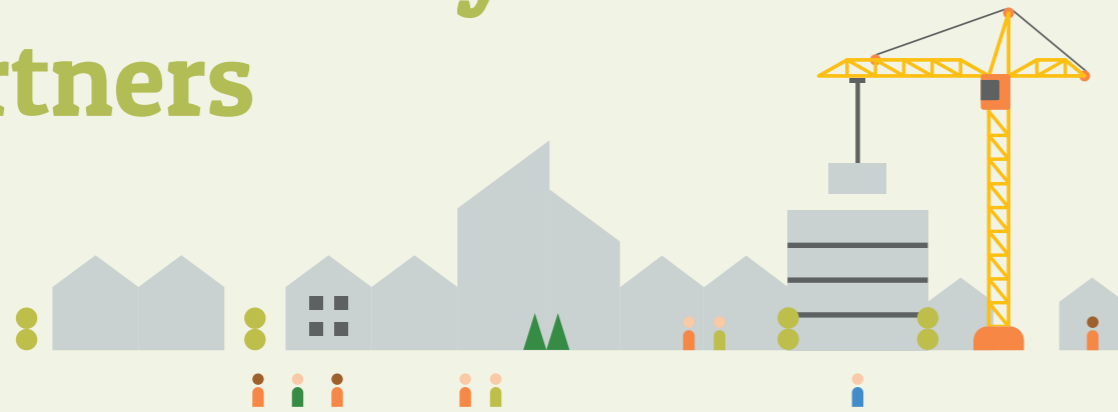


Over 100 Delegates

Registered for launch



Main Delivery Partners



Delivery partners were procured to mitigate the risks around the short delivery time for the programme (ran from December 2021 - March 2022). Blue Orchid and West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce were chosen as the key delivery partners as they demonstrated that they could:

- + Mobilise quickly
- + Already had a good understanding of the local business support landscape
- + Are recognised and respected locally
- + Have a proven record of delivering similar projects

Additionally, working with delivery partners allowed the grant element of the programme to be managed beyond the end of March 2022. This was important as some grants were not approved until the end of the programme delivery window and therefore need to be administered and managed after the programme had officially closed.



The programme provided a mix of support and activities to:



Stimulate entrepreneurship activity

Inspire local people to consider self-employment, with hands-on support to build confidence, skills, and experience, transforming people's life choices.



Create new start-ups

Empower new start-ups to progress their business idea with practical, achievable advice, support, and guidance through a mix of 1-2-1 support, bootcamps, bite sized training and workshops. Limited grants available to eligible businesses.



Enhance and re-energise Third Sector development

Increase the number of social enterprises, support organisations transitioning to a social enterprise model, advise budding social entrepreneurs and support existing social enterprises to progress and grow, building and developing sustainable and inclusive places.



Build resilience and accelerate growth plans in existing high growth businesses

Through tailored advice, support, guidance, monitoring and limited grants to eligible businesses enable developing businesses to expedite their growth plans.



Assist with recruitment/retainment, training, and skills

Assist SME businesses with their recruitment challenges, particularly in the hospitality, health and social care, leisure, manufacturing, and digital sectors which, have been gravely impacted by the pandemic and additionally by losing EU staff due to Brexit.



Inward investment

Supporting new investors to establish here at a faster rate, create jobs and contribute towards economic growth.



Access/secure commercial premises

- + Grants for businesses securing new premises as part of their expansion
- + Pop-up space to enable market testing, collaboration, and multi-retail space; supporting businesses who were unsuccessful in securing a place Chester Market and new businesses and social enterprises generated through the project



International Trade

- + Open new markets for growing businesses
- + Helping businesses navigate the new UK border operating model
- + Ensuring businesses are aware of the latest changes in international trade, enabling them to develop their own processes and procedure to keep trade flowing efficiently



Build opportunities for businesses to work together

Provide opportunities for businesses to build stronger supply chains through networking.



The programme also provided a platform to highlight the council's Climate Emergency Response and Inclusive Economy Plans, encouraging businesses to get involved and help build a greener, fairer, and stronger local economy that works for everyone.

Programme Delivery

The CWaC Business Growth Team and delivery partners worked together to design and agree the paperwork and processes required for each part of the programme, ensuring enough flexibility to meet the ever-changing challenges and demands facing businesses.

C WaC's Let's Talk Business branding was used on all marketing to build on the ongoing brand development and business engagement through the Lets Talk Business website, social media, and weekly newsletter.

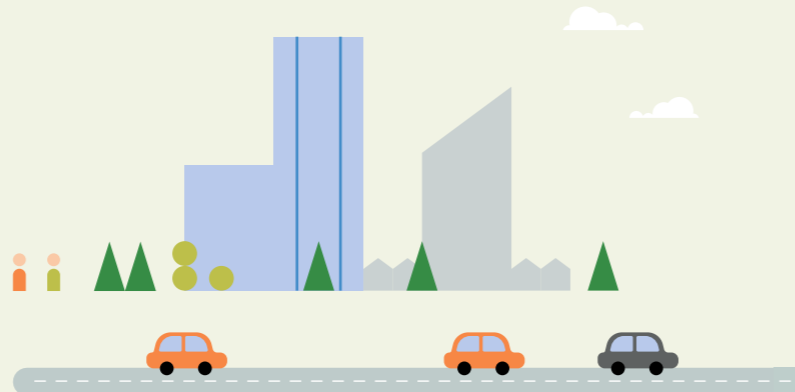
The 2 December online programme launch was filmed and posted on a dedicated West Cheshire Business Support Programme page on the Let's Talk Business website, along with a flyer providing more details about the programme and links to access the support. A press release following the launch, the video and flyer were shared with partners to send out through their networks and stimulate interest.

Client journey through West Cheshire Business Support Programme:

- + Simple registration process for support - both telephone and online Expression of Interest form ensured all enquiries were captured
- + Online registration for events and workshops
- + Diagnostic for all businesses accessing support
 - Diagnostic provided a view of the business's background, challenges, and future plans, enabling us to explore how they could be supported through the programme as well as ensuring they were introduced to wider existing business support, where appropriate.

- Through the information captured in the diagnostic businesses were able to apply for more than one of the grants available through the programme.
- + Action plans created with business to confirm next steps – bespoke training and skills plans created for those businesses accessing this support
- + Grants panel to evaluate and approve applications – grant applicants updated following each panel
- + Follow up and monitoring – capturing grant recipient investment, job outcomes, and additionality

During the programme the CWaC Business Growth Team held weekly partner and grants panel meetings to ensure delivery targets and outcomes were on kept on track and grant applications could be evaluated, approved, and signed off to ensure applicants could advance their plans within the timescale of the programme, where possible.



Programme Outcomes Delivered



Delivered over **£700k** in grants

- Eligible businesses were able to access more than one grant:
- + 2 Investor Fund grant recipients also accessed the Skills and Training grant
 - + 24 start-up and scale up grant recipients also accessed the Commercial and / or Skills and Training grants



1476
Hours of support

123
Portions of 12 hour assists

£2,677,201

Additional investment by the businesses supported (capital investment - new products / services; technology; equipment; machinery; premises; assets; etc.)

£1,920,201
Investor Fund

£757,000
Start / scale-up / Training / Commercial

Activity	Main Delivery Partner	Target no. of assists	Actual	Target no. of jobs created / safeguarded	Actual
Stimulate Entrepreneurship	Rebel Business School	50	21	n/a	n/a
Investor Fund	Blue Orchid	10	13	15	97* new and 561 safeguarded
Start Up	West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce	15	15	5	30 new and 23 safeguarded
Scale Up		20	26	5	82 new and 101 safeguarded
Training and Skills		30	40	30	113 new and 132 safeguarded
Commercial Premises		10	18	n/a	n/a

Actual job figures correct at the time of writing the report - figures still being captured

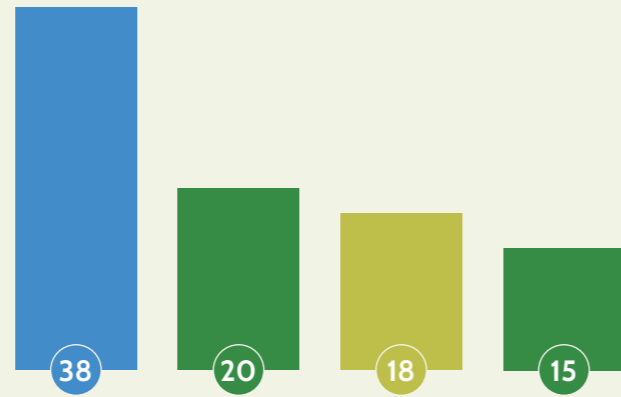
New jobs = new employees, safeguarded jobs = existing jobs that have been supported through business's engagement with the programme

*Investor Fund - total number of jobs for this fund were split across the impact of the invest and jobs created across 2022/23/24. Total number of jobs for the project is 350, forecast for 2022 is 128 of which to date 97 are already in post, with the remaining being achieved this year and into 2023/24.

ARG Workshops

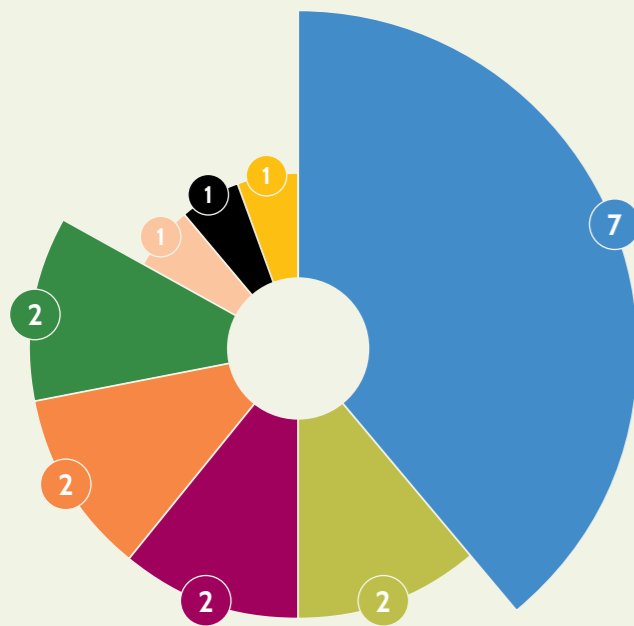
Additionally, delivered 18 workshops and training aimed at demystifying a subject to support businesses to make informed decisions on next steps, which included introductions to other projects to gain more experience and information (i.e., following our social media workshops businesses were made aware of the Digital Cheshire project).

- + 10 Third Sector organisations supported through bespoke targeted workshops / training
- + 25 young people inspired to explore self-employment as a career option, creating the entrepreneurs of tomorrows
- + 24 businesses supported with international trade



Attendees by Workshop Type

- Marketing (38)
- Corporate Social Responsibility (20)
- Finance (18)
- Sustainability (15)

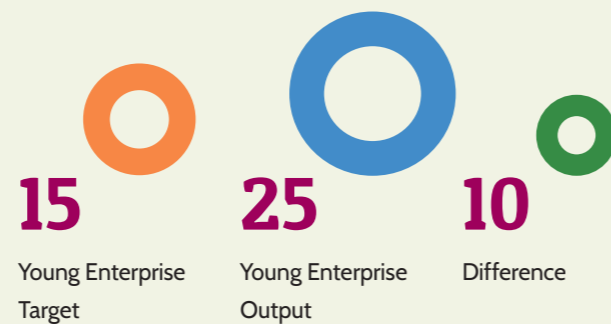


Workshops by Type

- Marketing (38.89%)
- Sustainability (11.11%)
- Finance (11.11%)
- Financial / Legal (5.56%)
- Human Resources (11.11%)
- Launch Event (5.56%)
- International Trade (11.11%)
- Legal (5.56%)

Young Enterprise

2 Schools in attendance



Investor Fund

Delivery Partner	Activity	Target no. of assists	Actual	Target no. of jobs created / safeguarded	Actual
Blue Orchid	Investor Fund	10	13	15	97 New, 561 Safeguarded

New jobs = new employees, safeguarded jobs = existing jobs that have been supported through business's engagement with the programme

Total number of jobs for this fund were split across the impact of the invest and jobs created across 2022/23/24. Total number of jobs for the project is 350, forecast for 2022 is 128 of which to date 97 are already in post, with the remaining being achieved this year and into 2023/24.

The Investor Fund supported up to 80% of the costs for a business to invest in projects which include capital investment, consultancy support or both.

Eligible businesses had to demonstrate through the diagnostic and 121 support process that the grant would support new activity, facilitate new growth and lead to job creation.

Businesses had to source 3 independent quotes for all equipment being purchased to ensure value for money was demonstrated. Blue Orchid account managed each business supported to ensure that businesses, although "time poor" were able to access the support within the tight delivery time of the programme.

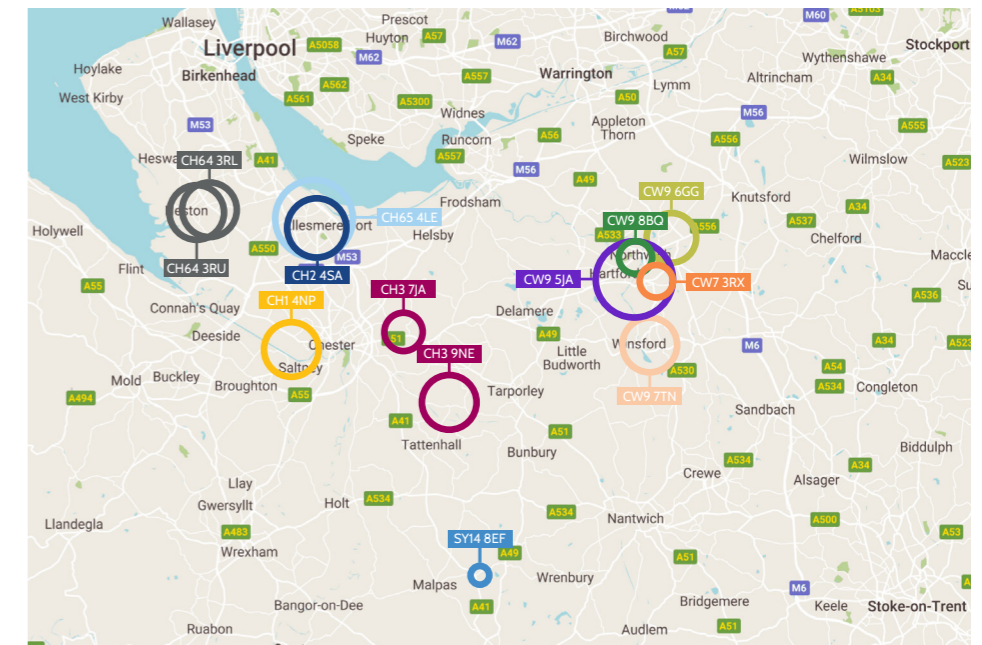
£500k of grants were approved through the Investor Fund, ranging from £23,000 to £43,000.

Businesses Supported

Business	Location
KOR Energy	Chester
Brownlow Furniture Ltd.	Rural
Open Window Engineering Ltd.	Ellesmere Port
EMS	Ellesmere Port
JPL Flavours	Neston
Cheshire Wildlife	Malpas
Alphabond	Northwich
Cygnat Texkimp	Northwich
IPET Networks	Northwich
Cheshire Ice-Cream Farm	Tattenhall
Buccaneer	Northwich
Mobile Reborn	Winsford
All About Me Marquees	Little Stanney

Total Grant Offered by Postcode and Total Grant Offered

- £17,742.12
- £23,064
- £23,196
- £28,429.60
- £29,172
- £31,108
- £31,239.75
- £32,000
- £37,789.98
- £38,598.40
- £42,453.60



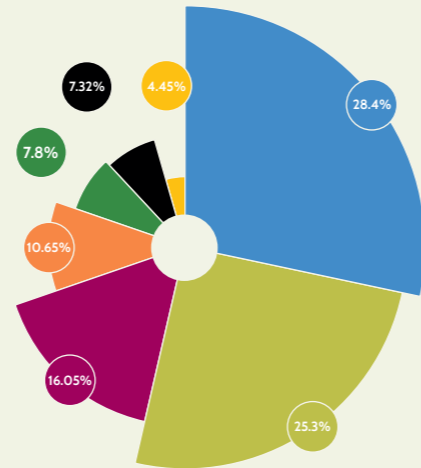
Investor Fund - Award Info

Total Grant Offered by Sector



Total Grant Offered by Area

- Northwich - £113.3k (28.4%)
- Chester - £101k (25.3%)
- Neston - £64k (16.05%)
- Ellesmere Port - £42.5k (10.65%)
- Winsford - £31.1k (7.8%)
- Great Barrow - £29.2k (7.32%)
- Malpas - £17.7k (4.45%)



Total Project Costs and Total Grant Offered by Sector



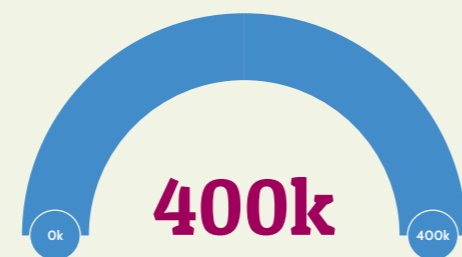
Number of Grant Awards

13

Number of Diagnostics

13

Value of Grants of Approved vs. Investor Fund Budget

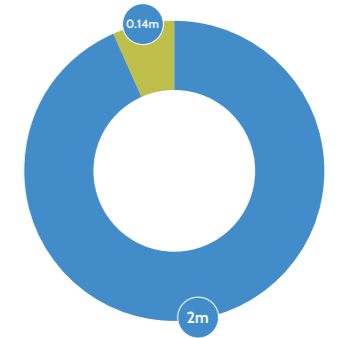
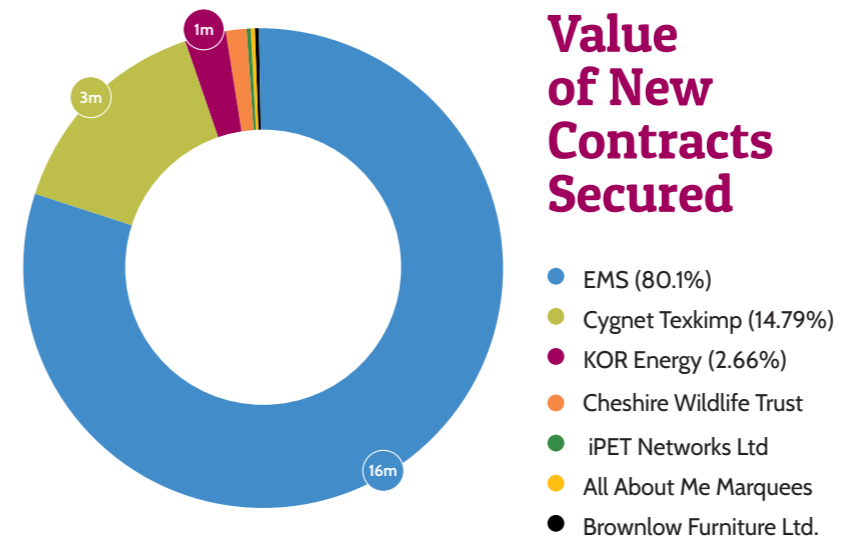


Investor Fund - Impacts & Results

Forecast No. of Jobs Created 2022 vs. Actual No. of Jobs Created 2022 by Area



Value of New Contracts Secured



Private Sector Contribution & Additional Capital Investment

- Private Sector Contribution (6.6%)
- Additional Capital Investment (93.3%)

19

Number of New Contracts Secured

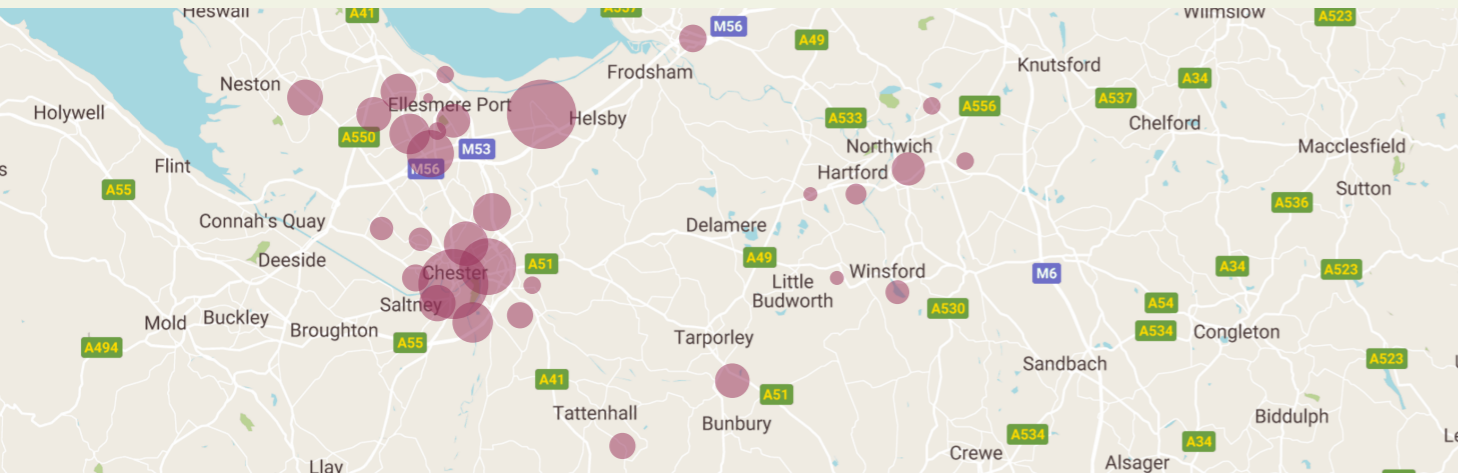
8

Number of New Products / Services

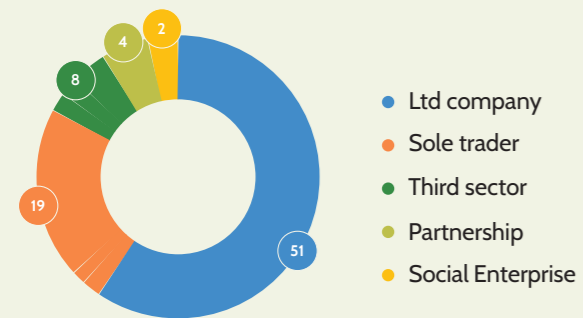
Actual Number of Jobs Created 2022 vs. Forecast Number of Jobs Created 2022



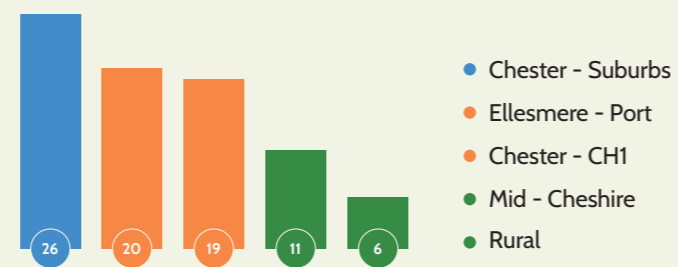
Start, Scale Up, Commercial and Training & Skills



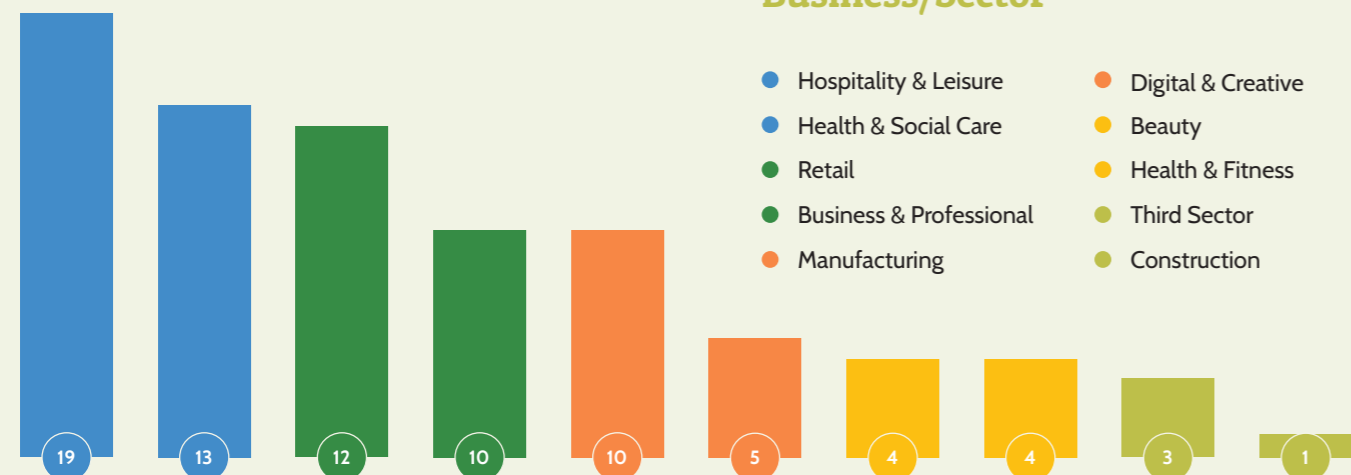
Diagnostics by Type of Business



Diagnostics by Area



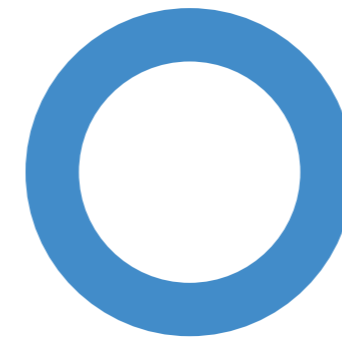
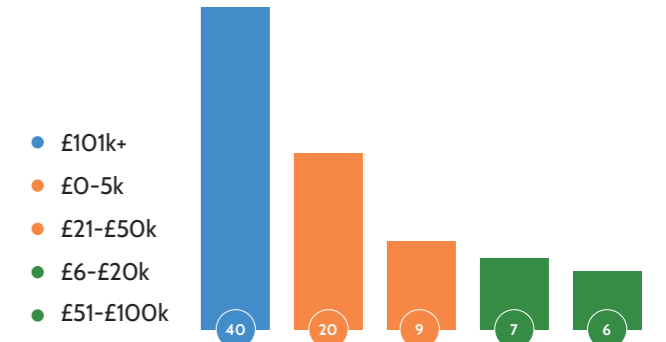
Diagnostics by Nature of Business/Sector



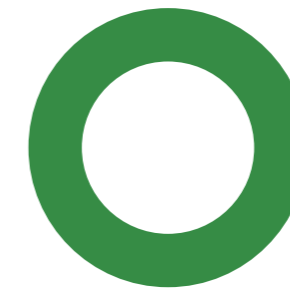
No. of Group Workshops



Diagnostics by Current Turnover



256
No. of Jobs Safeguarded



225
No. of Jobs Planned



100
No. of EOs



82
No. of Diagnostics

Start/Scale Up



42
No. of Start/Scale Up Payments



£44K
Payments Approved vs. Budget

Commercial



19
No. of Commercial Payments



£73K
Payments Approved vs. Budget

Training / Skills

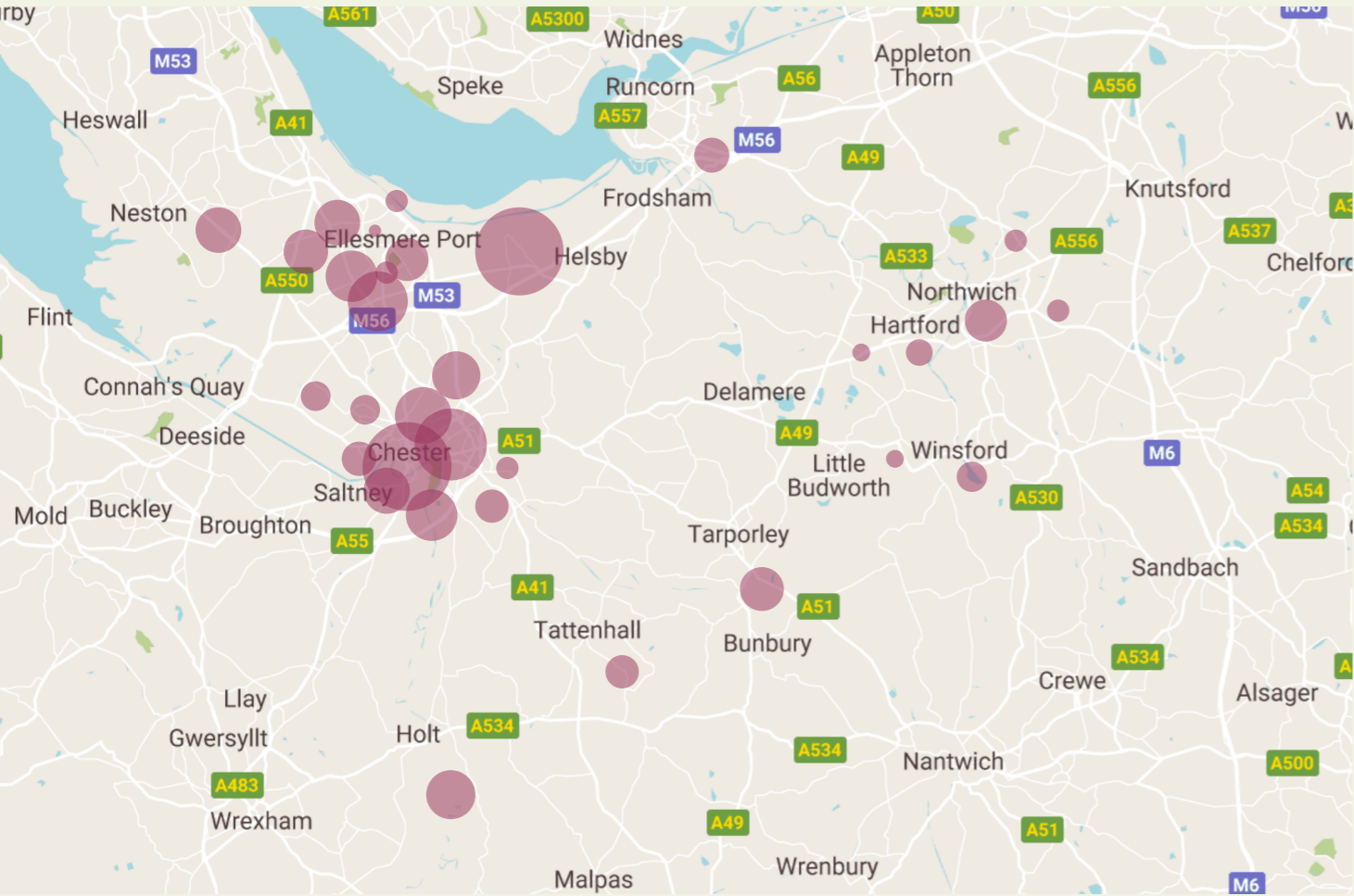


40
No. of Training / Skills Payments

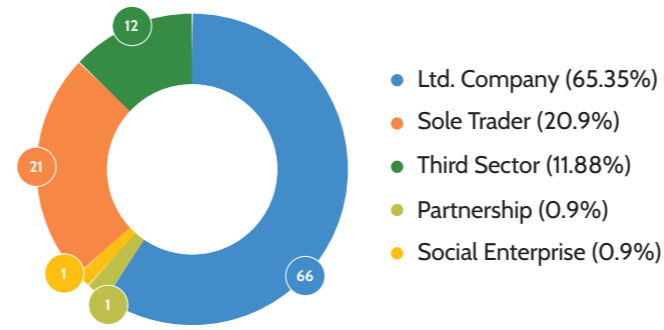


£190K
Payments Approved vs. Budget

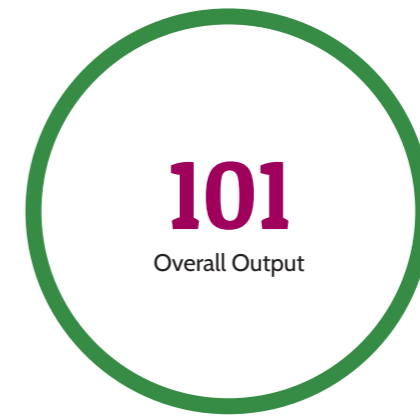
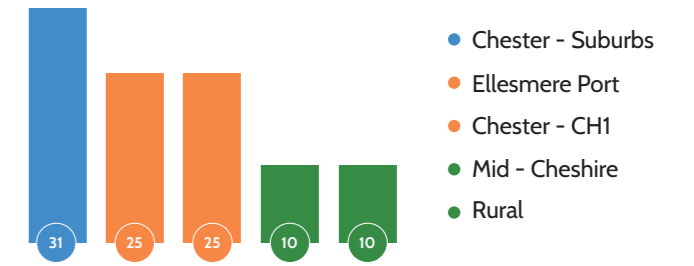
Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)



Diagnostics by Type of Business



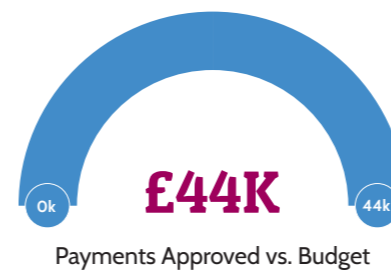
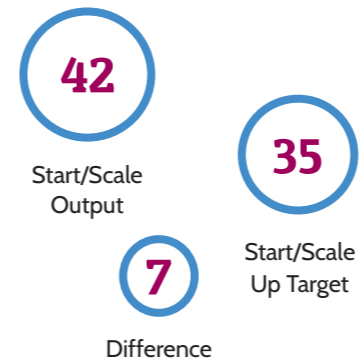
Diagnostics by Area



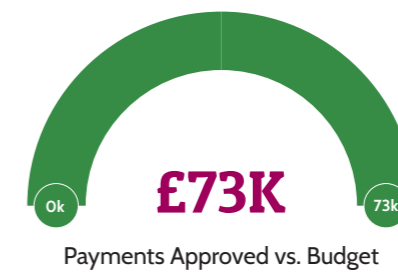
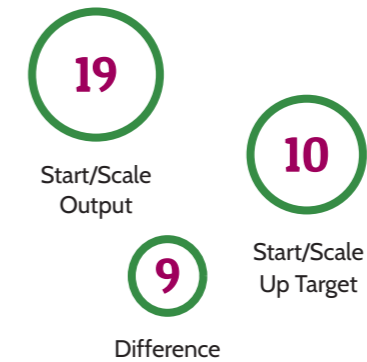
Payments by Business Sector



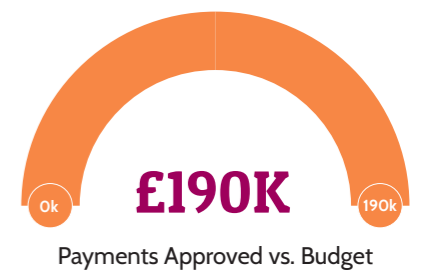
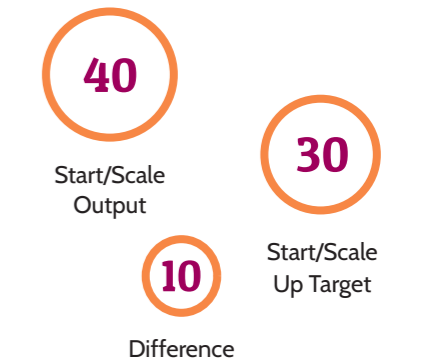
Start/Scale Up



Commercial



Training / Skills



How TMC supported ARG

TMC provided creative support and contributed to the ARG Grant, working with the partners in a number of ways.

Strategic support

- + Attending weekly partner call

Promotional materials

- + Social media graphics
- + Website banners
- + Flyers for launch event

Communications

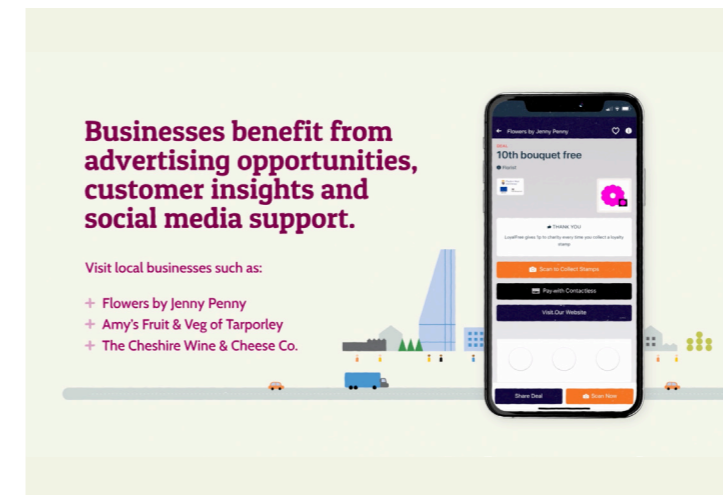
- + Launch event powerpoint
- + Social media posts
- + Press releases
- + Layout and styling of ARG report

Webinars

- + Corporate Social Responsibility & Your Business
- + Social Media for Business series of webinars

Filming

- + Capturing launch event footage
- + Producing the ARG case study evaluation video
 - Storyboarding
 - Filming
 - Script writing
 - Editing
 - Animating



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LinkedIn: [@lets-talk-business-cheshire-west](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lets-talk-business-cheshire-west)

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