

## **DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS ENTERPRISE & REGULATORY REFORM**

### **Small firms can access real help through**

- The [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp) portal
- Information on finance schemes and initial diagnosis of eligibility is available at [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp/finance](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp/finance)
- Their local Business Link adviser on 0845 600 9 006

### **1. Real Help with finance**

#### **Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme**

Real help is available now for companies with an annual turnover of up to £25m, looking for a loan of up to £1m for a period of up to 10 years. It can also be used to convert an existing overdraft into a loan so that the overdraft facilities can be used to meet working capital demands.

All you need to do is apply directly for a loan from Barclays, Clydesdale/Yorkshire Bank, HBOS, HSBC, Lloyds TSB, RBS/Natwest and Northern Bank. They will do the rest.

#### **Regional loans**

If your business hasn't been able to secure funding from the bank under the Enterprise Finance Guarantee, you may be eligible for a loan or other support from your Regional Development Agency. Your local Business Link can advise on what additional finance help is available from the development agency in your region.

Contact your local Business Link Helpline: 0845 600 9 006.

#### **Capital for Enterprise Scheme**

Viable small businesses with high levels of existing debt can get real help to raise long-term finance.

Professional fund managers will provide equity investment which can be used to pay off existing debt to free up capital for day to day cash flow and for investment for the future.

Call the Capital for Enterprise Fund Registration Helpline on 0845 459 9780.

## **Freeing up bank lending: action behind the scenes**

Government is working with UK banks and the European Investment Bank to maintain existing lending and make more available to small and medium firms.

This is happening under the **Working Capital Scheme** which will secure up to £20bn of working capital credit lines for companies. And it will free up capital which the banks must use for new lending.

With the **European Investment Bank** Government has helped UK banks to negotiate credit lines of more than £1 billion to provide loans to small and medium businesses.

## **2. Health Check for your business**

Get a free review of your business with a professional business adviser who can provide hands-on advice and help you access other Government help, including all the schemes mentioned here.

Over 16,000 businesses have so far benefited from these reviews, provided through Business Link.

To access a free health check, call the Business Link helpline: 0845 600 9006 or at [www.businesslink.gov.uk/healthcheck](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/healthcheck)

## **3. Need more time to pay your tax bill?**

If you are worried about paying your tax, National Insurance, VAT or other payments owed or due to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) then you can contact the Business Payment Support Service. HMRC staff will review temporary options tailored to your business needs, for example arranging for payments to be made over a longer period.

You won't be charged additional late payment surcharges or penalties on payments included in the arrangement. But interest will still be payable on those taxes where it applies.

Over 25,000 businesses have been helped to spread payments in this way amounting to more than £429 million of tax.

Call the Business Payment Support Service: 0845 302 1435 or at [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp)

#### 4. **Managing cash flow**

Short guides on managing cash flow, developed by Institute of Credit Management (ICM) and funded by Government, are available at: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp)

Government is encouraging all businesses to agree to pay suppliers on time. You can see which businesses have signed up to this at: [www.promptpaymentcode.org.uk/](http://www.promptpaymentcode.org.uk/)

Central Government is also helping by committing to pay its own bills within 10 days.

#### 5. **Debt Problems**

Get free, confidential and independent help to deal with business debt problems so you can successfully manage your way through your financial difficulties from

[Business Debtline on 0800 197 6026](tel:08001976026)

#### 6. **Real help with training**

Free training is available for small businesses through the **Train to Gain Scheme**, which has changed to make small firms a top priority for funds, helping them continue training during the economic downturn.

Details also available via: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp)

#### 7. **Alternatives to redundancy**

Interactive guidance is available on the business link website to help with these situations.

Advice includes consulting with employees to help businesses avoid making redundancies and how companies can effectively plan for better job security.

Find out more at: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp)

#### 8. **Staff restructures and major change**

Guidance is on the businesslink website to help you with staff restructuring. This includes a number of recognised ways for businesses to change to minimise disruption and maximise progress towards businesses goals.

Find out more at: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp)

## **9. Save time and money complying with employment law**

BERR's Employment Law Guidance Programme is committed to save time and money complying with employment law. Interactive tools and guidance can help you to manage employment law efficiently.

Access them at: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/employingpeople](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/employingpeople)

## **10. Support available to your business**

**Solutions for Business** provides advice on a range of publicly funded business support available. This brings together and simplifies the range of support offered to businesses by government departments, their agencies and local authorities in England.

Find out more at: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/solutions](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/solutions)

## **11. Exporting helps**

Overseas customers and markets continue to offer real opportunities for businesses in the UK. Companies can look at exporting to new markets as a way to utilise capacity, extend the lifespan of products or services, and maintain or increase growth. 50% of UKTI customers say they are continuing to benefit from sustained demand overseas.

## **12. Help with Exporting**

Each year, UKTI helps around 20,000 UK businesses of all sizes and experience to identify specific business opportunities, and to find their way quickly in overseas markets. They can help you access the right contacts and raise your company's profile, and they can assist with navigating the local business culture, regulation and logistics.

To find out how UKTI can help your business grow internationally, phone 0207 215 8000 or log on to [www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk](http://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk)

## **13. Reduce waste and save energy**

Advice on how your business can save money at the same time as protecting the environment.

An interactive tool is also provided to help businesses assess the areas where they are most likely to be able to cut costs, based on their business activities.

Find out more at: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp)