



Foundation East: business loans you can build on

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR NEW CHAIR

I feel privileged to succeed Jim Murray as Chair of Foundation East. He, and others, have done all the "heavy lifting" that is so necessary to define the vision and get any new business off the ground, up and running.

And running it certainly is. We have given 31 loans in this financial year so far.

What have I found at Foundation East, coming to the Chair as a complete outsider? Professionalism, enthusiasm and expertise, especially in the staff. The board brings a very wide range of small business experience from around the East of England.

Did we foresee the full extent of the credit crisis that has been so debilitating to the sales and cash flows of small businesses? I wish we could say that we had 20\20 vision. Like every one else, we have had to adapt. Some of our business practices have had to change but that change has been embraced enthusiastically. We no longer lend 100% of the amount required.

Small businesses everywhere have been through the "wringer" this past year and a half. Many will be the stronger for it. When the economy in the East of England recovers, as it will, they will surely prosper.

Meanwhile, our goal remains to support and sustain new and existing businesses in these difficult times, albeit that our resources are more limited than we would wish. Job preservation and job creation remain central to everything that we do.

Let us hope the business climate in 2010 is more hospitable than 2009!

Peter Jones
Chair



ULTIMATE CARE UK LTD

HELPING TO ACHIEVE A NEW STANDARD OF CARE

A blinding flash of entrepreneurial vision can strike at any time, but it's what you do with it that shapes your future. For Nicola Rowland the spark came over a glass of wine one evening. After working in the care industry for sixteen years, Nicola was becoming increasingly frustrated with the working practices of her employers. So when her husband Marc suggested she put her expertise to good use and start up her own company, she thought "why not?"

Buoyed with enthusiasm it took Nicola twelve months to gain registration from the governing body, The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). During this time she also worked hard to achieve a management qualification and NVQ level four. Finally in 2008 Ultimate Care UK Ltd began trading.

"Finding staff and clients was difficult," said Marc. "We were so new, without a track record people were reluctant to try us. But by going out and meeting people and spending time with them, Nicola soon

attracted clients and our reputation spread, growing the business through word of mouth."

"We provided a different level of care," explained Marc. "It's not just about providing a service and then leaving. We take the time to sit and chat and build trusting relationships with all our clients."



Initially covering the Shotley peninsular area, Nicola wanted to expand out towards Stowmarket but this required additional staff. "It is vital that all our staff are trained to our exacting standards to ensure our service users receive the highest standard of care," said Marc. "But it costs about £600 to train a carer so we needed financial assistance."

Due to the recession and being such a new business, the banks were unwilling to help. But when a friend told Marc about how Foundation East had helped them he got in touch.

"Foundation East's support has enabled us to take on seven new staff and buy a company vehicle. Now, if any of our carers have car trouble, we have a spare vehicle so they can still go out and provide care for our service users. By helping us expand, our predicted turnover for this year is set to treble that of last year which is an incredible achievement considering the present economic climate," said Marc. "But that wasn't all, they also put us in touch with a business advisor who has helped us stabilise the business, improve our efficiency and as a result, has saved us money."

The future is looking very good for Ultimate Care UK Ltd. "The next step is to open an office in Stowmarket," said Marc. "Then we can expand into North Suffolk and South Norfolk, but that won't be for a couple of years. The help, encouragement and support we received from Foundation East has been invaluable. Without them we wouldn't have grown to the extent we have and our expansion plans would be much further away."

WELCOME TO FOUNDATION EAST

Without access to finance many businesses do not get off the ground. Others are unable to expand. Some are forced to cease trading. We lend money to new and existing businesses that have workable business plans but can't get a bank loan or need additional funds to match bank lending.

CAN WE HELP YOU?

Do you have a business idea you believe in?

Can it be turned into a viable business plan?

Yes? Then we may be able to help you.

Even if you lack business experience, savings or assets; even if you've had credit problems in the past or been turned away by the banks, our team will consider your needs.

HOW DO YOU APPLY?

Please visit the business loans page on our website:
www.foundationeast.org/page/business-loans

Don't have internet access? Call 0845 293 7751

WHAT ARE OUR TERMS?

Our business lending terms are flexible and designed to respond to your specific needs. Every application is considered in full according to our ethical guidelines. Typically the following terms apply:

- Loans between £500 and £50,000
- Loan repayment periods between six months and ten years
- Interest rates change but are always commercial. Please visit our web site to find out our current rate. Lower rates can be arranged for social enterprises
- An arrangement fee of 2% (minimum £100) is payable for loans above £3,000. If your loan is for below £3,000 then the fee is fixed at £50. Either way the fee is payable at the start of the loan
- Start up loans are normally limited to 50% of total required
- Where security exists, a charge may be taken
- Capital repayment holidays may be agreed, where appropriate
- No penalty for early repayment
- Mandatory business coaching

MISSION STATEMENT

Foundation East aims to help make the East of England the enterprise capital of the UK by championing financial inclusion through providing access to fair finance for:

- local businesses
- clients of partnering housing associations
- community groups wishing to use Community Land Trusts to develop affordable housing and business premises

OUR VALUES

Foundation East's officers, members and board of directors all work in line with our agreed values:

- Honesty
- Service
- Respect
- Responsibility

We live by these values and ask you to do so too.

Here is our commitment to you:

HONESTY

- we value the truth
- we act with integrity, always
- we provide clear and transparent costings

SERVICE

- we will be helpful, skilful & supportive
- we will all achieve more by working together
- we will offer you personal assistance in all your dealings with us
- we understand that things can go wrong and will take a realistic view if they do
- we believe that our business is built on your success

RESPECT

- we treat everyone fairly, with consideration and decency
- we respect your confidences

RESPONSIBILITY

- we will be responsible and realistic
- we will give you an honest opinion about your business proposal
- we will only lend to you if we consider you can afford to repay your loan

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Foundation East Ltd is an Industrial and Provident Society number 29722R and an exempt charity recognised by HMRC. It is a Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI) and a Charter Member of the Community Development Finance Association (CDFA), being the national trade association for CDFIs.