

Minister Opens Zero Energy Cost Business Park

Baroness Hanham, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Minister responsible for the European Regional Development Fund recently visited Wigan to officially open Armstrong Point, the UK's only zero energy cost business park.

Located on Swan Lane in Hindley Green, Armstrong Point is the brainchild of local property owners Dave and Mike Armstrong. The former derelict building, which was previously occupied by Britvic Soft Drinks, has now been transformed into a new, vibrant, business park, offering all tenants zero-cost energy bills. The park, which was part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (a funding programme managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government), consists of six industrial units. At present no other industrial development in the UK harnesses as many low and zero carbon technologies.

Baroness Hanham said "Armstrong Point is an exciting and innovative development. It harnesses one very important priority, carbon emissions, while tackling another, by supporting local businesses.

"It is essential that we create and safeguard local jobs, support local businesses and boost local economies. This project, which has been driven by local leaders and businessmen, does just that."

Dave Armstrong said: "We were very pleased to welcome Baroness Hanham and our other distinguished guests to our Hindley Green base to showcase our development.

"Our park offers the latest renewable energy technologies to tenants and is the first zero-energy cost business park in the UK – we are delighted at the level of interest it has generated to date."

During her visit, Baroness Hanham also called in on the University of Central Lancashire in Preston to see and hear about ERDF supported projects managed by the University. Representatives also attended from the Lancashire LEP and Lancaster University to brief The Baroness on their ERDF supported work. Among the projects discussed were the Northern Lights business support programme and the Centre for Global Eco Innovation, both of which are geared towards improving business performance and creating local jobs.

Ends

Notes to editors

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European Regional Development Fund in the Northwest

The projects mentioned above are part financed by the North West European Regional Development Fund Programme 2007 to 2013.

The Department for Communities and Local Government is the managing authority for the European Regional Development Fund Programme, which is one of the funds established by the European Commission to help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support local businesses and create jobs.

For more information visit www.communities.gov.uk/erdf

Armstrong Point

For further information on Armstrong Point visit - www.armstrongpoint.co.uk

University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN)

For information on European Regional Development Fund supported projects delivered by UCLAN visit - www.uclan.ac.uk/information/business/funded_support.php

Lancaster University

For information on European Regional Development Fund supported projects delivered by Lancaster University visit – www.lums.lancs.ac.uk/departments/Entrep/Projects/smeassist/ERDF