

Newsletter 49: 19th September 2008

This is part of a fortnightly series of newsletters that will help explain the process and progression of the Convergence Programmes for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The newsletters will contain the most up to date information about Convergence as it evolves over the coming months. [New information will appear in blue.](#)

The Convergence Programmes are investing in a higher value, more knowledge based economy. The table below summarises the value of Convergence investments as at 19 September 2008.

CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMES' POSITION AS AT 19 SEPTEMBER 2008

All monetary figures are £ Million	TOTAL	ERDF Programme	ESF Programme
Programme budget	£500.2m	£347.0m	£153.2m
Value of investments contracted	£84.3m	£15.8m	£68.5m
Value of investments endorsed (not contracted)	£15.5m	£15.0m	£0.5m
Actual project spend to date	£0.0	£0.0	£0.0
N+2 spend target by end 2009	£43.2m	£30.0m	£13.2m

NB. The Programmes' budgets are given in Euros in the European Regional Development Fund Convergence Operational Programme and the European Social Fund Operational Programme for England and Gibraltar. The pound sterling figures above are estimates, as at 19/9/08, and will vary due to changes in the exchange rate during the life of the Programmes.

GLOSSARY

- Contracted:** Contracts signed by both the applicant and the organisations managing the Programmes (South West Regional Development Agency for ERDF and Department for Work and Pensions for ESF).
- Endorsed:** Investments awaiting final exchange of contracts.
- Spend:** Money claimed from the European Union by projects for work in progress.
- N+2 spend target:** The amount of money the Programmes must spend on a yearly basis. The first target is for 2009.

ERDF CONVERGENCE INVESTMENTS CONTRACTED

The following European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Convergence investments have been contracted.

- Truro Falmouth Branch Line** £4.67 million investment in improved public transport giving access to work and the Combined Universities in Cornwall at Falmouth, Penryn and Truro. Details are available at www.objectiveone.com/client/media/media-1400.htm.
- Peninsula Dental School** More than £4.7 million investment to help develop a state-of-the-art dental education and research facility in Truro. Details are available at www.objectiveone.com/client/media/media-1417.htm.
- Business Support** Specialist business support to boost business productivity and competitiveness on a national and international level and to help increase the economic prosperity of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Support will be accessed through Business Link and will receive investment of £4.6 million from the ERDF Convergence Programme. Further details can be found at www.objectiveone.com/client/media/media-1430.htm.
- Watson-Marlow Pumps Group** Falmouth pump manufacturer Watson-Marlow has announced a £7.3 million expansion having secured £1 million of investment from the Convergence Programme and the South West Regional Development Agency. The company is building a new silicone tubing plant to support its core pump business and a growing global market for food, beverage and biopharm tubing. Further details can be found at www.objectiveone.com/client/media/media-1433.html.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FRAMEWORKS ESTABLISHED

- Definition** Strategic Investment Frameworks (SIFs) provide a framework and justification for potential Convergence investments in specific areas in Cornwall and the Isles of a Scilly. Proposed individual investments within the SIFs will then be appraised and, if suitable, endorsed for investment.
- Proposed Frameworks** Strategic Investment Frameworks are being developed for the following areas: Bodmin, Falmouth, Newquay and St Columb Major, Penzance and the Isles of Scilly, St Austell and the Clay Country, and Truro.

To date two SIFs have been established:

- Bodmin** [The overall aim for the Bodmin Strategic Investment Framework is to develop Bodmin as an economic growth pole while retaining its distinctive heritage.](#)
- Camborne, Pool and Redruth** The Strategic Investment Framework for Camborne, Pool and Redruth provides a framework for investments to increase the number and range of jobs, support business growth, stimulate innovation and enterprise and to boost skills levels.

ESF CONVERGENCE INVESTMENTS CONTRACTED

European Social Fund Convergence investments which have been contracted are described below.

Investments Managed By Jobcentre Plus

- Cornwall Works Plus** This investment aims to help unemployed people overcome barriers to work by improving their skills and employability.

Cornwall Works for Social Enterprise An investment to provide inspirational and high quality developmental experiences and sustainable work for jobless people through social enterprises.

Cornwall Works for Learning Disabilities This investment aims to provide a pathway to sustainable employment for people with learning disabilities.

Further information More details about all three Cornwall Works investments can be found at www.objectiveone.com/client/media/media-1422.html.

Investments Managed by the Learning and Skills Council

The following investments, aiming to raise skills levels, have been contracted by the Learning and Skills Council.

ACE ACE will invest in developing and delivering vocational teaching and learning resources and personalised programmes, enabling young people who are not in education, employment or training to access appropriate learning, training and/or employment. The project aims to make learning relevant, to raise aspirations, maximise potential, build confidence and embed lifelong learning and progression.

EMBARK This investment focuses on raising aspirations and participation levels among employees in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, who, as members of minority groups, face multiple barriers to education and employment opportunities. The investment also focuses on increasing employers' awareness of the needs of the target groups.

Partnership Works The aim of this activity is to enhance Cornwall Works and Skills for Jobs opportunities in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It will provide employability skills to help prepare adults to be job ready.

Equator This project aims to raise aspiration and participation levels of people who are not in employment and, because of their minority status, face multiple barriers to accessing education and employment opportunities.

Vocational Routeways Vocational Routeways has been developed to help create sustainable economies and communities by linking the employment needs of local employers with unemployed people in disadvantaged communities. It aims to deliver tailored vocational training and support packages that will equip participants to enter employment.

Key Sectors This partnership project works with 13 sector organisations, the Skills Brokerage Service and providers to engage businesses in workforce development activity.

Capacity Building Works This investment is being made to enhance the ability of voluntary/community sector organisations and social enterprises to contribute to the Convergence Programme. It will carry out organisational 'health checks', encourage employees to gain skills for life qualifications and promote volunteering.

The Progressive Isles The Progressive Isles investment focuses on enabling individuals, organisations and businesses to fulfil their ambitions and potential on the Isles of Scilly by offering Level 2, Level 3 and Basic Skills qualifications.

Workforce led Eleven partners will combine to address the development of individuals within

Programme	the workforce. Through raising aspirations, widening access to training and empowering individuals to contribute at higher levels, employees will be more productive and have the skills to contribute to workforce success.
Skills for Work	The Skills for Work programme will deliver Continuing Professional Development training to the Skills for Life workforce. It also aims to encourage more people to take Skills for Life qualifications.
Freestyle: Best Start for Young People	This investment will provide activities and specialist support for young people aged 14-19 years within the target groups who are not in education, employment or training or at risk of becoming so. It will help them to engage in learning in an informal setting with individually tailored learning plans with a view to moving them towards employment, training or further education.
Freestyle: Equality and Diversity	This project aims to provide activities and specialist support to young people in disadvantaged and hard to reach groups so as to remove barriers to learning and help them engage with and remain in learning. Raising awareness of equality and diversity issues is also a key part of the project.
Freestyle: Extended Learner Fund	The Extended Learner Fund will provide financial assistance for a broad range of target groups to make it possible for them to continue their learning.

Investments Managed by Government Office for the South West

The Graduate Placement Scheme is the first element of Higher Education investment contracted by the Convergence Programmes. Other investments in research, enterprise, higher level skills and raising aspirations are being developed.

Graduate Placement Scheme	This project, which will place graduates with businesses in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, has received approval for a £4.25 million investment from the European Social Fund Convergence Programme. Further details are available at www.objectiveone.com/client/media/media-1418.htm .
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PARTNER'S PERSPECTIVE

BROKERING BUSINESS SUPPORT EFFECTIVELY

Richard Adams, Business Link for Cornwall, Isles of Scilly, Devon and Somerset

The issue	“The term ‘brokerage’ has become commonplace and put simply means the managed linking of a business with specific needs, to a relevant service or solution. The brokerage function is a key component of the Business Link model and the ability to broker effectively will be integral to the strengthening and development of the future business support network. The issue, however, is ‘broker to whom’?”
The businesses perspective	“Businesses don’t care what agency or company provides what support. They don’t care if it’s public or private sector. They just want relevant, quality solutions that help them realise their aspirations and they want to be able to find out about them quickly, simply and without confusion. This requires a critical mass of specialists, experts and services that can respond to the issues identified by Business Link and deliver the solutions the businesses need.
Making brokerage work	“For brokerage to work, Business Link must be able to identify quality assured providers, who can respond quickly and not be cost prohibitive, especially to

start ups. Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly's economy has some unique characteristics and some excellent deliverers of business support services in both public and private sectors. However, there can be difficulty in identifying a choice of locally based or relevant delivery providers. Simple systems and effective communication of services amongst the business support network must be in place and must be supported by all involved, along with advancements in delivery support.

Getting the model right

“Partnership is one solution. Improved working relationships between the public and private sector, harnessing the specialists in the delivery market, resolves two issues. Firstly a strong relationship means that services become seamless; secondly the more partnership and communication between providers the greater the opportunities to link businesses with the best choice of solutions.

Cutting to the chase

“To provide an improved choice for businesses, the development of more, high quality delivery support and services, which responds to Cornwall's distinct economy, is required. Initially, in accordance with Business Simplification, publicly funded delivery support can respond to market failure and help create momentum for more private sector activity; thus ultimately creating a self-sustaining model. With public funds becoming ever limited coupled with the last chance for European Union structural fund intervention, this is the best and maybe the last chance to develop a sustainable business delivery model for Cornwall.”

Richard Adams

Senior Development and New Projects Manager

Business Link for Cornwall, Isles of Scilly, Devon and Somerset

RELATED EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR ENGLAND

Accessing the Rural Programme

The Rural Development Programme can be accessed through the Rural Development Gateway which provides advice about project proposals. They can be contacted by telephoning 0845 600 9966 or at www.sw-ruralgateway.info. For more information please see www.defra.gov.uk/rural/rdpe/index.htm, www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/post2006_faq.htm#Q4 and www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/eafrd/introduction.shtm.

Consultancy service

The Rural Development Programme is investing in a new consultancy service, REG 1 to 1, offering a review of farms' business needs and tailored advice, which is provided by the Rural Enterprise Gateway. For further information, please call 0845 600 9966 or visit www.sw-ruralgateway.info.

EUROPEAN FISHERIES FUND PROGRAMME FOR THE UK

European Fisheries Fund Programme approved

The European Fisheries Fund Operational Programme for the UK has been approved and over the next two months the programme will be opening for applications. For details please see www.mfa.gov.uk/grants/grants-eff.htm and www.defra.gov.uk/marine/fisheries/grants.htm.

More detailed information about Convergence, links to key organisations and websites can be found in the 'Convergence' section of the website www.objectiveone.com. Information is also available from the Partnership Office's helpline on 0800 028 0120.