

Press Release



Furniture firm gets £50,000 loan boost

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A FURNITURE making firm has become the first business in Sutherland to receive funding from the North Highland Regeneration Fund. Highland Bespoke Furniture Ltd, based in Brora, has been granted a £50,000 low-interest loan payable in two stages.

The regeneration fund was set up to offset the loss of jobs from the decommissioning of the Dounreay nuclear plant. Highland Bespoke Furniture's managing director, Hans Mol, said this week he was delighted to have received the funding. "It will be invested in marketing, new equipment and staff training in order to increase productivity," he said. Highland Bespoke Furniture was formed last year after Dutch-born Mr Mol teamed up with John MacGregor, who had been operating as a sole trader for seven years. Mr Mol said: "John had developed an excellent product and had laid a good foundation for a successful business. After much discussion I decided to become involved and we set up a new company." The firm has since grown steadily and now employs a five-strong workforce.

Operating out of Scotia House, the former Hunters of Brora woollen mill, the firm designs, manufactures and installs high quality furniture. It offers custom-built fitted kitchens, bedrooms, studies and libraries, as well as producing free-standing pieces of furniture and hand-made interior joinery products such as doors, architraves and stairs. Mr Mol said: "It's our ambition that Brora will become known as the place to go for this type of product. We have plenty of great ideas for growing the business and increasing the workforce. The support from the regeneration fund will help realise our ambitions."



The team at Highland Bespoke Furniture (left to right): Claudia MacGregor, Lewis Sutherland, Hans Mol, John MacGregor and Adam MacKenzie.

Production and design manager Mr MacGregor said: "It has been a long time coming, but it is good to see the business move on to this stage of development.

"We have a great team and the business can now expand. I will be able to continue developing our products, the manufacturing process, the workforce and the marketing."

Mr MacGregor issued an invitation to anyone interested to visit Highland Bespoke Furniture Ltd at Scotia House or their website (www.highlandbespokefurniture.co.uk).

The North Highland Regeneration Fund was established two years ago by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to provide loans for small businesses.

The initiative is designed to pump-prime both the start-up of new ventures and the growth of existing businesses as part of the drive to replace the jobs which will be lost in Caithness and Sutherland as the Dounreay nuclear plant is decommissioned.

Neil Robertson, director of the regeneration fund, said: "We are delighted to have approved a loan to Highland Bespoke Furniture Ltd, especially as they have the prospect of creating more skilled jobs in the future."