



case study

equal opportunities



Objective One is
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The Objective One Partnership
for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

CORNISH HORTICULTURAL ENTERPRISES (CHE)

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the project

CHE is a delegated grant scheme developed to provide investment to help further develop businesses in the horticultural industry within Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Investment is available for both capital and revenue projects. Businesses can apply for capital investment for processing, packing and marketing horticultural produce. The types of revenue project that can be supported include feasibility studies, training, marketing and technical business support.

The Programme has invested £1,548,000 from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) in the project which has a total cost of £6,639,400.

measures of equal opportunities adopted

CHE operates an active equal opportunities policy in both its employment and application process. Flexible working is encouraged as is working from home. The business is heavily reliant on ICT and broadband has been installed. Employees with childcare commitments will be offered assistance in terms both financial and in flexible working conditions. The employment application form is in two parts with personal details, age, gender ethnicity etc on a separate form which is not seen at the sifting process. All staff involved in the recruitment interview process are briefed regarding the types of questions which may or may not be used.

The application for CHE investment addresses equal opportunities on the application form. All applicants are required to have or to develop equal opportunities policies and all capital investment must include compliance with the DDA.

Steve Tones said, "Although our application process concentrates on the financial aspects of the business - value for money, the need for funding and CHE's confidence in the applicant to deliver, we do try to raise awareness of equal opportunities." Many applicants are endeavouring to safeguard jobs or to help family members receive payment for work done, often improving the quality of life. Applications can be submitted on line which can assist those for whom



Chris May demonstrates the daffodil flow wrapper at
Varfell Farm, Long Rock

writing is difficult. Meetings are held in the client's premises if meeting rooms are available otherwise hotels with full access are used. CHE is now able to provide limited grants to people in the horticultural industry to increase the use and highlight the benefits of ICT. By working in partnership with Rural Progress and Duchy College they are delivering training to current CHE clients at a level the client needs. Steve said, "We are able to show clients what to do and how to do it rather than telling them to read a book."

benefits of equal opportunities

Steve Tones, the project manager, said that the reasons for incorporating equal opportunities into both their employment practices and the project application process are simple. "Incorporating equal opportunities maximises your capability. There is no point in excluding half the human race. The person you need may be female, black, gay and disabled. It's the right attitude and commitment that matters not gender or physical ability." To date CHE has helped 18 women-led businesses which range from retailing to marketing to providing storage facilities.

For more information about how you can incorporate equal opportunities into your project please contact the Objective One Partnership Office on 01872 241379 or email objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk.