

# LoveBusiness

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# LOVE ENTERPRISE



by **STUART KLOSINSKI**,  
industrial  
development  
manager for  
Furness  
Enterprise

## After the rain

**S**OUTH Cumbria businesses were hit by the floods of November 17 and 18, though not as much as those which were based in and around Cockermouth and Workington. Coniston, Lakeside, Newby Bridge, Backbarrow down to Greenodd, Ulverston's east side, mainly North Lonsdale Road and Duddon Bridge were the most affected local areas. Transport was also disrupted.

As part of the Cumbria County Council-led response to the flood disaster, Furness Enterprise was invited to join the county's business and economic recovery group meeting last week.

Val Robinson, Joyce Hughes and I have been in touch with manufacturers, hotels and other businesses to firstly gauge what the local South Cumbria impact has been, brief business owners on what discretionary assistance is on offer, and to outline what the county-wide group is doing. There are six elements to the response we have offered so far, as follows:

- Describing what discretionary financial help is on offer, and helping businesses apply for it.
- Briefing firms about properties available for temporary use, should they be needed.
- Providing a list of suppliers, tradesmen and contractors who can help with clean up.
- Supporting the county council team's discussions with insurers' bodies, banks and HM Revenue and Customs, about the need for flexible help to be offered to firms faced with resuming business.
- Supporting the banks in their delivery of assistance to firms.
- Supporting the 'Cumbria is open for business' and 'to tourist visitors' promotional efforts.

Firms affected by the floods can approach us with a business case for discretionary funding to help them recover – it may cover activity such as marketing, training of staff and job safeguarding – the latter available £1,000-£5,000 per job.

This discretionary help could complement insurers' assistance to firms and the flexibility banks like Barclays are providing.

Last week Graham Duckworth of Barclays came in to brief us on how they can help flood affected firms. There have been some remarkable recoveries already. In Ulverston, GW Waite, a metal pressing operation was flooded on the Thursday and fully operational again on the following Monday, due to sterling work by the workforce, the company's suppliers and contractors.

At Lakeside and Newby Bridge the feedback we have is the hotels are working to refurbish as quickly as possible, and urging everyone to push out the message that the area's open for business and tourism. Ulverston also showed how quickly visitors can be attracted to a flood hit town – its two day Dickensian Festival held this past weekend attracted coach-loads of visitors.

Flood recovery in Furness and South Cumbria is just one part of the wider recovery programme that the area is undertaking after the economic changes of the past decade and a half. It is crucial that everyone reinforces the message that this UK Assisted Area is continuously and fully supported by mainstream funding to help it transform and rejuvenate into a sustainable economy.



**NEW WARNING:** The Safety Car warning panel for F1 motorsport developed by McGeoch Technologies Ltd in Ulverston

# Formula 1's new flag system is a winner

**REVOLUTIONARY LED panels for motorsport, designed and developed by local firm McGeoch LED Technology of Ulverston, helped a customer to scoop the 'Safety Initiative of the Year Award' at the Professional Motorsport World Expo Awards.**

The customer, EM Motorsport, picked up the award at the event in Germany for its safety contribution, which included the LED lights panel designed by McGeoch as a key feature of their race marshalling system, which has been acknowledged as making a major contribution to safety.

The LED electronic light panel is designed to augment the traditional cloth flags manually waved by marshalls positioned around the circuit, which put marshals in danger spots and can sometimes go unseen.

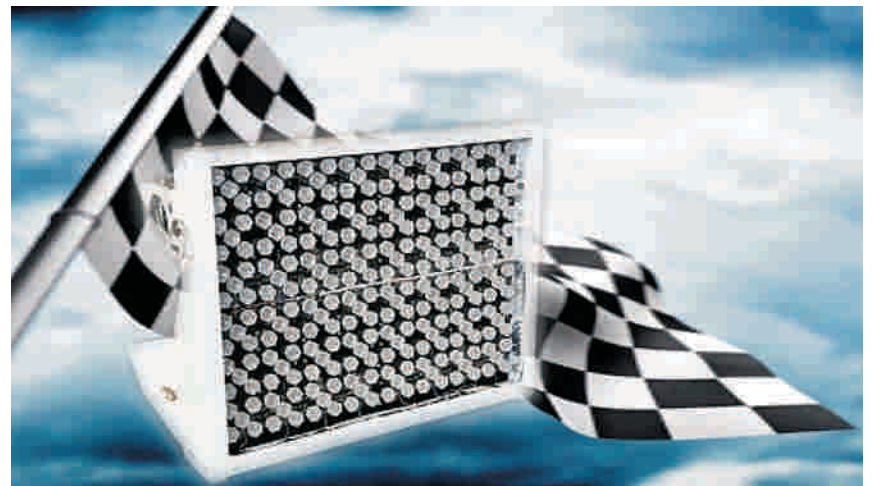
A McGeoch spokesman said: "The high brightness LED electronic panels replicate the full range of coloured signals with improved visibility in all weather conditions, and at a much greater distance than the traditional waved flag.

"Marshals can operate the system from a much safer position."

The most recent motorsport development by McGeoch is an LED light panel to alert the drivers that the Safety Car is on the track and this too is a key feature of the marshalling system.

Each panel has a real-time two way wireless interface with Race Control.

If there is an incident, McGeoch LED technology panels can be instantly activated with warning signals even



**WINNER:** The McGeoch Technologies Ltd LED flag for motorsport designed in Ulverston

before marshals may be aware of it saving 15-20 valuable and vital seconds.

McGeoch says with cars going at up to 200mph, the instant response can be indispensable to prevent serious injury or even fatality to participants or spectators.

Phil Logan, director of Technology for the LED division of McGeoch in Ulverston, is project leader for motor racing and was responsible for developing the revolutionary LED Motor Racing Flag lights which have taken the motor racing industry by storm.

Packaging and production of the light panels was carried out at McGeoch's headquarters in Birmingham.

Speaking of the award, Charlie

Whiting, Formula One Race director and safety delegate for the international motoring and motorsport body FIA, said: "We are very pleased with the Marshalling System which we have used at all Formula One races since the beginning of 2007.

"The FIA has always been committed to increasing safety in motorsport and the Marshalling System has provided us with an incredibly useful tool to enhance awareness of what's happening on the track at all times.

"Further enhancements to the system, namely the Electronic Flags and the Safety Car panels, have provided additional safety for drivers."