

Skylark Garden Centre - Infrastructure Development

Awarded £37,578.46 under Priority 3 Support for Rural Tourism Intervention rate 40%

This project application has been submitted by R & J Gowler trading as Skylark Garden Centre & Lawrence Bridge Farms. This is a family business which started trading as a farm in 1957. The project seeks to continue the growth of the garden centre business. Skylark, based near March, Cambridgeshire, opened in 2003 as a diversification measure. Now, Skylark is the biggest garden centre in the Fenland area and provides a calm, relaxed and enjoyable experience for everybody who visits. It has expanded to include a café, regular car boot sales and a range of special and seasonal events including a maize maze, week of wickedness, fireworks spectacular and Christmas activities with visitor numbers growing each year.

The current toilet facilities are inadequate for the growing visitor numbers. This has been a recurring theme of visitor feedback. The project seeks to address this by building a bigger toilet block in a better location to better standards.

The project is the first phase of a five year business plan designed to grow visitor numbers by improving the customer offer and expanding the range of special events held.

The construction phase was straightforward, with the expanded facility open for business in time for the peak season in 2017.

The growth of the business has required new seasonal and part time jobs, and provides an indirect boost to the local economy through visitor expenditure in shops, pubs and other local facilities. The further development of Skylark is exciting with its potential to grow as a visitor attraction to the area as well as further job creation and economic growth.

Photographs of the work in progress



Find out more about Skylark Garden Centre

www.skylarkgardencentre.co.uk

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