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KING KONG OF CUMBRIA CLIMBING TO SUCCESS WITH HSBC SUPPORT

A Cumbrian climbing enthusiast who has ran his own climbing wall design, manufacture and installation company for the past 20 years is launching a climbing wall centre in Keswick, creating 12 new jobs.

Paul Cornforth has been climbing since the age of 14 and launched King Kong Climbing 20 years ago to design and manufacture climbing walls, as well as associated accessories and clothing. Paul has now taken his experience to launch the leisure facility, which will feature 600 square metres of climbing surface, including an indoor ice climbing facility.

The new 900 sq ft centre, which will be called King Kong Climbing Centre, will also feature children's climbing walls, a children's castle and dragon play area, technical and advanced climbing facilities and caving areas.

The centre is due to open by July and Paul has secured £150,000 in funding from HSBC's Lancashire and Cumbria Commercial Centre to support the £800,000 project. HSBC Commercial Manager Angela Kirkpatrick managed the deal on behalf of the bank. The funding has been allocated from HSBC's recently launched £100 million SME Fund to support businesses across Lancashire and Cumbria.

King Kong's Paul Cornforth said: "We are very excited about the new centre, which has been a labour of love. I have been climbing for 40 years and have been designing and building walls for the past 20, so I wanted to take all of that experience to build something special, which I believe I have. We believe this will be a destination venue for people living in the North West and all those that come to The Lakes on holiday."

Jason Gledhill, HSBC Lancashire and Cumbria Area Commercial Director, added:
“We know Paul well through his main climbing wall business and we know he is passionate about this new project, which we are confident will be a success. Paul is typical of many customers we are speaking to currently; there is certainly a renewed appetite to invest and grow businesses at present.”

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