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WELLAND VALE NURSERIES OPENS TO THE PUBLIC

Rutland nursery stock wholesaler Welland Vale Nurseries has opened a retail arm to the public following a £500,000 investment programme over the past few months.

The nursery, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, opened the retail unit and glass house recently as it looks to expand the business and reduce its reliance on its wholesale business.

The company secured a £200,000 finance package from HSBC's Mid Lincolnshire and the Fens Commercial team to support the project, in a deal managed by International Commercial Manager Terry Spriggs. The finance was allocated from the £100 million fund established by HSBC specifically for SMEs from Mid Lincolnshire and the Fens.

The company hopes the new development will help boost sales from £1.25 million to £2 million. It has recruited Mike Easom as garden centre manager to work alongside operations directors Laurence Middleton and a loyal team of staff to drive the business forward. Long-standing and loyal customer and designer Adam Frost, winner of three consecutive Chelsea Flower Show medals, opened the new centre.

Trevor Burns founded the business in 1974 with two other founder directors. He became sole owner of the business two years ago after buying out his former partners.

Trevor Burns said: "We are very much focused on the gardener and our product range is aimed towards them, rather than some other garden centres which offer goods which are very much on the periphery of gardening.

"Our wholesale business was still strong but growth opportunities were limited, which has led to the launch of the retail offering. We have enjoyed a really strong start to business, with the bright March weather bringing everybody out into their gardens."

HSBC Mid Lincolnshire and the Fens Area Commercial Director Alan Andrews added: “Welland Vale Nurseries is an example that there is never a bad time for businesses to adapt and evolve. The company had been doing pretty much the same thing for 40 years, but it has acted on the opportunity to expand the company and diversify its income stream. We are seeing more of our customers talking to us about investment opportunities as business confidence grows.”

Ends

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