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## WELSH BEER-MAKER BREWS SUCCESS WITH HSBC SUPPORT

A micro-brewery based in the Carmarthenshire countryside is expanding its premises and increasing production capacity with the help of HSBC.

The company, using malted barley, a range of selected hops from around the world, and local Welsh water, first began brewing its sought-after beverages in August 2013, and has seen its orders rise ever since.



Until receiving a business loan from HSBC, however, The Handmade Beer Co was producing its hand-crafted beers from a temporary site at the brewery. To match the growing needs of founder Ian Bowler's rapidly-expanding business, HSBC's branch in Carmarthen, South Wales, supported The Handmade Beer Co with an initial £5,000 loan in January. This was later extended to £10,000, and used primarily to develop a dedicated bottling area. The company has to date averaged monthly sales of 18 casks and 3,000 bottles, and is targeting growth to 18 casks per week and 6,000 bottles monthly.

Ian Bowler said: "We had been bottling on a temporary setup at the brewery, which had to be dismantled when not in use as the space had multiple uses. As the business began to receive more orders, there was a need to establish a dedicated bottling area. We were able to set this up with the loan from HSBC, and invested in more casks to increase production and meet the higher demand.

"Now we're looking into further expansion by creating a sampling area at the brewery, as well as a campsite next to the brewery, which would significantly increase footfall given that we're located within a popular tourist destination."

Tom Simms, Business Specialist for HSBC in Carmarthen, said: "After discussing Ian's business growth plans with him using HSBC's in depth business review process, I was truly able to understand its expansion potential. I felt confident HSBC could provide Ian's company with the tools and resources needed to realise his plans. The Handmade Beer Co produces quality products and I enjoy seeing it go from strength to strength.

"HSBC recently announced a £400 million fund to support SMEs in Wales in order to help businesses like the Handmade Beer Co grow. As the economic recovery takes root, now is the time for small businesses to invest in their growth and expansion."

**Ends**

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