

[Press release: Sellafield funding brings new business unit to life](#)

The [Watershed](#), in Whitehaven, will support aspiring business owners to get their ideas off the ground.

Sellafield Ltd and the [Nuclear Decommissioning Authority](#) are providing £996,000 for the project via Sellafield's social impact budget.

It will be part of the [Whitehaven Buzz Station scheme](#), which Sellafield Ltd is supporting with a £2.6 million investment.

Both projects are being led by developer [BEC](#) and are key to Whitehaven's North Shore regeneration programme.

Gary McKeating, head of community and development for Sellafield Ltd, said:

Our social impact strategy is designed to help our community overcome barriers to success.

One of those barriers is the low number of business start-ups.

Small businesses are the engine of the economy. And to be successful they need vital support in the early stages.

The Watershed is a state-of-the-art facility which will nurture the energy and creativity of our entrepreneurs and allow them to work together to bring ideas to life.

That's what our social impact strategy is about: providing opportunities that change lives.

The Watershed is scheduled to open at the same time as the Buzz Station.

It will support businesses in their very earliest stages while the Buzz Station will provide facilities for more established companies.

Facilities at the Watershed will include:

- co-working space
- high-speed connectivity and communications
- digital manufacturing facility, including 3D printers and laser cutters
- business support and advice

Its design reflects the changing needs of smaller businesses and aims to provide facilities usually only available in bigger cities.

Michael Pemberton, chief executive of BEC, said:

Co-working for small businesses is becoming the norm. The conditions they need to grow is changing from a four-walled office to a lively, shared space.

This allows people to bounce ideas off each other and support one another's growth.

The lead contractor for construction of the Buzz Station and the Watershed will be announced by BEC soon.