



**Update
Late Summer 2006**

This Issue

NSRCF puts a Spring into the North Staffordshire Summer

Putting a Spring into North Staffordshire 1

"What's it" - A new concept in Learning 1

A recycling 1st for Stoke 2

Borrowing from North Staffs Risk Capital Fund 2

With total loans of more than £725,000 already made or committed to supporting Companies across our area, NSRCF has recently passed an important milestone in its efforts to help drive forward the regeneration and growth of the North Staffordshire economy.

Loans made by North Staffs Risk Capital Fund have given an essential fillip to a variety of small and medium sized businesses, both new and established, ranging from those involved in hi-tech precision electronics

manufacture and complex software development, to the more traditional North Staffs ceramics and distribution sectors.

NSRCF support has already been instrumental in helping create and safeguard more than 180 quality, sustainable jobs and we are currently assessing several further potentially exciting projects, such as the growing demand for loans from the Fund.

Our loans typically 'fit' alongside those offered by the

more traditional lenders, including the High Street Banks, and we work closely with the Company, its professional advisors and other lenders during the application process.



Helping build on Regeneration in North Staffordshire

North Staffs Risk Capital Fund PLC

Finance for New & Growing Companies

Dedicated to economic regeneration in North Staffordshire

Unsecured Loans for Working Capital with minimum formalities

Call us for a no-obligation discussion

MERPIC

Merpic Ltd. Educational Resources.

"What's it" - A new concept in Learning

Supported by NSRCF, Stoke-on-Trent based Merpic Ltd., is busy introducing a new and exciting concept in education.

"What's it" Learning is an innovative multimedia, e-learning software system developed by the Company's founders, Richard Mercer and Richard Pickard.

In their roles at Edensor Technology College, Longton, the two Richards, who have a combined teaching experience of more than 45 years, had a need for an e-learning system to compliment the already successful student experience

at the College.

Their research soon showed that commercially available packages lacked the dynamic, interactive interface to motivate students and were mainly intended to completely replace the teacher. This was not an attractive option, so the two Richards set about devising their own system which has now been introduced to the College.

Realising that not only was it what they sought for the College, *"What's it" Learning* also has huge potential for schools nationwide where it

can be beneficially and cost effectively used as part of the learning process. Several leading schools are now piloting the package and an encouraging number of enquiries are already being generated.

Commenting on the support from North Staffs Risk Capital Fund, Richard Mercer said "Our application to NSRCF was dealt with speedily and sympathetically and has enabled us to launch *"What's it" Learning* at the earliest opportunity."

Oil Recycling Plant is a 1st for Stoke

A new industry is coming to Stoke-on-Trent. A Staffordshire company has plans to refurbish a derelict oil refinery in Sneyd Hill, Stoke-on-Trent to establish a small-scale Waste Oil Refinery to recycle used oil and create over 25 jobs for local people.

supplies and skills locally.

Managing Director, John Whelan says: "This is a great opportunity for the ongoing regeneration of the local area. The company will employ about 25 people and will provide training opportunities for the young people of the city. We will be making a difference from Day One!"

At a time when oil and oil products are becoming increasingly scarce and expensive, Whelan Refining Limited will be the first and only re-refinery in the UK recycling and producing the single most valuable product obtainable from the Crude Oil 'barrel'.

Whelan Refining Limited has received financial backing from The North Staffordshire Risk Capital Fund; Michelin Development; Bridges Community Ventures; Advantage West Midlands and the Advantage Enterprise & Innovation Fund, managed by Catapult Venture Managers.

There are over 300 million litres of Waste Oil collected annually in the UK and the company will be re-refining 50 million litres of it to produce Base Oil - the base for all industrial and automotive lubricants.

John Whelan adds "Our process recovers a valuable raw material. It's good for the environment. We will create new, skilled jobs and provide training for the young. The refinery development will have a significant and beneficial knock-on effect to local suppliers, services and the community generally.

With work starting in September, the refinery will cost about £2m to re-engineer and refurbish and the company intends to source

Waste Oil is primarily used engine oil from cars/trucks/buses and ships. It is not highly flammable in the same way that petrol is. However, it is very valuable.

When I look into the future I see a facility of which the City of Stoke-on-Trent can be proud."



"When I look into the future I see a facility of which the City of Stoke-on-Trent can be proud"

**John Whelan, MD
Whelan Refining Ltd**

Obtaining Funding from NSRCF

NSRCF provides unsecured working capital loans, of between £10,000 to £50,000 (exceptionally £70,000) to owner-managed companies.

Our target is businesses, whether new or existing, with sustainable potential for growth, including opportunities where companies can be revitalised by management succession.

We have strong links with the Business Support networks in order to improve the quality and number of opportunities offered by the Fund.

A high proportion of the businesses we support are either start-ups, or less than three years old. Typically, they are knowledge-based and innovative.

Our application process is simple and straightforward. Initially we wish to see a Business Plan and Financial Projections to form the basis of the application. We do not call for directors guarantees or other security.

North Staffordshire Risk Capital Fund PLC

5 Ridge House, Ridge House Drive

Festival Park

Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5SJ

Tel/Fax 01782 266408

E-mail: info@nsrcf.co.uk

Website: www.nsrcf.co.uk

