

# Helping businesses and organisations to become more productive and thrive in the face of change

Phil Cole

Head of Business Support



INCLUSIVE  
GROWTH  
LEEDS  
2023-2030



Creating  
growth in  
our economy  
that works for  
everyone



## Leeds economy

- 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city in the UK and regional capital of Yorkshire
- Economy worth £26.2 billion; GVA per head £34,510
- Significant draw for employment – 471,000 employed in the city, net in commuting in excess of 100,000
- **Low unemployment and high employment rates** comparable with the England average
- 30,000+ businesses, 99.5% employing fewer than 250 staff
- **Key sectors** for private sector employment – financial and business services, creative and digital, manufacturing, wholesale/distribution

## Key challenges

- Like most cities in the UK has **high levels of deprivation** and relatively **low wages in the inner city**
- **Key issues post 2008** – low economic growth, lack of business investment, low levels of productivity growth and investment in R&D, relatively low start up levels compared to England average
- Significant support for businesses during Covid Pandemic – £300m provided in Leeds to keep businesses going in the form of Business Rate Relief and business grants

# Business support for SMEs



## Lead on behalf of West Yorkshire, delivering:

- **Ad:Venture** programme aiming to support 1,000+ young businesses to grow by 2026  
[www.ad-venture.org.uk](http://www.ad-venture.org.uk)
- **Digital Enterprise** aiming to support 480 SMEs with digital investment projects by 2025  
[www.digitalenterprise.co.uk](http://www.digitalenterprise.co.uk)

## Launched a £1.75m Discretionary Rate Relief scheme

- Aimed at support SMEs focused on young businesses, those with a social purpose and those operating childcare day nurseries [www.leeds.gov.uk/business-rates/relief-from-business-rates](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/business-rates/relief-from-business-rates)

## Deliver Business Growth Service in partnership with West Yorkshire local authorities

- Evaluation shows the service made a net addition to GVA of £38.6m. A ROI of £11.40 for every £1 spent on delivery. Since 2015 over 15,000 businesses supported with £66m invested in more than 6,600 growth projects. [www.wybusiness-skills.com/business-support](http://www.wybusiness-skills.com/business-support)

# David Baggaley Economic Development Programme Lead Business Growth Service

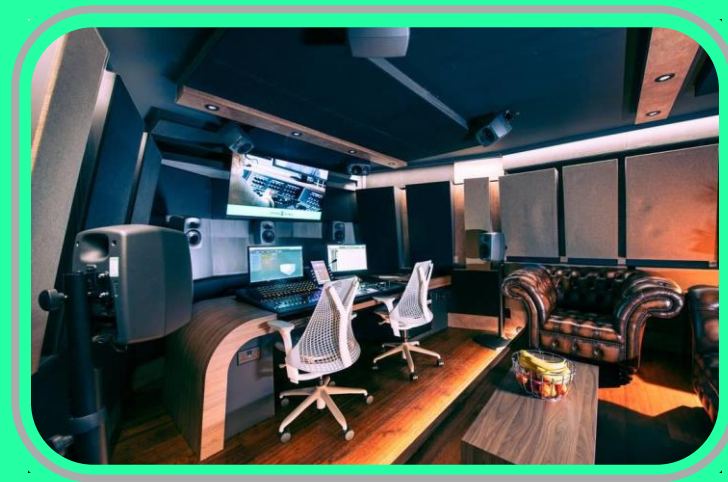
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# STICKS GLASS



**Adam Bennett**  
Director



We believe in being a people business  
that *actually* cares about people

# Michelle Connolly

**Co-Founder & Director**

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BIRKENSTOCK

dubarry  
of Ireland

Dr. AirWair  
Martens  
WITH BOUNCING SOLES

  
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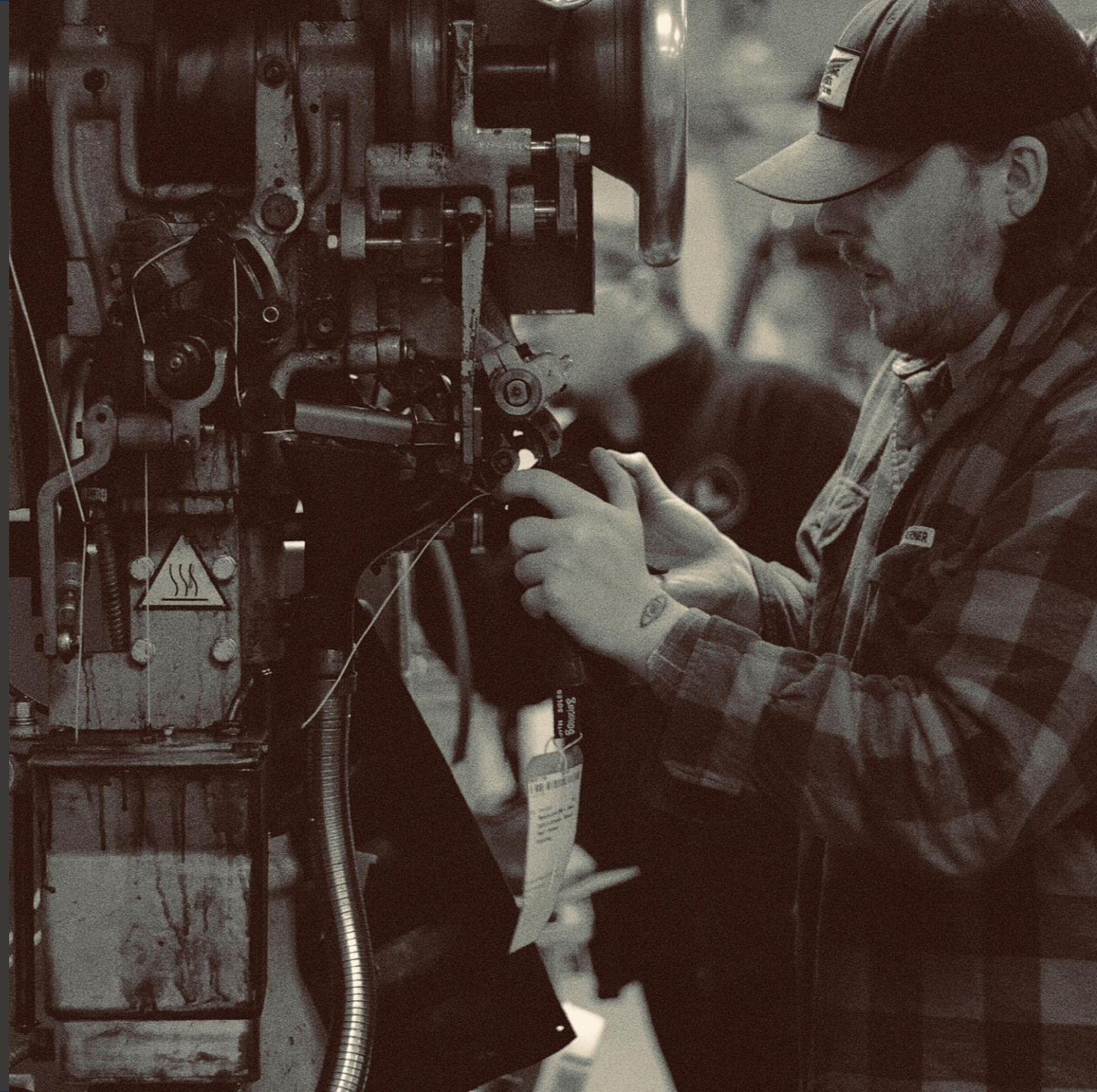


THE  
BOOT REPAIR CO.

GERALD FORBES  
Commercial Director

# BRC beginnings: launched 2011

- Provided repair service for military in London – Household Cavalry, Kings Troop & Royal Household Windsor
- September 2016, extended to Tri-Service, covering Scotland, North, South East and London, processing 5,000 pairs annually





# Sustainability (2020)

- Launched ReVivo for VivoBarefoot
- The first footwear company to offer pre-owned graded shoes
- Huge success of sales in 2023, selling 75,000 pairs and becoming a £6m business.
- 2024 projected 100,000 pairs
- New customers since ReVivo launch: Birkenstock, Dr Martens, Dubarry, Fairfax & Favor, Red Wings

# Scaling up

- New factory/warehouse in Hunslet, 12,000 sqft
- Bespoke software system to manage entire repair process
- Flexible working hours, partnered with local schools
- Investment in machinery and training to take on the work
- Dr Martens bespoke machinery, factory training and in-house coaching
- Level 2 Footwear Manufacturing Apprenticeship



# Support from

- Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- Leeds City College
- Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund
- Mercia Debt

