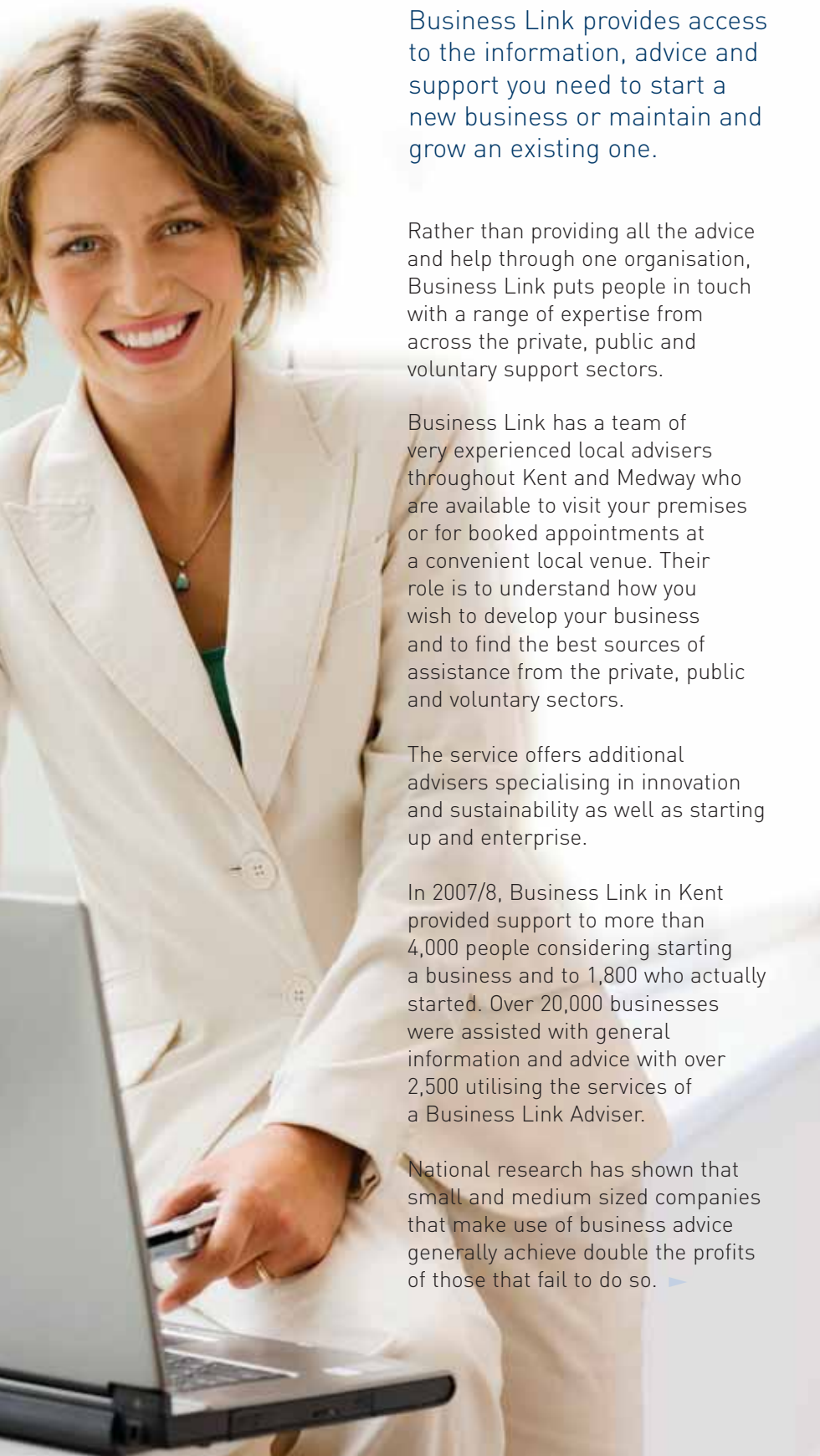


## Business Link



Business Link provides access to the information, advice and support you need to start a new business or maintain and grow an existing one.

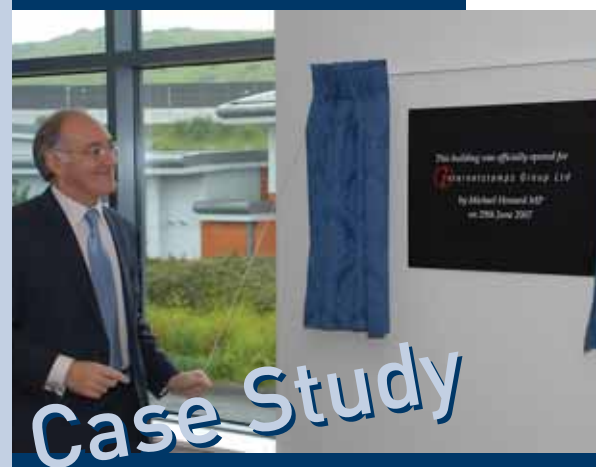
Rather than providing all the advice and help through one organisation, Business Link puts people in touch with a range of expertise from across the private, public and voluntary support sectors.

Business Link has a team of very experienced local advisers throughout Kent and Medway who are available to visit your premises or for booked appointments at a convenient local venue. Their role is to understand how you wish to develop your business and to find the best sources of assistance from the private, public and voluntary sectors.

The service offers additional advisers specialising in innovation and sustainability as well as starting up and enterprise.

In 2007/8, Business Link in Kent provided support to more than 4,000 people considering starting a business and to 1,800 who actually started. Over 20,000 businesses were assisted with general information and advice with over 2,500 utilising the services of a Business Link Adviser.

National research has shown that small and medium sized companies that make use of business advice generally achieve double the profits of those that fail to do so. ▶



## Case Study

### A case in point

Among the companies that have been helped is Folkestone-based **Internetstamps Group**, where staff have been working with Business Link advisers for more than two years. Due to its success and expansion, the company, which provides high quality limited edition first day covers to stamp collectors and enthusiasts, moved to new offices in 2007.

Sales Director Ellie Hopkins said: "We have received fantastic service from Business Link over the last couple of years. The advisers have listened to our needs, recommended ways to take the business forward and provided practical assistance with funding and contacts. I have had help in reviewing our management structure and processes and was put in touch with a training provider who has made a real difference to the whole company; the training has revolutionised the way in which we approach HR and recruitment and has also brought the management team together.

"Some of our team members have been on sales and marketing courses recommended by Business Link which have made a real difference both to staff motivation and our bottom line. Everyone I have spoken to at Business Link has always provided a superb service and offered us invaluable advice. Whenever I phone the organisation I speak to someone cheerful, friendly and ready to assist."