

Case Study – Growing 2322 BRES

In a first for the business areas of Beresfield, Hexham and Thornton, a Business Retention Expansion Survey (BRES) has been undertaken across these areas.

The results of this survey of local businesses provides analysis in key areas for future planning, development and support of these areas, and looks at challenges and opportunities in the local business environment. The project is known as “Business Means Community - Growing 2322”.

The survey asked questions about the importance of social infrastructure in supporting local business, and the importance of partnerships between business and education to meet business needs and growth and interest to establish linkages with education and training.

Hunter Valley Youth Express (HVYE) was successful in their BRES application to NSW Industry & Investment in 2010. The grant funding was then matched by local sponsors including the Beresfield and Hexham Bowling Clubs, Beresfield Post Office, Bloomfield Colliery/4 Mile through the Australian Industry Group (AiG), an HVYE contribution and the Berotarwood Project.

HVYE, through their Partnership Brokerage role, has facilitated a steering group around this survey, drawn from business, industry, local government and education to further the results of the survey.

This Steering Committee selected David Crofts of ‘Strategy Hunter’ who completed the survey, analysis of data and preparation of a report that was released in March 2011. Each business was personally visited by David from Strategy Hunter with a request to complete a BRES. David paid a return visit to each business to collect completed surveys. Some surveys were returned by post.

The report was launched on 7 April 2011 at a breakfast event at Beresfield Bowling Club. It was attended by 80 interested businesses, local government, local residents and government agency representatives. The report can be found at <http://www.hunterbusinesspublications.com.au/hbrextra.html> The Chair of the BRES Partnership Committee, Sandra Feltham, Senior Strategist at Newcastle Council can also be contacted for further information on 4974 2961.

Subsequent to the report, an emerging fledgling business group called ‘Regional Economic Development Thornton and Beresfield’ (REDTAB) has been identified and is keen to work with the BRES Committee in developments that result from the survey. This group will expand to include Beresfield and possibly Hexham. NSW Industry and Investment, following the launch of the report, are working closely to build and grow the new business group through incorporation support, business resources and leadership. Both Newcastle and Maitland Councils will also work closely to support the emerging business group. An education/training subcommittee has also been developed to support and work with the Industry group to foster improved links and outcomes for the businesses and local people including pathways into employment and career direction for local youth.