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BUSINESS CRIME TAKES A HIT.

Greater security measures are helping to save jobs and keep companies in the region.

The Business Crime Reduction Centre, funded by Yorkshire Forward and the European Regional Development Fund, is a major player in tackling business crime. It has helped more than 700 SME's since its launch as a South Yorkshire pilot in 2007.

Increased security means companies are less inclined to relocate, with the centre helping to create or safeguard around 450 jobs in the region.

The centre's expertise and support could soon be extended beyond the South Yorkshire border

E-crime and more traditional crime such as burglaries pose significant financial costs to businesses.

These costs are unwelcome at any time, but particularly in the current economic climate when budgets are tight.

The centre's team of specialist advisors undertake risk assessments for businesses and produce action plans to help increase security. More than £340,000 has been spent helping SMEs to prevent e-crime such as hacking.

Sheffield based CS Surveying and Architectural Design Ltd received a £3,900 grant to install external roller shutters, a

sophisticated alarm system and extensive CCTV coverage.

The company has grown turnover 400 per cent year on year and last year handled projects totalling £35 million. Managing Director John Cawkwell-Stansfield said: " Many of our projects include built-in security measures and we are well aware of the damage business crime can cause. Accordingly, we have been able to adopt a belt and braces approach to total security thanks to the grant"

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