

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

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Council support for snooker pro's new club in Chatteris

Professional snooker player Joe Perry has realised a long-held dream to open a pool and snooker hall in his hometown of Chatteris.

Joe and his partner Penny Richardson, who live in the town, have invested upwards of £150,000 in the project to transform the former Turkish restaurant in Market Hill.

The project, which has been more financially testing than expected due to extensive internal works necessary to bring the building up to modern standards, including a full rewire, won the support of a £5k Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) grant, administered by Fenland for Business.

Joe said: "This has been something we've wanted to do in Chatteris for a long time and we've been looking for the right premises for quite a few years.

"With snooker I've travelled the world, but Chatteris has been my home and base since my parents moved here when I was 14.

"I still have all the same friends I grew up with and the town is a magnet for me. Wherever I go I always want to be back here.

"There isn't lots of things to do here and when I think how much snooker brought to my life, not just as a career, but a hobby and all the social side of it, I wanted to offer that to people in Chatteris too.

"I had opportunities to set the club up further afield but it just wouldn't have felt right to me."

Rural England Prosperity Fund grants, [open now for funding bids of up to £10k from businesses in much of Fenland](#), are administered by Fenland District Council's Fenland for Business team.

The fund aims to improve productivity and strengthen the economy in areas Government has identified as being rural and therefore, it says, facing potential challenges of lower productivity rates, poorer connectivity and poorer access to key services. It created the fund to support rural communities and new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy.

The grants are being delivered by Fenland District Council's economic growth team Fenland for Business thanks to funding awarded to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority by the Government's Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

The £5k award to Joe Perry's Pool and Snooker Palace has allowed the purchase of five new pool tables. Joe says this means the club can offer a top-quality experience from Day One rather than the alternative, which would have been to offer used tables in the first year or so until the business got established.

Joe Perry's Pool and Snooker Palace opened on Wednesday, coincidentally two years to the day of one of his most proudly won tournaments the Welsh Open. It has already secured more than 250 members. Everyone is welcome.

The business has created eight jobs.

Cllr Ian Benney, Fenland District Council's portfolio holder for economic growth and skills, said: "It's incredible to have the likes of Joe, with all his success, being such an ambassador for Chatteris and wanting to support the town.

"This is exactly what the rural fund is for – to help our rural areas to thrive, grow, gain and keep employment opportunities and facilities.

"We're delighted to see Joe's endeavour off the ground and to have been able to help towards it being the great success we're sure it will be."

- Businesses can put themselves forward for a Fenland Rural England Prosperity Fund grant of up to £10k today. Apply at: <https://www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk/REPF>

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Photos:

Professional snooker player Joe and his partner Penny Richardson on the opening day of Joe Perry's Snooker and Pool Palace, in Chatteris.

Joe Perry, right, with his dad, Chatteris resident Peter on the opening day of Joe Perry's Snooker and Pool Palace, in Chatteris.