



From start-up to seasoned pro, the Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre offers flexibility for businesses to grow through a range of virtual, co-working and private office spaces.

Creating opportunities for business growth

Summary

- **Delivery Area:** Enterprise
- **Location:** Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre
- **Organisation:** The Digital DRA
- **Values:** We are enterprising, We care

The Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre is a converted textile mill that offers state-of-the-art office and meeting spaces for Calderdale professionals. As a social enterprise the centre welcomes businesses of all size and aims to support them with quality workspaces and access to grants. From start-up to seasoned pro, the Centre offers flexibility for businesses to grow through a range of virtual, co-working and private office spaces. This is facilitated through start-up grants that subsidise office rental costs for new businesses established for up to 18 months. The Digital DRA moved into the Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre (EWIC) in 2021, and remains their work home.

Choosing a new work home

As a new business there were a number of considerations that were important for Arren, Managing Director of the Digital DRA. Among many other factors, managing cash flow and costs were important when setting up his business, which influenced his choice in workspaces.



“EWIC stood out among the other options we considered. They offer substantial grants in the form of discounted rent for the initial 18 months of operation, providing invaluable support to start-ups like ours.”

Arren Khan, Managing Director of Digital DRA

Flexible Workspaces

Part of the centre’s uniqueness is down to its flexibility. There are workspaces available for most ways of work and industries, from virtual office spaces that have no physical footprint to private office spaces in various sizes, which means as businesses grow, so can their office facilities.

“Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre’s flexibility, in terms of agreements, allowing easy upgrades, downgrades, or even moving out, played a pivotal role in our decision-making process.

“They are a reliable and supportive partner, providing a secure foundation for budding businesses.”

Arren Khan, Managing Director of Digital DRA

Offering flexibility is only possible through the centre’s stable foundations. Being established for almost two decades means EWIC has the experience and knowledge of how businesses operate and the factors that make workspaces work for them. This includes focusing on the customer experience.

That feel good factor

The Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre has a team of four front of house staff, who have years of experience working at the centre or within customer facing roles. Having a friendly face to welcome tenants each day, at hand to support with any queries, is a valuable asset of the centre and one of the factors that Arren and his team feel make the Digital DRA so at home at EWIC.

A destination that feels like home

The Centre offers more than a place to work in the vibrant town of Halifax. The centre cares about the people who work there and prioritise their experience. Not only does the friendly front of house reception team give a warm welcome, and front desk services, the café and casual working facilities in the atrium are also assets that make the centre's environment so inviting.

“What truly sets EWIC apart is its outstanding staff – consistently friendly, supportive, and always ready to assist whenever needed.”

Arren Khan, Managing Director of Digital DRA

Arren comments: “Since 2021, the Digital DRA has found a home at the Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre (EWIC), and our experience here has been nothing short of exceptional from day one. The facilities at EWIC are not only impressive but also well maintained. The level of cleanliness is consistently top-notch, adding to the overall pleasant atmosphere.

“And let's not forget the delightful café on site, boasting possibly the most delectable selection of cakes in Halifax right at our doorstep – a temptation for our taste buds, though not ideal for our diets!”

As part of Halifax Opportunities Trust, every penny the centre makes is either fed back into the business or to other parts of the Trust, to ensure innovation and provide the best facilities, service and support, not only to businesses but the people in the local community. This means considered investment into the facilities at the centre keeps it looking fresh, operating as a modern working environment and upholding the high standards it has built.

“In light of our positive experience, I wholeheartedly recommend EWIC to anyone embarking on their entrepreneurial journey.”