



Ruth Smith, owner of Café Venue

Background of business

The Bradford District very nearly didn't get Café Venue, which is already impressing customers with its home-baked cakes, deli-counter and delicious sandwiches. Its founder, Ruth Smith, is a qualified primary school teacher who taught in Indonesia and had applied for a job in China. However, her husband's work brought them to Bradford and to The Lighthouse Group, a charity working with young people in impressive, premises in Trevor Foster Way, near the top of the M606. While her

husband worked as a fund raiser for the project, Ruth decided to pursue a long-held ambition to set up her own café and outside catering business.

Support journey

Having initially made contact with the Kickstart Gateway, Ruth became a client of Tony Wilson, a Business Counsellor based at Bradford Chamber, who advised her on business planning, cash flow management and marketing. "Tony has been brilliant," says Ruth, adding that the Kickstart programme had motivated her to launch Café Venue and her outside catering service. Through Kickstart's professional services programme, Ruth has had a logo designed for the business, along with business cards, a promotional banner, marketing leaflets and a 'starter' website. She also attended a Kickstart training course to build her business skills.

Where they are now

Despite its somewhat remote location, Café Venue is becoming a popular, highly-regarded supplier of excellent coffee, under the Costa Coffee brand, plus fresh sandwiches, cakes and pastries made daily on the premises. Ruth has been appointed as the official caterer to The Lighthouse Group and provides buffet lunches for business meetings, as well as refreshments for young people who especially like the wide range of different sandwich fillings. Ruth already employs three part-time assistants but, as she expands her District-wide outside catering service more job opportunities are likely to be created. With the benefit of a website and promotional print materials Ruth now intends to market Café Venue strongly, building increased awareness of her fledgling business. Existing customers are already voting with their feet by returning to Café Venue and recommending it to others.

Background Information

Client Name: Ruth Smith

Ward in which trading or resident: West Bowling

Business Name: Café Venue

Business Address: The Lighthouse Group, Trevor Foster Way, Bradford, BD5 8HB

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