

# Case Study

Jeff Moody and partner Simon Peek bought a run down farm in Pluckley in January 2007 and within six months had transformed it into a thriving business.

With very little previous experience, the couple turned to Business Link for assistance even before they had exchanged contracts on the property.

"I was very impressed with the enthusiasm that we were met with," explained Jeff. "Our business adviser was full of ideas and after an hour spent with him at a free Business Advice Clinic, we came away feeling inspired and felt that we could really achieve our goals."

Jeff enrolled on several business courses that were recommended by Business Link and slowly built his knowledge of the industry and the ins and outs of running a small business.

He continued: "Our adviser helped us with our business plan, the pricing structure and forming partnerships with organisations such as the Kent Tourism Alliance. We were able to talk through our priorities and soon realised that we could be financially better off by changing our order of work."

Occupancy rates at the guesthouse soon far exceeded its owners' expectations and were further boosted after the venue received a four star rating from 'Quality in Tourism'.

Jeff added: "I have to admit that I was sceptical about the practical help that Business Link could provide but I was soon proved wrong. Our adviser has been involved with the business almost every step of the way and I know he genuinely cares about it. It is great to have someone on the end of the phone to act as a sounding board whenever we have a new idea or just need to talk through a problem."



The programme is user-friendly, with participants able to dip in and out of the course. There is also the opportunity to find out more on the broad range of free support available from Business Link.

## One-to-one clinics

Business Link also runs a programme of one-to-one drop-in clinics across the county, where local business people can benefit from expert, impartial advice from an experienced Business Link adviser. In many cases, the hour-long session is the start of a longer professional relationship.

## Keen to be green

As part of the business advice and information services provided by Business Link, there is specialist advice relating to environmental issues. This can be as simple as getting recycling started in the office or how to switch to a green tariff right through to the impact that climate change is having on business. It's a service that businesses of all sizes are using.

The team also helps ensure that Kent businesses understand their legal responsibilities for their impact on the environment and encourages them to look beyond simple legislative compliance to examine the potentially wider business benefits, for example, by selling waste for reuse or recycling. ►

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