

Case Study from BBV

Christine Thomasson, Rivington Chocolates



Christine Thomasson from Horwich, near Bolton, Lancashire was supported by Bolton Business Ventures.

Christine was inspired to start her own business making hand crafted artisan chocolates whilst visiting a similar small business in Ireland. Following this visit she received the gift of a place on a course to learn how to make hand crafted chocolate at Slattery's in Bury.

With £3291 of her own to invest, Christine approached BBV and attended a Barclays Get Ready For Business event in September 2014, receiving 8 hours of 1-1 support.

The business was soon up-and-running making freshly prepared, hand crafted chocolates with, where possible, local produce with some unique flavours: local beers, local honeycomb aswell as some more unusual combinations such as orange curd and Cointreau.

The business successfully supports Christine and her partner and she has plans to employ part time staff to help during very busy events over the summer, such as food festivals. They have been approached by a local company, Sykes fish & chips, to supply chocolate based products such as chocolate cupcakes for their afternoon teas.

They have featured in local newspapers and were part of the 'Artisans at the Palm House' event at Sefton Park, Liverpool, organised by the Artisan Network.

Christine aims to grow the business whilst retaining the artisan nature. She is currently investigating new business opportunities such as supply the wedding industry.

Attending workshops has provided Christine with invaluable knowledge which has allowed her to build networks with other local companies and also establish a large and growing following online via social media.

Christine recognises the invaluable support she has received from BBV and Get Ready For Business and does not believe she would be where she is now without it - she has recommended the support to other people.

Christine said:

"The Ready for Business programme helped us to write a proper business plan as we had never done this before. The adviser gave us all the information we needed to set up properly.

It can definitely help others. It gives support to set up correctly and prevent you from making expensive mistakes!!"