



Business Profile

My Coffee Stop prides itself on its ethical and organic ethos. The owners are passionate about serving up delicious healthy products, reducing waste and promoting a community minded hub in a friendly unique setting on the high street.

Industry

Coffee Shop and Retail

Geography

Based in the high street in Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

TDA Business Support

- Business diagnostics to understand business potential, development and growth opportunities
- Business planning and marketing strategy support
- Digital marketing support
- Exploration and support for funding opportunities.

Results

- A revised and updated strategic retail layout
- Implementation of social media strategies and ideas
- Enhanced customer communications
- Potential social enterprise.

My Coffee Stop – delivering quirky, happy and healthy on the high street

My Coffee Stop is a coffee and health food shop in Shepton Mallet, Somerset. Characterised by its unique, cosy, quirky and homely interior you feel like you're stepping into a friend's living room, with a relaxed atmosphere to match.

Mainly vegan and zero waste and dogs are welcome. Their customers say they serve the best coffee in town, along with amazing smoothies that are healthy and tasty. The shop sells a selection of health food basics and an ever-increasing range of plastic-free goodies.

The Challenge

Karen and her partner Gunter, have found it difficult to encourage people in the locale to 'buy-in' to the Eco/Organic side of the business. Public awareness of the environmental impact of plastic has helped to grow the refill side of their business; the next challenge is to present more of the fantastic initiatives and products available. The cosy space for customers is a different feel for some potential customers, more au fait with chain coffee shop conventional layouts, but it is due to this charm and intimacy that regulars can develop friendships and business connections.

Despite being active in the community, and hosting different themed events, the business was struggling to attract new customers, outside its core clientele. Many cafes within short walking distance and yet few casual shoppers in the town during the working week, means lots of competition for the same customers. Along with a large superstore located at the top end of the high street offering free parking, it seems not many people walk into the town centre to shop with the independent retailers.

The Solution

Karen got in touch with TDA Business Advisor Alan Smith, who provided business support through the ERDF Growth Support programme.

Alan said: "At the initial diagnostic meeting, we analysed Karen's business to see what quick-wins could be made to help change customers' perceptions of My Coffee Stop.

"Between us, we came up with some improvements to the retail section to make it easier for customers to browse and find what they wanted. A clear layout helped to showcase the fantastic range of products on offer.



“We are unique in Shepton, both in the products we offer, and the ambience of our space.”

“I found the meetings with Alan really helpful in giving clarity to my vision, and helping to re-affirm my belief that I am running a good business.”

“Karen and Gunter ran a similar venture near London, and it was very successful. We discussed what Karen had done previously, and assessed if they could be employed here.”

Karen said: “I found the meetings with Alan really helpful in giving clarity to my vision, and helping to re-affirm my belief that I am running a good business. We are unique in Shepton, both in the products we offer, and the ambience of our space. Alan made some helpful suggestions about layout, which I put into practice almost immediately. We also talked at length about tapping into local events, and promoting our shop on social media, to help the locals understand it is a real community hub, and we are keen for people to use us in that way. I also felt boosted emotionally and encouraged by his positive comments.”

The Results

Alan said: “I was impressed at how quickly Karen implemented my suggestions for her retail business – she sent through photos of the alterations less than a week after our meeting.

“We have discussed the change to becoming a Social Enterprise, this potentially opens the way for funding, and actually it feels right for the sort of business they run.

“I strongly believe Karen can make a difference in Shepton Mallet, enhanced social media and her personality will help gain new customers. She must believe in herself and her ethos. Oh.... And the coffee is fantastic!”

Find My Coffee Stop at
34, HighStreet, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 5AN



European Union

European Regional
Development Fund

The Heart of the South West Growth Support Programme project is receiving up to £904,945 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for ERDF. Established by the European Union ERDF funds help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding> The accountable body for this programme is Devon County Council, working with the following delivery partners: BIP, Cosmic, North Devon +, Somerset Business Agency, TDA and YTKO