

### Business Profile

You-Do Forest School aims to encourage children to collaborate with each other, explore, acquire new skills, raise self-esteem to take calculated risks, and learn about the natural environment whilst having tons of fun.

### Industry

Education.

### Geography

Somerset.

### TDA Business Support

Delivered as part of the ERDF Support Plan:

- Business review to help identify key issues and possible solutions
- Recommendations to aid the development of the business or proposed new business
- Funding opportunities
- Networking support.



## You-Do Forest School – Outdoor adventure, discovery and fun!

Original founder Tom Ridout is a qualified Forest School leader with a background of teaching youth work and providing learner support across colleges, schools and science centres. Having grown up on a farm and experienced first-hand the benefits and enjoyment to be had from outdoor play and exploration, Tom aspired to bring a new and exciting Forest School to Somerset.

A programme of Forest School learning began in Spring 2019 and You-Do Forest School was subsequently launched and now runs a series of school holiday activities, children's parties and forest events.

### The Challenge

Tom first met with TDA when You-Do Forest School was in its infancy, a taster session was planned, but the business was yet to launch. The support plan from TDA was a way to tap into resources available for new businesses.

Tom already had extensive experience of providing educational sessions and delivering events, the next step was to make the move from delivering sessions for others, to setting up as a functioning business.

Phil was a chance to consult on how to make the move to setting up You-Do as an actual business and progress the Forest School offer.

### The Solution

Business Advisor Phil Riste enrolled Tom on the Pre-Start Business Plan. This fully funded ERDF programme provides up to 12 hours of completely free support on a one-to-one basis.

The initial meeting was used to discuss what activity had been done to date, and the aspirations of the business. Progressively the programme worked through plans and actions around the practicalities of running as a business, looking at cash flow forecasts as well as appropriate marketing techniques and possible funding routes and opportunities.

Phil Riste said:

“What stands out about You-Do Forest School is that it is a unique offer, run by an exceptionally talented individual.”

“It was refreshing to work with Tom who is naturally creative and has a fantastic way of planning his work visually. This is one of the first business

*Just like You-Do Forest School, some of the best businesses are built from a passion and incredible talent of knowing exactly what appeals to the local market.*

*TDA Business Advisor,  
Phil Riste.*

*“The flexible one to one support meant that I could fit our meetings around other responsibilities, and juggling work commitments.”*

*Tom Ridout.*



plan I've worked on using a pin board! And without hesitation I wholeheartedly encourage people to embrace methods that work for them.”

“Developing a successful business isn't about sitting in a dark room in isolation – far from it. Just like You-Do Forest School, some of the best businesses are built from a passion and incredible talent of knowing exactly what appeals to the local market and being able to deliver it. Then, and when the need arises for pouring over the detail, form filling and applications... we're certainly on hand and able to help!”

### The Future

You-Do Forest School continues to grow in popularity, offering regular events at Huntstile Organic Farm in Bridgwater. Base camp shelters have been built at the Forest Schools main venue and Forest Fun sessions run every Friday.

2020 has a programme of school holiday activities planned and You-Do Forest School offers fantastically creative birthday parties and bespoke sessions including nursery groups and local clubs.

Talking about the support Tom received from TDA Business Advisor Phil Riste, Tom said:

“Phil was a fantastic resource whilst we were starting out. He was able to provide professional direction on the practicalities of becoming a business, and has supported the business as it has developed. The flexible one to one support meant that I could fit our meetings around other responsibilities and juggling work commitments.”

If you would like to know more about the Forest School or get involved in stick clay fairy making, fire lighting, wands, magic potions, elves in the forest, den making, exploration and the natural outdoors! Get in touch with [youdoforestschool@gmail.com](mailto:youdoforestschool@gmail.com) or 07494 598273 [Facebook Page](#)

To find out more about the business support available from TDA visit: [www.tda-business.com](http://www.tda-business.com).

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