



**“Working with Business Link gave me a fresh approach to my business. It’s probably safe to say that without help from Business Link, the ‘Love Cleethorpes’ website would still be work in progress.”**

Andy McClusky, Kingsway Kiosks, Cleethorpes, October 2009

## Business Link helps Kingsway Kiosks strengthen Cleethorpes’ position on the map

A chance meeting in a car park helped Kingsway Kiosks, a café located on Cleethorpes seafront, accelerate its plans for business growth.

Viv Forbes, a business adviser with Business Link Yorkshire, was leaving an event jointly run by the North and North East Lincolnshire tourism team, when she spotted someone carrying a Business Link cloth bag. It provided an opening, and Viv found herself in conversation with Andy McClusky, owner of Kingsway Kiosks.

It turned out to be a fortuitous encounter, as Viv discovered that Andy had a clear vision of where he wanted to take his business but needed help to get there. A more formal meeting was arranged to discuss how Business Link could assist Andy with his future plans.

Andy had taken over the small, run down kiosk on 2 April 2007. By adding a large, comfortable conservatory, he’d transformed Kingsway Kiosks into a continental style café. Employing three full time and ten part time staff, Kingsway

Kiosks offers customers a large indoor and outdoor seating area overlooking the blue flag, Cleethorpes Beach.

As a destination, Cleethorpes has two distinct halves. The lively northern half plays host to the arcades and piers, while the more relaxed southern beach has the boating lakes. Located more or less in the centre of these two visitor destinations, Kingsway Kiosks was off the beaten track as it were, and needed to give people a reason for them to visit.

By providing regular entertainment, Kingsway Kiosks was gradually growing its customer base, however Andy had more ambitious plans to develop his business.

“Having attended a number of events run by Business Link, I’ve always found them to be very professional and incredibly useful for gaining a sound business background. They’ve also helped to keep me up to date with new technology,” said Andy.

“Until I met Viv however, I hadn’t considered approaching Business Link for one-to-one help. Yet having the opportunity

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to sit down and bounce ideas around with someone as helpful and knowledgeable as Viv was extremely useful," he added.

One project that Andy was keen to move ahead with quickly, was to develop a website that promoted Cleethorpes as a visitor destination.

"Although our entertainment programme works well and attracts visitors from the local area and passing tourism trade, we recognise that we are by no means a tourism destination.

"Yet, when you add together everything Cleethorpes has to offer visitors, the region becomes an interesting and entertaining day out for all the family. We knew that if we could encourage more visitors to Cleethorpes, then our business would benefit from the increase in passing trade," said Andy.

Due to lack of funds however, the idea was put on hold.

"Andy is incredibly proactive but funding issues and problems with accessing people with the relevant skills were slowing his plans down. It quickly became obvious however that we could help," said Viv.

Obtaining funding for the project was an area where Business Link provided significant help. Business Link advisers have knowledge and access to small loan schemes and financing agreements, that businesses are sometimes unaware of. In Andy's case, as the website was designed to promote

Cleethorpes as a destination and would also benefit other businesses in the area, Andy was eligible for Business Link's voucher scheme. This helped him to raise the necessary funds to develop the website

Through the Yorkshire and Humberside referral service, run by Yorkshire Forward, Viv then put Andy in touch with three different website development companies. As all suppliers meet strict quality criteria, clients can be confident that they are dealing with competent and reputable companies.

Having interviewed the three companies, Andy selected Alison Wileman, a web designer with a marketing background, to take his project forward.

"Alison has been superb. Unlike many agencies that specialise in either web design or marketing, her skills as a web designer are equalled by her marketing expertise. She has helped me to not only develop 'lovecleethorpes.co.uk' but also market the site online, ensuring that tourists can see what our town really has to offer," said Andy.

Andy's philanthropic vision for Cleethorpes is certainly paying off. Despite the recession, Kingsway Kiosks has seen a 50% increase in business over the summer, compared with the same period in 2008.

"Working with Business Link gave me a fresh approach to my business. It's probably safe to say that without help from Viv and Business Link, the 'Love Cleethorpes' website would still be work in progress," said Andy.

NB: All case studies have been signed off by the subject and Business Link Yorkshire. All details are accurate at the time of publication, but please check with Business Link's PR team before using this case study, as details may have changed.

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