



“We are already sending our staff on Business Link courses covering business development and book keeping so they can help with different areas of the operation.”

Ian Adams, Stuff in Oatcakes

Business Link support provides Oatcakes with recipe for success

Two men, whose experiences of homelessness and unemployment inspired them to help others out of hardship, have launched an innovative social enterprise with support from Business Link Yorkshire.

Sheffield-based Ian Adams and Nathan Roper, who are civil partners as well as business partners, initially worked together on an idea to buy council houses as investment properties, using them to house homeless people. The idea worked well but part of Ian and Nathan’s vision was to get their tenants into work too.

“That’s when we had the idea for Stuff in Oatcakes, a catering business producing traditional Staffordshire oatcakes,” said Ian.

“After initial discussions with Business Link Yorkshire they recommended that we attend one of their social enterprise

workshops to help us decide if that was the route we wanted to take and to give us all the information we needed to set it up.”

Since then Ian and Nathan’s idea has really taken off. They invested in a trailer and started trading at Sunday markets.

The flat pancakes, known as Staffordshire oatcakes, are traditionally filled with bacon and cheese but Ian and Nathan have developed a range of mouth watering toppings, including a fresh cream and strawberry special which proved a hit with customers over the summer.

Their reputation has grown and the Stuff in Oatcakes trailer is now trading at major events including Nottingham’s Goose Fair and Lincoln Christmas Market.

“We would never have chosen this path if we hadn’t gone to Business Link Yorkshire and attended their workshops on

Could you benefit from Business Link’s free, independent and impartial advice? Contact us now to find to what we can do for your business.

Telephone **08456 048 048**

Email info@businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk Website businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk





social enterprise and Community Interest Companies (CIC),” said Ian.

CICs are limited companies that bring community benefits, and the idea of a commercial business with a social purpose is at the heart of Ian and Nathan’s plans.

“We want to train homeless people and give them skills that can take them into other areas of employment,” explained Ian.

Ultimately all aspects of the business will be staffed by people who were once homeless but who, thanks to Stuff in Oatcakes, are skilled and experienced.

“Business Link put us in touch with people who can help us onto the next stage and thanks to the contacts they have we have been able to access legal help to formalise the structure of our social enterprise.

“Our vision is to have houses in other cities across the UK, funded by the Stuff in Oatcakes business. It’s a model that hasn’t been seen before and it’s an exciting prospect.

“As we move forward with this we hope to be able to access relevant Business Link training events and workshops to give those working for us the skills they need to help them play a vital role in these ventures.”

NB: A social enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose rather than being driven by the need to deliver profit to shareholders or owners (DTI, Social Enterprise Strategy 2002)

Could you benefit from Business Link’s free, independent and impartial advice?
Contact us now to find to what we can do for your business.

Telephone **08456 048 048**

Email info@businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk Website businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk

