

Press Release

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To: News Desk
From: Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, Councillor Ian Courts
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Hobby turns business for out of work Solihull resident

Lots of people dream of one day turning their hobby into a business and that's exactly what Kingshurst resident Gary Jakeman did when, after 20 years of working in training, he found himself out of work.

Gary, 43, retrained and in November of last year he turned his interest in country sports and wildlife into a business. Pied Piper Pest Control specialise in wildlife management including bird control using trained hawks and falcons, and other pest control services such as insect, rodent, rabbit and mole control. They have recently completed a large contract for a new shopping centre in Gloucestershire, keeping the local pigeon population at bay using birds of prey.

"People think it's about killing things but it's not. At Pied Piper our motto is 'Conservation, care and control'", says Gary. Putting theory into practice, Gary is currently working with a farmer to control the mink population in a nearby river and installing otter holts as well as to try and encourage more otters to take up residency.

Gary was helped to set up his thriving new business by Solihull Council's Enterprise for Success programme which provides free, confidential business support in the local area, including help with business planning; finding funding; premises search; financial forecasting – and anything else that a new business needs to know!

"My Enterprise for Success advisor Marcus helped me with working out my business plan and strategy as well as finding funding to help start the business."

Marcus Cole, business advisor with Tribal and Enterprise for Success, is based in Solihull and holds regular advice sessions across the whole of the North Solihull area.

Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, Councillor Ian Courts said: "Our main focus is in North Solihull where we want to encourage business start-ups and, as a result, new jobs. Solihull Council looks forward to working closely with Pied Piper with their expansion needs over the coming months."

So what does Gary think about his decision to work for himself? "The worst thing is when I'm at the computer at night doing the invoicing and the rest of the family's in bed – but the best thing is being able to make all my own decisions and do what you want to do. It is definitely worth it!"

To find out more about Enterprise for Success or to speak to one of our advisors call 0121 704 6363 email enterprise@solihull.gov.uk or visit www.solihull.gov.uk/enterprise

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