

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate and general release

Traders Association takes shape in Belper after Shop Doctor visit

Business owners who attended a series of free workshops or “surgeries” in June were delighted with the really practical help they received from the Shop Doctor – retail marketing specialist Diane Jackson. But some went one stage further and have now set up a traders association.

Sally Arden from Belper Gas Showrooms explained, “All the Belper traders who attended the course have now joined forces and formed our own trade association. We’re complete novices in this but Diane has inspired us and been an excellent mentor and sounding board.”

Getting Belper on the map

Now taking the chair of the newly formed Traders Association, Sally said, “We have 24 members in just 4 weeks and have presented to the town council. We’re producing a brochure with offers in it from different traders and the Peak District tourist board are looking to include us in their welcome material. We are going to get Belper on the map and that can only be a good thing for the town and the businesses here.”

Yvonne Clayton who runs the Belper repair and alterations service echoed Sally’s reaction. “It was so good to meet other local traders at the workshops because it created the opportunity for us to talk together. We’ve since been in regular contact and pass each other business referrals. I hope we can continue to attract more people. Any business owner in Belper interested in joining our Traders Association should contact Sally on 01773 824212 or Yvonne on 01773 880008.”

Now secretary of the Traders Association, Yvonne has seen concrete evidence of the usefulness of the Shop Doctor’s advice in her own business. “The course gave me ideas for growing my business and I’ve opened a new part to the business since. I had had it in mind but Diane gave me the confidence to go ahead and do it. I’ve re-done a leaflet and it has brought in many more new customers. I’ve had a really, really good month’s trading since the course – the best ever and I put that down to what I learned on the course.”

All independent retailers in Ashbourne, Belper and Wirksworth were invited to attend the series of free workshops held over four evenings in June. Those who came to the series of four 90 minute workshops at the Knockerdown Inn near Carsington Water, were unanimous in the enthusiasm for the course.

The programme explored different facets of retail marketing, including injecting great customer service ideas into business, advertising and promotions and visual merchandising.

Speaking from her office in Stockport, ‘Doctor’ Di said, “In all honesty, feedback is usually very positive from our workshops. It’s good to know that we can contribute to the improvement of people’s business and give them ideas that will make a difference to them. Belper delegates have gone one step further and have been galvanised into action – not just for their own businesses, but for the whole town. I’d like to think the prognosis for Belper is really good. They’re seeing the bigger picture and that’s what I call injecting new life.”

FREE workshops in 2009

The programme from the popular series “Retail Survival” and “The Shop Doctors” was devised by retailing specialists Main Marketing & PR Limited and presented by MD Diane Jackson. Diane was invited by Derbyshire County Council to run a series of FREE marketing workshops or ‘surgeries’ to independent retailers across many parts of Derbyshire. The current series continues right through until November. Anyone interested in knowing more about the course should contact Diane Jackson on 0845 129 9948.

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Further information

The Shop Doctor series is aimed at supporting local businesses and creating prosperous towns, and is part of Derbyshire County Council's Market Towns Initiative, funded by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP). Anyone requiring further information about the rest of this, or any other series, should ring 0845 129 9948.

The Traders Association in Belper is run by Sally Arden of Belper Gas Showrooms. Any interest should be directed to Sally on 01773 824212 or Yvonne on 01773 880008.

New eyes

Wirksworth retailer Gail Spolton from Traid Links, was among a high number of delegates who appreciated a lot of the tips and advice on visual merchandising: "I now come into the shop with new eyes every day and check the window, the layout and so on."

New business

Helen Williams is just setting up her new business Stepping Stones, selling children's shoes in Ashbourne "I thought the course was very good; I found it extremely useful. It touched on so many areas that gave me ideas and contacts. I got such good practical help. I'm usually very picky about things like this, so when I say it's good, it is!"