

Press release for Long Eaton & Ilkeston

Shop Doctor's advice enables £1,500 sale

A business in Long Eaton was delighted they'd been to see The Shop Doctor recently.

The Shop Doctor is retail marketing specialist Diane Jackson. She's been running 'surgeries' or workshops for independent retailers throughout Derbyshire this year to help give their business a boost. And a boost is certainly what Fitness Options received when they followed the advice of 'Doctor' Di - in the form of a very large sale.

Wendy Howe of Fitness Options was delighted. "There were some real nuggets that we learned from the Shop Doctor to help with sales and marketing. Within a week of the course we were doing things we hadn't really done before, but we followed Diane's advice – and made a sale worth £1,500", she said. "We were glad we went on the course because we got really practical help and ideas. It also reassured us we were doing many things right, reminded us we should be doing things we'd forgotten about and it got us to do things we thought we should be doing and hadn't got round to."

Aimed at supporting local businesses and creating prosperous towns, the programme is part of Derbyshire County Council's Market Towns Initiative, funded by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP). The programme, which was free of charge to attend, explores different facets of retail marketing, including injecting great customer service ideas into business, advertising and promotions and visual merchandising. It was devised by retailing specialists Main Marketing & PR Limited and presented by MD Diane Jackson, on this occasion at The Old Police Station in Ilkeston.

All independent retailers were invited to attend these free workshops and the last of the current series was held for businesses in Ilkeston and Long Eaton. More surgeries are planned for next year in other parts of Derbyshire, continuing the success they have generated.

"I wish I'd met the Shop Doctor years ago"

Francesca Lobina has been in business in Ilkeston for over 30 years and seen many changes over that time. She felt her business, like so many others has been adversely affected in recent times with the advent of retail giants, changes in shopping patterns and the disappearance of local trading estates. Francesca however was revitalised by her visits to the Shop Doctor! "I thought the course was absolutely wonderful. It was very helpful and gave me lots of ideas", she enthused. "I would recommend 'Doctor' Di to anyone – she's brilliant; I wish I'd met her years ago. The Retail Survival course did what others said it would: it revived me, inspired and motivated me and gave me ways to think about how I can survive in my business."

Packed full of practical help and ideas, the 'surgeries' received top marks from delegates, including Sarah Hutchby who runs Eclipse hairdressers in Ilkeston, "I really enjoyed it and found it very helpful - it was great."

Experienced retailer Pete Priestley who runs Village Veg in Ilkeston was also enthusiastic about the course. "It was a good memory jogger and a bit of a wake up call. When you own a business, you've no-one to remind you about things and that's why I found the workshops particularly helpful. The marketing side was interesting and I got some new ideas", he said. Making the same point, fellow trader Philip Johnson from David Johnson ironmongers said "When you've been in business a long time you end up always doing the same things and you can't see the wood for the trees. So the course was good to stir things up a bit; I found it pretty useful."

Further workshops in other parts of Derbyshire – and in other parts of the UK – are also scheduled. For more information about the rest of this series in Derbyshire, or other similar programmes, contact The Shop Doctor on 0845 129 9948 or by Email to shopdoctor@retailsurvival.co.uk.