Funded by UK Government

Accelerator Case Study

Buxton Gardens

Sector: Garden Design/Horticulture **Size:** Micro **Location:** High Peak

About the business

Buxton Gardens was founded in 2020 by Martha Everett. Located in the scenic High Peak, the business specialises in organic gardening with a focus on designing and cultivating cottage gardens. Buxton Gardens exclusively uses peat-free plants, all of which are grown in-house in Buxton. In addition to garden design, the company offers expert advice on organic gardening practices, promoting biodiversity, supporting local wildlife, and growing your own food.

Challenges faced

The main challenges the business faced has been a lack of marketing expertise and infrastructure. Martha planned to expand the plant sales side of the business but faced difficulties due to limited sales experience, extreme weather causing damage

High Peak Borough Council east midlands chamber

Accelerator Case Study

to polytunnels and a shortage of growing space and equipment, which significantly slowed progress this year. Even when the necessary infrastructure was finally in place, the cycle of plant growth presented an additional challenge, meaning they would have to wait until the following year to fully implement their plans.

Solution and impact

Martha discovered the Accelerator Project while researching online for small business support available in High Peak. She found the information on High Peak Borough Council's website. The Accelerator Project is funded by High Peak Borough Council's share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered by East Midlands Chamber.

Seeking guidance on how to recruit new staff, Martha reached out to the project and was connected with Business Adviser Manager, Abi Phillips. Abi conducted a business review and outlined the various types of support available to Martha.

Through the Accelerator Project, Martha accessed several valuable services, including:

- Various workshops focused on Email Marketing.
- Growth Voucher for marketing consultancy with Lindsey Newman-Wood, which helped her develop a new marketing plan.
- Assistance with writing a successful grant application, which resulted in £1,600 in funding for a new polytunnel and solar irrigation system, awarded through the High Peak Borough Council's Business Grant Scheme.
- Advice and support on hiring staff for the first time.

The funding allowed Martha's business to expand and cultivate plants on a larger scale, leading to a significant boost in plant sales. The marketing consultancy helped her create a comprehensive marketing plan that will be launched next year, aimed at promoting their subscription service and increasing plant sales both online and at markets. This new marketing strategy is projected to double the subscription service, attracting new customers while retaining existing ones and further increasing sales.

Martha now employs two staff members and one freelancer. The team's morale is high, benefiting from the outdoor work environment. One team member transitioned

Accelerator Case Study

to this role for better work-life balance, while another returned to work after a period of unemployment.

Beyond the financial growth, the support through the Accelerator Project has also had a positive psychological impact on the team, enhancing both individual well-being and company culture.

A word from the business:

"I am so, so grateful for the huge amount of support I've received. The business has grown hugely over the past year, partly due to the financial support, but also in a large part because just having someone to talk to who understands the challenges and is unendingly supportive has pushed me to keep jumping over the next hurdle!"

- Martha Everett, Owner

Accelerator has provided:

- 1-2-1 Business Advice
- Action Planning Workshops
- Growth Voucher
- Consultancy Support
- High Peak Business Grant

Impact to business:

- Jobs Created
- New Product to Market
- Increase in Sales and Revenue
- Increase in Staff Wellbeing and Morale