



With help from WBA support, Adder Bookkeeping was able to invest in 'crucial business development activity'

## Business:

Adder Bookkeeping- based in Pershore, provides secure 'cloud' bookkeeping and related services to SME's in the Worcestershire area.

## Problem:

After a decade as a sole trader, Helen Bower wanted to transition from being a sole trader to become a fully fledged bookkeeping business. "I was inspired by the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers at a conference in London in October 2016," she explains.



Adder Bookkeeping owner- Helen Bower

The high number of clients became too much for Helen to handle alone and the time was right to grow the business. The only block to growth was a lack of capital, and Helen needed more knowhow in key business operation elements such as cash forecasts and marketing plans.

## Solution:

Helen contacted Wychavon District Council, where a business advisor suggested she access the ERDF funded Worcestershire County Council Business Accelerator programme.

With the help of a business mentor from BizSmart Ltd, Helen created a business plan to enlist on the Business Accelerator programme?, outlining a plan to employ one 30-hour-per-week employee with immediate effect, one apprentice in September 2017 and two further employees within the three-year timeframe.

"To be accepted on the Business Accelerator programme you have to complete a certain number of hours of mentoring with BizSmart. I have to say that the two-pronged approach of mentoring and funding was invaluable to me," she explains.

With the grant she received, (which comprised 45 percent of the funding required), Helen was able to invest in crucial business development activity, including a new interactive website featuring Alfonso the snake - Adder's brand mascot. The funding also contributed to marketing spend and office equipment for a recently acquired office.

For more info see: [www.business-central.co.uk/worcestershire-business-accelerator/](http://www.business-central.co.uk/worcestershire-business-accelerator/)

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# Open for Business

“My funding also enabled me to have a social media coach, which has been a real boost,” says Helen. “I’ve used my social media coach one day a month for six months and she has trained my apprentice. I’m going to carry on using her quarterly,” she says.

Following on from her BizSmart mentoring, Helen was invited to join BizSmart’s Smart Board. “Business owners from different industries share problems, insights,” explains Helen. “I had three free sessions and found it so helpful with decision making that I have decided to pay for it now.



Adder Bookkeeping

## Results:

Thanks to the mentoring and funding received via the Worcestershire Business Accelerator programme, Adder Bookkeeping became a limited company in April 2017 and has boosted its turnover by 43 percent, from £24,000 in April 2017 to £34,000 in December 2017.

In October 2017, Adder was shortlisted by the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers for its New Practice of the Year award. Now Helen is planning to apply for Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce micro business of the year.

“I’ve gone from being a bookkeeper to being a business owner - and I needed to really understand cash flow costs, marketing, long term and short term goals, “ explains Helen.

“The mentoring and funding I received was invaluable. I didn’t expect all of this I thought I was just going to get some money!” she says. “Being involved in the BizSmart Smart Board was a fantastic help and it was also great for business referrals. Two of the people on the board are now customers and one of them is a supplier. And I am also running joint workshops with another board member.”

## European Regional Development Fund

Worcestershire Business Accelerator- This project is receiving up to £604,005 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund.

Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>.



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