

Start your Business and gallop towards business success

A family farm in the village of Bishopton in Stockton has been transformed into a successful horse riding and livery business, through business start up support from Business Link.

Grange Farm Riding Centre and Livery was established by husband and wife team Eric and Cath Brannen who sought to transform their love of horses into a successful business enterprise. The centre is home to over fifty horses and provides horse riding tuition for riders of all abilities as well as a cross country course stretching over one and three quarter miles.

Grange Farm Riding Centre and Livery was set up with support from Business Link, which provides advice and support to start up and established businesses in the region.

Mr Brannen said: "Both Cath and I are experienced horse riders and decided to start our own business to utilise our farm in a new way, while enjoying our passion for horses.

"Thanks to our robust business plan, developed with advice and guidance from Business Link, the centre is going from strength to strength and we are thrilled to be able to say that all of our current livery facilities are being fully utilised. We also received support from Business Link in raising additional funding towards the project, which has been invaluable."

Eric Whitehouse, Business Link account manager, said: "Rural businesses have an important role to play in the growth of the North East economy and Business Link recently appointed three rural account managers to provide specialist support to firms in this sector.

"Many small businesses grow by taking the opportunity to diversify, but it is essential that they are aware of the risks and rewards before entering into an unknown marketplace. Business Link offers a number of services to enterprises looking to identify opportunities for sustainability and expansion.

"Business planning and additional finance are essential components towards building a successful company and I am thrilled that Business Link has been able to provide Grange Farm Riding Centre and Livery with the support required to become such a highly successful rural enterprise. It is also encouraging to see the centre having such a positive impact upon other businesses, particularly the blacksmith, in the local community."