

Sharing stories for International Women's Day

To mark International Women's Day 2020 the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Growth Hub spoke to some of Cornwall's women business leaders about their life in business.

Q - Who is the most important woman in your life and how have they influenced you?

A – **Gemma Teague, Atlantic Blankets:** I have a number of important women who have influenced me; my mum, my daughter, my friends. But one woman in particular who has influenced my decisions is my great aunt; a strong, powerful, authoritative woman, who's drive to succeed has influenced me to strive for more, to better myself and to dream big. She lived her life as a career woman, in an age where she was an anomaly. She showed that women could be at the top. It was my aunt that enabled us to start the Atlantic Blankets journey and I'm forever grateful to her.

[Full interview here](#)

Q - If you were to turn back time and give yourself one piece of advice before you started your business what would it be?

A – **Alison Thomas, Diamond Light Photography:** Be patient and keep at it! It takes time to build up a business and to get your name known. I think most businesses fail because people give up too quickly. Most sole business owners I speak to tell of the nagging doubts that creep in every now and again but whenever this happens for me I remind myself that Marks & Spencer started as a market stall!

[Full interview here](#)

Q - What is your proudest achievement in business so far?

A – **Lou Portass, Serendaya:** My philosophy is that, by honouring ourselves and listening to our intuition, we can all reduce 'the overwhelm' and bring more ease and flow into our businesses, and lives. I show my clients how to create routines, boundaries and processes that enable them to flourish as their businesses grow. My proudest achievement is that I get to do this thing that lights me up every day and that in doing so, I am helping other women to create successful and fulfilling businesses too.

[Full interview here.](#)

Q - Have you had to face any struggles in business and how have you overcome them?

A – **Veronica Lamond, Landy Books:** I was rejected by a publisher when I first set out and so reluctantly turned to self-publishing by borrowing money

from my mother. It turned out that it was the best thing that could have happened; it has given me the opportunity to pursue my work in freedom and publish when I want to.

Being self-published also gave me the freedom to create two animations of my work on YouTube, negotiate a publishing deal in South Africa with Penguin Random House and now I'm busy negotiating publishing a series of American Landy books.

My other worst moment was after I'd published three books, I received a letter from Jaguar Land Rover saying I'd breached copyright by illustrating Land Rovers and was immediately shut down. Many people told me to argue with them, but I held firm and kept a friendly correspondence with them and, in the end, I was granted a licence for my work. Jaguar Land Rover only has 16 licence holders, so that was an achievement.

[Full interview here.](#)

Q - The theme for International Women's Day 2020 was #EachforEqual, championing individual action to challenge stereotypes, broaden perceptions and celebrate women's achievements. What does equality mean to you and what can we all do to forge a gender equal workplace?

A - Sue Hook, Sapience HR: If we all took individual action just think what we could achieve! I would love that everyone makes a personal commitment by showing up and challenging anything that smacks of gender stereotyping or inequality or just downright crass! That means always challenging language, terminology, actions, the printed word, expressed views, assumptions etc on every single occasion. It is not necessary to be aggressive or bullish but to be able to alert others that what they have said or you have seen, is not acceptable. Not challenging could be potentially interpreted as tacit approval. Is that really what you want? I have a bit of a radar which goes off when I hear or see things I am uncomfortable with. Develop your own radar and when it goes off, challenge away!

[Full Interview here.](#)

Louise, Sue and Veronica shared their stories as part of a discussion panel organised by the Growth Hub as part of the FSB Women in Business Conference on Friday 6th March. The all-day event aimed to support and inspire women in business with a range of motivational speakers, workshops and networking opportunities and was well attended.

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Growth Hub offers free, specialist business reviews tailored help to new and established business owners find the right guidance and support for them.

For more information and to discuss your business with the Growth Hub, call 01209 708660 or visit www.ciosgrowthhub.com.

The Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Growth Hub is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund and is match funded by Cornwall Council, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership.

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Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Growth Hub

The Growth Hub has been created in response to a common issue raised by businesses – that the range and complexity of business support available at a local and national level is far too confusing and time consuming to navigate. At its core the Growth Hub acts as a signposting service, pointing people in the right direction to get the support they need to start or grow their business.

Supported by a comprehensive website, a team of locally based experts work directly with businesses to help them identify and access support in a way that is right for them, whether that is business development, coaching, funding or something else entirely.

www.ciosgrowthhub.com

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European Regional Development Fund

The project has received £2,535,200 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

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>.

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Growth Programme

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Growth Programme is part of the England Growth Programme, which will run from 2014-2020. Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is the only area in England to qualify as a 'Less Developed' region and has an allocation of €603.7million which is split as follows:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) €438 million
- European Social Fund (ESF) €166 million



European Union

European Regional
Development Fund

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) has an allocation of £10 million in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, aligned with the wider England Growth Programme. www.erdconvergence.org.uk/growth-programme

Contact:

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly ITI Support Team (European Structural and Investment Funds) Tel: 01872 224325 / @GrowthProgramme

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership drives activity to support business growth, create jobs and help people realise their potential.

The LEP is led by local business people working together with Cornwall Council and the Council of the Isles of Scilly to set priorities for how the economy should grow.

Follow us on Twitter @LEPCornwall_IoS and visit www.cioslep.com

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Cornwall Development Company

Cornwall Development Company is the arm's length economic development company of Cornwall Council, designed to deliver a bespoke, business facing service and support the delivery of the economic vision and strategy for Cornwall.

www.cornwalldevelopmentcompany.co.uk / mail@cornwalldevelopmentcompany.co.uk / @CornwallDevCo



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