



LEWES DISTRICT BUSINESS START-UP

DEVELOP OUTDOORS CIC

Company Info

DEVELOP OUTDOORS CIC
NEWHAVEN



[@developoutdoors](https://www.facebook.com/developoutdoors)



developoutdoors.com



Where it started

Develop Outdoors is an alternative education provider based in Peacehaven, Telscombe and Newhaven, offering tailored programmes for children and young people aged 5 to 16 (soon to be 18), many of whom experience challenges in mainstream education. Their work also extends to community projects across age groups, including holiday schemes and support for older residents.

At the time of joining LD Start-up, the team had reached the end of their original five-year plan and were ready to focus on the next stage of growth.

“We wanted to push forward, start the next step of growth with our business and gain advice and clarity around it.”

Co-director Hayley had recently joined the team, and they were exploring a new direction, including the potential for a sister business.

About LD Start-up

Lewes District Start-Up (LD Start-up) is a support scheme to help residents start and grow new businesses, with a particular focus on community wealth-building, co-operatives and other social enterprises.

From turning an entrepreneurial idea or sidehustle into reality, to scaling and growing a recent start up, LD Start-up is there to help.

It is a series of in-person workshops, resources and webinars with leading business mentors.

It is funded by Lewes District Council. It runs until March 2027.

“

We'd already reached our five-year plan. This helped us shape the next one.

”

The LD Start-up Experience

Hayley and Yolandi joined LD Start-up in 2023, looking to refine their vision and structure future growth. They were particularly interested in advice on setting up a new business alongside their established provision and found value in the strategic clarity the programme offered.

They used tools like the Business Model Canvas to identify areas for improvement - particularly in funding, staffing, and marketing. Through workshops and one-to-one support, they also received guidance on building business proposals and pitch decks to support their expansion.

“ We did the business model canvas and really sectioned out the areas that we felt we needed to work more - like focusing on our funding areas.”

The LD Start-up Experience

An opportunity came sooner than expected and thanks to their planning work on the programme, they were ready to act.

As a result, they launched a new sister company: a football coaching academy for girls, now embedded in their broader programme delivery.

“ ***An opportunity came along, and we had already started our plan. So we thought let's just seize it and roll with it.*** ”

The LD Start-up Experience

Throughout the programme, the team benefited from introductions, practical tips, and extended peer connections. These included:

- ✓ Links to the Newhaven Enterprise Zone
- ✓ Strategic support and proposal writing from their mentors
- ✓ Use of Xero and other software tools for business admin
- ✓ Networking advice and future engagement with the Newhaven Chamber of Commerce

They also linked up with other participants, and followed advice from their mentors on connecting with funding teams, local councils, and business advisors.

“***It's been a bit of a domino effect. One contact led to another. It's been brilliant.***”

What changed?

Yolandi and Hayley emerged from the programme with renewed clarity about their business identity and roles as directors.

Clarity

Leadership

Storytelling

“ *We’re always on the ground, doing the delivery. But we’ve started to separate ourselves from the business and to think about it strategically.* ”

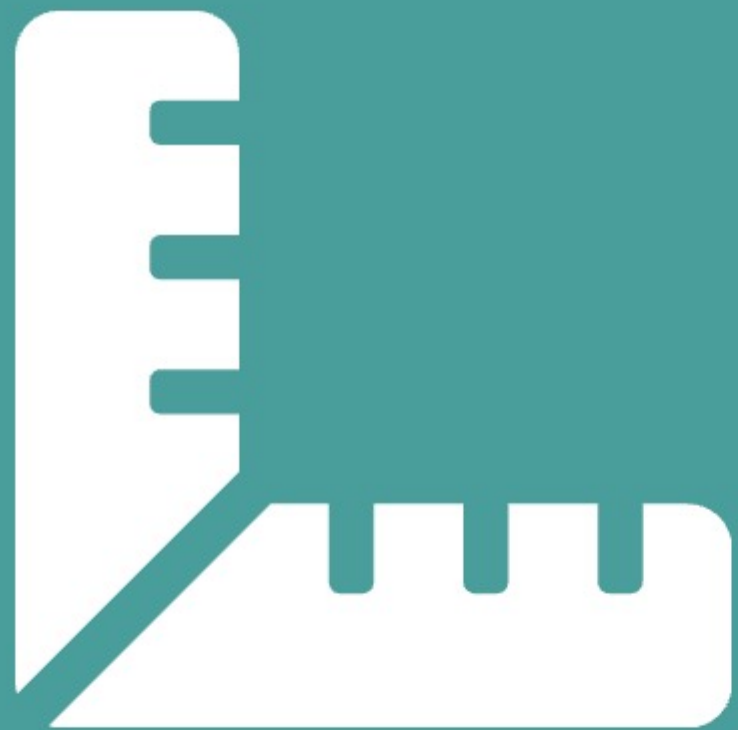
LD Start-up prompted reflection on leadership and presentation skills. They were introduced to a mentor who now supports their staff development, public speaking and pitch preparation.

They are now investing in a new website and engaging with local journalists to raise awareness about their work.

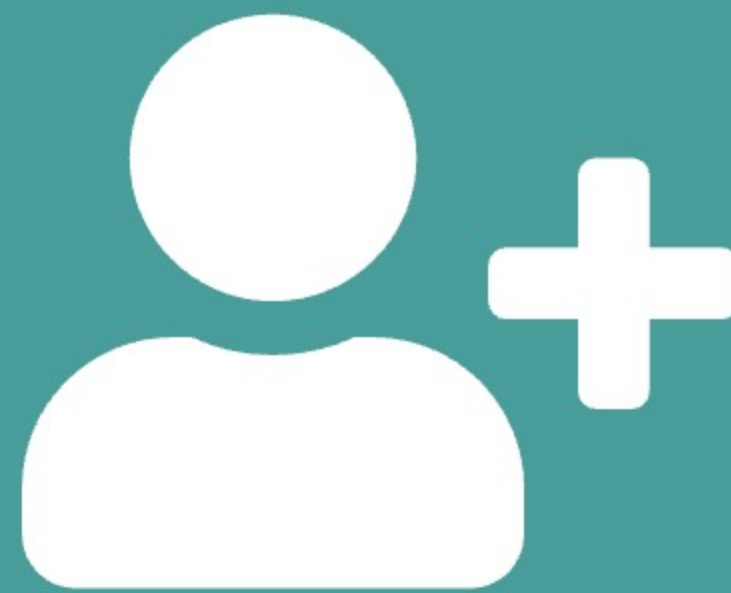


What's Next?

Develop Outdoors has bold, clear goals. The biggest of which is to secure significant funding to build a purpose-built facility in Newhaven. They're also actively working on pitch decks, bid writing, and partnership development to support their growth.



Grow their alternative education offer and reach across East Sussex



Expand their girls' football academy (LCA) into a formal coaching and employment pathway



Strengthen their digital and physical presence through a new website, media coverage and marketing



“

We've already referred someone! It just felt really exciting. It was a really great space to share ideas and collaborate. Having the opportunity to have that time, to speak with the mentors, was really valuable and gave really positive clarity for our projects moving forward.

– YOLANDI & HAYLEY, DIRECTORS

Inspired?

Explore LD Start-up and how it could help your business take the next step.



ldstartup.co.uk

