



## Event specialist has business success Covered

A Northumberland entrepreneur, who found herself out of work as a result of the economic downturn, has proved there are still opportunities to set up a successful business after recognising a gap in the market to supply quality chair covers table linen and accessories to the UK events market.

Sarah Pittendrigh launched Simply Bows & Chair Covers in January 2009 and has now launched a franchise operation to manage increasing customer demand.

Sarah, who has had the role of brand manager for Jaguar and Land Rover Cars and formerly a Marketing Director for a National Event Company, runs the business just outside of Hexham, said "It had been suggested, while I was in my previous role, that we bring the supply of chair covers and table linen in-house as it had been identified that there was an inconsistency in service and quality among our suppliers.

I thought it was something that to do well had to be a specialist project, for which we did not have the time. However after losing my last job I realised I wanted the autonomy associated with self-employment, and I saw there was a big opportunity in the North East to specialise in products aimed at the top end of the market."

After approaching Business Link with the business idea and gaining their support, Sarah was provided with advice on funding streams and was able to secure financial support via the North East

England Investment Centre (NEEIC) to launch Simply Bows & Chair Covers.

Twelve months on Simply Bows and Chair Covers has established itself as the preferred supplier for many of the region's most prestigious venues including Close House Hotel, Seaham Hall, Wynyard Hall, Rockcliffe Hall, Doxford Hall and the BALTIC to name but a few. With the business growing at such a pace and Sarah keen to retain a work-life balance, she decided that franchising the business would be the best way to manage growing demand.

She said: "I had started to get enquiries from as far down as London for venues such as Grosvenor House, however having travelled a lot in my previous role, I was keen that my new venture allowed me the flexibility to be able to spend more time with my family.

"Franchising Simply Bows & Chair Covers has enabled me to grow the business while at the same time allowing me to concentrate my efforts on the Northumberland and Durham areas."

The business already has two franchisees on board, Lucinda Thompson who heads up Sunderland and Tees Valley and Ivana Thomson who heads up Newcastle and North Tyneside.

If you are interested in becoming a Franchisee or know someone who may, then please do not hesitate to email: [stewart@simplybowsandchaircovers.com](mailto:stewart@simplybowsandchaircovers.com)

To view our new range of chair covers and accessories for Spring 2010, please do not hesitate to contact us for a private appointment.

Simply Bows and Chair Covers  
[Simplybowsandchaircovers.co.uk](http://Simplybowsandchaircovers.co.uk)

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