



ALP Synergy Ltd



ENTERPRISE  
**OXFORDSHIRE**  
Business

WEST OXFORDSHIRE BUSINESS  
**SPARK**



Funded by  
UK Government



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



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## **Supporting entrepreneurs to start their brilliant business!**

West Oxfordshire District Council received funding from the UK Government through the Shared Prosperity Fund to support local small and medium sized businesses to get started and grow.

The target audiences for this support were residents of all ages who wanted to start their own brilliant business.

West Oxfordshire District Council chose to work with OxLEP Business to deliver this support due to their strong pedigree for supporting profit and purpose driven businesses across the County.

The 'Business Spark' programme is designed to be engaging and fun, but also challenging, to ensure that those involved get maximum value. The support provided included:

- A set of five workshops covering the following topics:
  - Business Fundamentals and the Business Model Canvas
  - Understanding Your Customers, Marketing and Sales
  - Financial Planning and Management
  - Developing Your Year 1 Action Plan
  - Business Pitch for Success
- Bespoke one to one meetings with a business advisor to discuss the specific business idea and any questions in more detail about starting and growing the business
- A peer to peer support programme

This showcase report highlights a number of case studies from just a few of the entrepreneurs supported through this programme. If this inspires you to want to engage with support then flick to the back page and get in touch.



# Vault

Launching Vault VA has been an incredible journey, and I owe a great deal of its early success to the support provided by OxLEP through the West Oxfordshire Business SPARK programme. As someone with over 12 years of experience supporting high-growth small businesses and ambitious VC-backed start-ups, I understand the pressures that come with running a business. However, taking the leap to start my own venture was both thrilling and daunting.

Vault VA was created to support UK-based start-ups and small business owners by streamlining processes, clearing to-do lists, and allowing them to focus on what truly matters, growing their business. By taking on the tasks they don't need, want, or shouldn't be doing, I give my clients the time and capacity to achieve their goals.

The Business SPARK programme gave me the knowledge and confidence to turn my vision into reality. The subsequent Foundations to Growth sessions have been invaluable, providing a forum to discuss challenges and gain insights from my peers and the brilliant Ant Parsons.

I could never have anticipated the success Vault VA would achieve within its first few weeks, and I am excited for what the future holds. With this momentum, I look forward to growing Vault VA and continuing to support ambitious business owners in reaching their full potential.

<https://www.vaultva.co.uk>







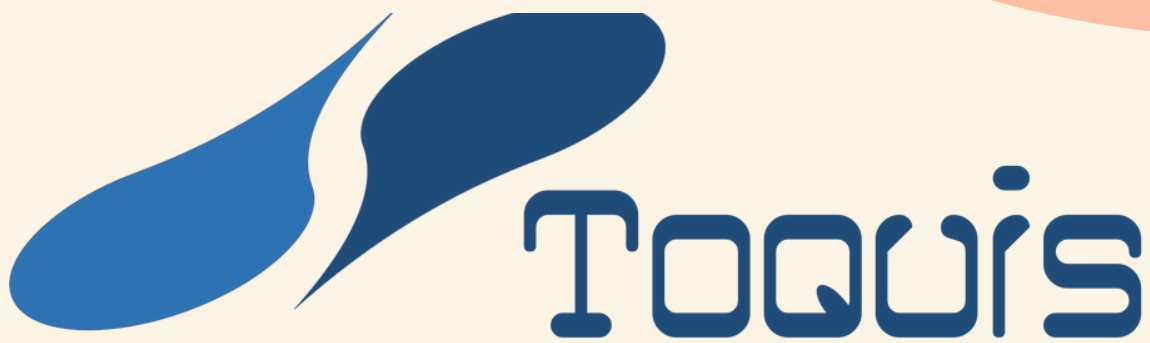
Starting Wychwood Soapery has been an exciting and challenging journey. After years working as a sustainable energy expert, I took the leap into creating my own business, crafting traditional cold process soaps in small batches using 100% plant-based ingredients. Each bar is fragranced with essential oils, coloured with natural clays, and designed to be gentle, moisturising, and suitable for use on the face, hands, and body.

The transition from employment to running a sole trader business has been a steep learning curve. Balancing product development with the realities of marketing, finance, and sales. The support from the West Oxfordshire Spark programme, along with OxLEP and Oxfordshire BIPC, has been invaluable. From refining my business name to identifying popular fragrances, the encouragement and advice from fellow entrepreneurs have helped shape Wychwood Soapery.

Over the next six months, I'll be working with local businesses to stock my soaps in shops and craft fairs while also launching an online store. I'm also keen to collaborate with other local creatives, building a strong network to promote handcrafted products. Alongside growing the business, I'll continue testing new recipes, expanding the Wychwood Soapery range.

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When we founded Toquis, our vision was to revolutionise environmental intelligence through advanced technology. Our flagship platform, Earthbond, has rapidly established itself as a critical tool in the reinsurance market, providing a cutting-edge solution for risk assessment and environmental monitoring. Initially, we focused on orphan wells in Texas, where abandoned sites posed significant risks near urban areas. By integrating multi-domain data with Digital Twin sub-surface technology, Earthbond has enabled legal teams, reinsurance firms, and environmental agencies to visualise and analyse subsurface conditions with unprecedented clarity.

Our pilot project in South Texas demonstrated Earthbond's ability to identify and catalogue well conditions, track water pollution, and mitigate risks such as blowouts. The success of this two-month trial has led to the full-scale deployment of our platform, incorporating diverse sensor data to map and analyse the impact of these wells on water systems. Our powerful visualisation tool further supports well monitoring and provides compelling evidence in legal proceedings.

West Oxfordshire SPARK played a pivotal role in our journey. Their structured training programs and tailored mentorship equipped us with the skills needed to refine our value proposition, engage stakeholders effectively, and navigate the complexities of launching a new product. Their guidance in business model innovation, market research, and financial planning laid a solid foundation for our success.

Expanding beyond orphan wells, Earthbond is now evolving to monitor active drilling wells, ensuring that ongoing operations do not threaten natural reserves. Our work in regions like Rio Negro, Argentina, underscores our commitment to sustainable land management. Additionally, our collaboration with the USGS in the USA is enhancing Earthbond's capabilities in monitoring coastal erosion near Los Angeles, further demonstrating the platform's value in environmental preservation and risk management.

<https://www.toquis.com>



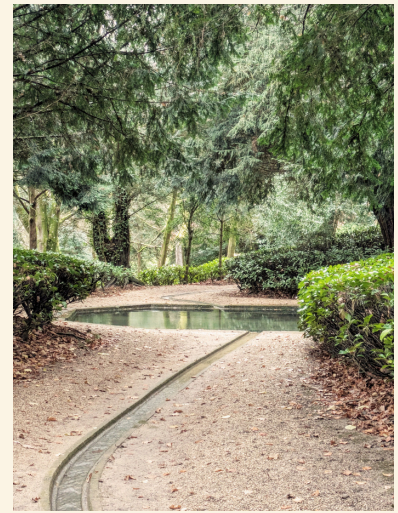
Waterlily Healing is my passion and purpose. As a Reiki and Sound Healing practitioner, I help my clients achieve deep relaxation, energy alignment, and emotional balance. My intuitive card readings provide guidance and insights to support personal growth and well-being. Whether you're looking for stress relief, spiritual development, or simply a peaceful retreat, my holistic approach is designed to nurture both mind and soul.

To expand my business, I've been actively growing my online presence on Facebook and Instagram, as well as exploring business-to-business (B2B) opportunities to promote staff and owner well-being. Increasing my regular client base is a key goal, and my participation in the West Oxfordshire Business Spark programme has been invaluable in refining my business planning and marketing strategies. A recent business grant has also enabled me to enhance my healing room, creating an even more tranquil and welcoming space.

I'm excited to introduce limited home visits for Reiki treatments and several unique workshops over the next six months. These include Aura Paint & Pour, Crystal Tree Making, Vision Board Manifestation, Tea Leaf Reading, Gratitude Journaling, and a special Dragon Energy workshop. Additionally, I am recommencing Monthly Reiki Shares and Weekly Development Classes, providing regular opportunities for connection and growth.

[www.waterlily-healing.co.uk](http://www.waterlily-healing.co.uk)





Starting my own bespoke tour business, Cotswold Tours with Adam, has been an exciting journey, and the OxLEP Spark programme has played a crucial role in shaping my success. Offering immersive day tours for up to four guests, I take visitors on a journey through the most outstanding gardens and architecture in the North Cotswolds, sharing my passion for the region's beauty and heritage.

When I began, I had to navigate various challenges, from applying for a licence with the council to building a website and marketing my tours effectively. The Spark programme provided structured guidance, and I frequently referred back to my notes when crafting my customer journey and marketing strategy. The insights from expert guest speakers were invaluable, offering real-life experiences that helped me refine my approach.

Now, I'm focusing on the next stage: integrating online payment software for a seamless booking experience and capturing high-quality photographs to enhance my website and promotional materials. I've also found mentorship support through Spark's peer groups, which has helped me tackle customer engagement and objection handling.

With a solid foundation in place, I'm expanding my offering to include more experiences incorporating food and evening entertainment, bringing even more of the Cotswolds to life for my guests.

[cotswoldtourswithadam.com](https://cotswoldtourswithadam.com)





Nestled on the edge of the Cotswolds, I have embarked on an exciting new venture, E J framing. Creating bespoke frames that are as unique as the pieces they protect. My approach to framing is rooted in flexibility, ensuring that every customer's needs are met with precision, dedication, and an unwavering attention to detail. By handcrafting each frame, I can offer a truly personalised service, while also upholding the highest standards of conservation to ensure long-lasting quality.

My love for woodwork began at the age of seven when I received my first toolbox and built a bird table for my Gramps. Over 25 years later, this passion has evolved into a business that I am eager to grow. Establishing my workshop at home was a strategic decision, keeping overheads manageable while I build my brand. However, navigating the start-up process has been challenging, from understanding my target audience to refining my marketing strategy.

The SPARK workshops have been invaluable, equipping me with the knowledge and support needed to move forward. In the next six months, I aim to complete my workshop setup, source suppliers, develop a customer database, and refine my craft further through specialised courses. My ultimate goal is to build a thriving business, supporting my local community while becoming a certified Fine Art Trade Guild Framer.

# Narrow Hill Design



When I started this journey, I had one goal: to help people who work from home love their office space. That's what led me to create a range of accessories, including monitor stands, desk organisers, and laptop stands. But getting started with something brand new was both exciting and daunting.

I'd never created a product range before, never thought about packaging or set up an e-commerce website. There was so much to learn, from product development to marketing and logistics. Attending the OxLEP Spark sessions was a great start, but what really made a difference was the support from the advisors and the wider community. Having a group of people on the same journey has been invaluable, providing both encouragement and practical insights.

One of my biggest milestones was developing and launching my first product: a beautifully designed monitor stand. Running a pre-sales campaign was a fantastic learning experience, helping me refine my approach and connect with customers. Now, with the first product out in the world, I'm excited to expand the range and continue creating accessories that make home working more enjoyable.





When I founded MyCoStrategist, my vision was clear: to redefine how we solve today's complex challenges. Strategy should be accessible, adaptable, and deeply connected to real-world impact. That's why we built The Strategist's Digital Platform, an AI-assisted tool that helps strategists, advisors, and consultants model their insights, decisions, and actions more effectively.

Our mission is the democratisation of strategy and its execution. Through inclusivity, connectivity, relevance, and adaptability, we empower our clients to thrive in an uncertain world. A recent highlight was winning our biggest international client, where we worked on a Distributed Renewable Energy initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa - proving the power of strategic thinking in driving global change.

Closer to home, our participation in the West Oxfordshire Spark Programme and peer-to-peer group sessions has allowed us to refine our approach and share knowledge with fellow peers.

## From the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2025 OxLEP became Enterprise Oxfordshire.

From 1 April 2025, we have operated under the trading name of 'Enterprise Oxfordshire', with the change marking the completion of a two-year process that saw the economic development functions – previously led by Local Enterprise Partnerships – altered so that they are overseen via a mechanism agreed by respective upper-tier local authorities. In this instance, Oxfordshire County Council.

Oxfordshire County Council now act as our 100% shareholder, known as a Teckal company arrangement, with Enterprise Oxfordshire maintaining our independent company status.

Building on our significant legacy as OxLEP, Enterprise Oxfordshire oversees the delivery of a comprehensive set of business, skills, investment and trade support services, as well as supporting a variety of strategies backing Oxfordshire's economic potential to be delivered in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

Engage with Enterprise Oxfordshire Support by completing the Business Support Tool.

You will then receive your fully funded Business Support Action Plan.

**Click here:** [Enterprise Oxfordshire Business Support Tool](#)

Scan here:

