

Lizzie Norris Seamstress

Growing a specialist sewing business while developing the next generation of sewing talent

About Lizzie Norris Seamstress

I founded Lizzie Norris Seamstress from my flat in Newbury, specialising in bridal alterations alongside bridesmaid, prom, occasion wear and general alterations. Since then, the business has grown into a team of four and is now based in Faringdon.

Alongside alterations, we offer wedding dress cleaning and boxing, sewing workshops and one-to-one sewing classes, providing a friendly, professional service for every customer.

Challenges & Growth

Finding people with the specialist sewing skills we need is one of our biggest challenges. Without growing our seamstress team, our capacity is limited, so we wanted to explore recruiting an apprentice or trainee. However, understanding the apprenticeship process and finding information relevant to our specific business felt daunting.

Next steps

We are planning more Sew With Lizzie workshops and new sewing workshops during the winter and run-up to Christmas. Our new shop manager will also help us continue improving the customer experience and developing our services for brides and the wider community. Our goal is to grow our team, develop new talent and continue building a successful specialist sewing business.

Support from Enterprise Oxfordshire Business

Enterprise Oxfordshire Business helped us navigate the apprenticeship process, researching suitable options and connecting us with the right information. This led us to a college offering a course compatible with the specialist sewing work we do and has opened the door to a potentially valuable relationship.

I also took part in the Foundations to Growth programme, connecting with other business owners and gaining valuable perspectives on how to improve and diversify the business, particularly during quieter periods.

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It is so refreshing to experience a programme where everyone is so clearly on your side and wanting you to succeed. There is no condescension and nothing is too much trouble for the team, being open about your business and the help that you need is hard to do, but with Enterprise Oxfordshire I have felt safe to ask questions that I may have felt vulnerable asking in other settings.

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