



Media release

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Business Gateway launches pilot programme to support women in business across Shetland

A virtual programme offering a package of support for female business owners in Shetland has been launched by Business Gateway, in partnership with The Pure Energy Centre and W-Power, with eight entrepreneurs selected to take part in the six-month pilot programme.

Realise, is a unique development programme specifically tailored to meet the needs of local self-employed women. The first programme of its kind in Shetland, it offers local female business owners the opportunity to receive 1:1 mentoring, as well as peer support from like-minded business owners with sessions every four to six weeks. These will cover topics based on the group's needs and could include confidence, responding to Covid, networking, self-promotion and managing motivation. ,

The course will also focus on how to effectively utilise digital platforms to build and grow a business, while the entire programme will be delivered virtually through Zoom.

Unst-based fused glass maker, Cheryl Jamieson, owner of Glansin Glass is one of the participants taking part in the pilot.

Cheryl said: "I first heard about the Realise programme through my local Business Gateway adviser. Following my involvement in business support groups in the past, I thought this would be an excellent opportunity to engage and learn from other female business owners across Shetland.

"Businesses around the islands are still facing challenges due to COVID-19, so it's really valuable to have a space for Shetland's female business community that lets us come together to share advice and experiences as we look to grow our businesses."

Kirsten Nicolson, Business Gateway, said: "We know that COVID-19 has significantly impacted opportunities for women, so our aim with this programme is to help female entrepreneurs and address some of their concerns. Through Realise, the participants will have a space to build valuable connections, discuss best practices and learnings and ultimately grow their businesses.

"Everyone will have access to a variety of support across a range of topics, and there will be an emphasis on how to use digital platforms to their full potential. DigitalBoost, Scotland's national digital training programme, delivered by Business Gateway, has become a critical tool for businesses during the pandemic, and all the participants will be signposted to it's services to help them take advantage of technology, improve productivity, and increase resilience.

We are grateful to The Pure Energy Centre and W-Power for their support towards this pilot programme, which we hope will be highly beneficial to the women involved"

For more information about how Business Gateway and W-Power can support your business, please visit <https://www.bgateway.com/> and <http://w-power.interreg-npa.eu/>