



KITE – PIONEERING A REGENERATIVE WAY OF LIVING, REIMAGINING THE SPACES WE LIVE, WORK AND PLAY IN, TO HELP RESTORE THE WELLBEING OF PEOPLE AND THE PLANET.

Based in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, KiteCreative is a purpose driven design and build studio centred around regenerative living, helping to restore the well-being of people and planet, by using a life-centred approach to reimagine the spaces we live work and play in, to design our lives, and create our futures to live and flourish.



We spoke with co-founder, Helen Gordon, who shares their business success story. “Ten years ago my husband and I set up Kite as a refurbishment company. We worked on a lot of turnkey solutions for clients to reconfigure period houses into high-end rentals for young professionals. We took care of everything from design and interior styling through to construction and project management.



As a company we’ve always been sustainable and purpose minded, but we knew we could do more. We were conscious of the amount of waste we were using and the amount of skips we were using, amounting to about 100 tonnes a year. Our ambition was to reduce our impact. During lockdown we researched everything we could do about sustainability. I also did a course on the circular economy. It was during this time that we

decided to completely pivot the business with sustainability at the centre and diversified from lots of refurbishment projects to more concentrated, sustainable interior solutions.”

OXLEP BUSINESS SUPPORT SINCE 2020

Over the past three years Kite have benefitted from a raft of OxLEP Business support ranging from one-to-one advice, webinars, peer groups to grant funding. Helen elaborates on the importance of this relationship and how it’s contributed to their success. “During my career I’ve always looked out for

a support network, I think it’s incredibly important. You need experts in the room to help you on your journey. I visited the OxLEP Business website and completed their Business Support Tool which guided me through to the support opportunities available to us.

We initially engaged with OxLEP’s eScalate programme, which supported socially minded businesses. We received one-to-one advice and grant funding which helped us redesign our new website and to do lots of marketing. We also joined the peer network groups where we meet with other businesses and discussed a variety of issues. This was very important at the time because we were in lockdown and couldn’t go to networking groups or meet people. OxLEP have really helped us grow our network locally.”

OXLEP’S GO-CREATE GRANT RAISES KITE’S BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

A key moment for Kite was receiving a Go-Create grant from OxLEP’s Innovation Support for Business (ISfB). Helen tells us more, “We signed up for ISfB which was absolutely massive for us. We were at a crucial point in the business where we needed to invest in machinery which would effectively turn us from a one-man band crafter to a manufacturing unit where we could employ a team.

We used the funding to purchase various machines, including a CNC machine.

“ OxLEP’s support and encouragement has been incredibly beneficial for us as a growing business. The team have been great and so efficient; they are there for you all the time and always go above and beyond. ”



The CNC machine allows us to follow the circular economy process and reduce waste far more accurately and sustainably. It totally transformed the business for us because this is work that we needed to previously outsource.

But the ISfB programme was not only important to us because of the funding, the one-to-one sessions were extremely valuable too. We met with an innovation advisor soon after joining who gave us lots of helpful advice around innovation and business planning. It was the advisor who signposted us to the grant. We had support from marketeers and financial advisers. There was one session where we had a few specialists giving us their thoughts and advice which was great. We also attended a number of innovation webinars. The advisors also helped us with exploring potential collaborations for research. All this support and encouragement has been incredibly beneficial for us as a growing business. The team have been great and so efficient; they are there for you all the time and always go above and beyond.”

BUILDING A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Helen and the team are excited to have recently moved to a new workshop where they can start manufacturing with innovation and sustainability in mind. “We moved into our new workshop in Abingdon, which also has a showroom and an office. In order for our clients to really understand sustainable manufacturing and buy into it, they can now come and visit our showroom and actually see how it works, touch the materials etc. We definitely wouldn’t have been able to move here without OxLEP’s support and funding.

We’re now building repurposeful solutions and looking at tools to help us with that. We’re building a new range of kitchens with low toxicity and sustainable materials. We’ve built a whole regenerative framework which focuses on the wellbeing of the person in the place, thinking about the planet, light, air, nature and ergonomics. Things are looking really exciting for us in the future.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON KITE
PLEASE VISIT: KITECREATIVE.CO.UK

kite



Find out more about the support available from OxLEP Business:

W: oxlepbusiness.co.uk T: 01865 897181

E: business@oxfordshirelep.com