



**Mums in South London are set to take on the business world after completing a business start-up course provided for residents by L&Q housing association.**

Nadine, Natalie and Jasmine are just three budding entrepreneurs on the first rungs to business success. They are all mothers who have been taking part in the Mums in Business course, a scheme funded by L&Q, which aims to **help unemployed residents back into work and supports** women who want to re-enter the workplace after having children. And it has inspired the mums to set up as entrepreneurs.

The three have been attending sessions at L&Q's Lewington Centre, in Lewisham. The course is delivered by Elevating Success UK, a not-for-profit organisation that supports local communities, which works with L&Q .

### **Three case studies highlight determination and commitment**

**Natalie**, 33, was keen to explore the next steps in her journey to running her own coffee business. She had already set in motion channels for importing coffee from Jamaica. She was determined to overcome a setback when a disused property in Lewisham she had intended to renovate and turn into a coffee shop was earmarked for demolition in a redevelopment scheme. Undeterred, she has been searching for an alternative site. Once this hurdle has been overcome she will be looking to acquire storage for the imported beans and already has sights on a milling facility. This way, she says, she will be able to control the quality of the coffee, and cementing contacts in Jamaica with native producers will mean she will always be in control of the supply chain.

The mum of one had done much of the initial research herself, but found the course very useful in giving her guidance on creating a business plan, looking at finance options and learning about future-proofing her venture.

Mum of three, **Jasmine**, 39, saw the Mums in Business scheme publicised on the L&Q website. She was already thinking about how to turn her acknowledged catering skills into a going concern, but needed direction in expanding her fledgling enterprise. Jasmine was starting from small but solid beginnings, supplying catering services informally to friends, family and former work colleagues. Having offered to provide food for leaving do's and birthday parties, she found she was being asked to take on more events. Jasmine said she found the course invaluable in helping her to focus on menus, finance and marketing. Naturally sociable, Jasmine found the

advice on networking from the course reinforced her focus on building relationships with other entrepreneurs, such as a friend who was setting up a venture, where Jasmine could supply catering – and publicise her offer to potential new customers!

**Nadine** is full of enthusiasm and joined the course to boost her business skills and confidence in taking on a business venture.

With four children, she is an energetic 33 year old and is looking forward to using her outgoing nature as a springboard to a business where she can utilise her organising and networking skills. She has already had success in managing events and sees her potential in expanding to big social occasions. “I could provide a ‘trouble-shooting’ role,” she says. “You have a requirement and I have the contacts, so I can customise your event, managing all the arrangements from guest lists to venue management.” And with a gift for communication, Nadine is set to make the most of social media, where she is quickly gaining a presence.

**Andrew Brown of Elevating Success UK** said: “We have really enthusiastic, focused mums on the course, and I wish them all success in their ventures. I am grateful to L&Q for the opportunity and premises to hold this important training.”

And now dads are eager to get in on the act too. With positive news about the training spreading, the course has been extended, with men expressing an interest in taking a course.

Elevating Success UK will be running further sessions starting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017. If you are interested in attending, please contact Andrew Brown at [andrew@elevatingsuccess.co.uk](mailto:andrew@elevatingsuccess.co.uk), or visit [www.elevatingsuccess.co.uk](http://www.elevatingsuccess.co.uk) for more information.