



NEWS RELEASE
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TWO NEW ENTREPRENEURS CONTRIBUTE TO RECORD NUMBERS OF
PSYBT BUSINESSES

Two young entrepreneurs, Karen Macdonald and Ewen Libby, both aged 30 have received assistance from The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust (PSYBT) to help them start their own businesses. In doing so they have helped PSYBT achieve record numbers of business start-ups in the Western Isles. Karen and Ewen are pictured with their cheques from PSYBT.

In May 2002, the PSYBT Board of Directors raised the age range in eligibility criteria from 18-25 (national criteria) to 18-30 for a pilot period of one year in the Western Isles only. Following the granting of the extension, and based on the predictions of potential business start-ups, the Western Isles region were given a new business start-up target of 15 by Head Office. This target was met in the first six months of the PSYBT year.

Councillor Donald Maclean, Regional Chairman for the Western Isles branch of PSYBT gave his reasons for the record numbers *"The increase in business start-ups can be attributed in part to the employment of a dedicated Youth Enterprise Development Officer by the Comhairle and the new central location of the PSYBT service. However, it is clear that the principal reason for the increase is the extended eligibility in age range up to age 30. We in the Western Isles are very grateful to the PSYBT Board for their decision to pilot this increase in age criteria in our area. It is our hope that the Board will agree to make the availability of PSYBT support for those in the upper age group of 26-30 permanent in the Western Isles."*

Jane Campbell, PSYBT Regional Manager commented *"We are now in the eighth month of the PSYBT Year and the number of business start-ups have already reached 18. There are also several young people preparing business plans who I*

would expect to make applications to PSYBT for financial assistance in the next few months. If the start-ups continue at the same rate we could potentially see a total of 30 new PSYBT assisted businesses in the year 2002/2003 in the Western Isles area.” Jane Campbell continued “I recently attended a PSYBT Board Meeting and presented the extremely successful results of the pilot to the Board. The presentation was warmly received and the Board were very encouraging. They promised to look at continuing the extended age range at their next budget meeting.”

Blue Heron Creative Services and Kiwis Garage Ltd. are two of eighteen young Western Isles Businesses to have received assistance from The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust (PSYBT) in the current PSYBT year which runs from July 2002 to June 2003. This is the highest number of Western Isles businesses ever to have received PSYBT assistance since the Trust was set up in 1989. The previous record in the Western Isles was 16, which was achieved in 1995/96 and 1996/97. Since then the number of start-ups have been declining.

Karen Macdonald received a grant of £1000 and a loan of £1700 to help her start her own business, Blue Heron Creative Services. Having recently returned to Stornoway from the Caymen Islands, Karen, who has 9 years experience in the design/new media/advertising industry, saw a market for a well run, professional, diverse design agency specialising in graphic and web design and also providing a range of creative services. With help from PSYBT Karen was able to purchase equipment to enable her to establish Blue Heron Creative Services. The company will provide full design and marketing services which will include anything from standard corporate ID packages to illustrations to commissioning a sculpture or art piece. Blue Heron Creative Services are located at 17 Francis Street and can be contacted on telephone no. 01851 702819.

Ewen Libby has worked as Foreman Mechanic and Manager (since 1999) at Kiwis Garage Ltd. for the last six years. When he was afforded the opportunity to purchase the business by owner, Malcolm Macleod, Ewen approached PSYBT for advice and assistance. A low interest loan of £5,000 from PSYBT facilitated the purchase and initial working capital requirements to enable Ewen to own and manage his own business. Ewen will keep the name, Kiwis Garage Ltd. which already has an established reputation as a local servicing point for Audi and VW Vehicles and as an MOT Centre. Under Ewen's daily management, the Garage, which has an ideal town centre location, has built up a strong client base. Ewen looks forward to the

continued provision of professional, flexible, and quality workmanship at competitive prices to existing and new customers. Kiwis Garage operates from 6-8 New Street, Stornoway and can be contacted on telephone no. 01851 705033.

PSYBT in the Western Isles offers advice and start-up/expansion funding to young people aged between 18 and 30, to help them set-up or continue to run their own businesses. For further information contact: Jane Campbell, PSYBT Regional Manager, Business Advantage, Town Hall, Stornoway, on 01851 707475.

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Photo: Ewen Libby, Kiwis Garage Ltd. and Karen Macdonald, Blue Heron Creative Services

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