

Dorset Jeweller Becky Walker Receives Enterprise Grant Boost

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A Dorset-based jeweller has expanded her independent business with help from a local enterprise grant aimed at supporting young entrepreneurs.

Becky Walker, 29, from Harman's Cross near Swanage, was awarded £1,000 through the Dorset Community Foundation's SWEF Enterprise Fund. The fund supports individuals aged

18 to 30 who are in the early stages of building their businesses, particularly where access to funding is limited.

Walker began designing and producing jewellery during the national lockdowns of 2020. Over the past four years, she has steadily built her hobby into a full-time business, selling handmade pieces at local markets.

“I was making a lot of jewellery and selling at markets, so I had a lot of silver scraps,” Walker said. “I needed a rolling mill to recycle that silver into sheet metal and wire. Buying new materials constantly is expensive, and a durable rolling mill costs around £800, something I simply couldn’t afford while covering other business costs.”

After learning about the SWEF Enterprise Fund through other creatives in the local area, Walker applied and was awarded the grant following an online interview.

“I was happy, it was a relief,” she said. “It came at a time when I’d had a lot of outgoings. It gave me some breathing room and confidence that my business was worth investing in.”

The grant has also enabled her to invest in professional development by enrolling in specialist courses in engraving and stone setting.

“Engraving is quite a niche skill and not something I could teach myself,” she added.

“Learning stone setting also means I can add colour to my designs, which helps expand what I offer to customers.”

Walker’s jewellery is now a regular feature at local events and markets across Dorset, and she is considering branching out into hosting jewellery-making workshops. She aims to share her knowledge while broadening her presence in the local creative community.

While many small businesses across the country face growing operational costs, schemes like the SWEF Enterprise Fund offer practical support without bureaucracy. For business owners like Walker, they make a real difference on the ground, enabling progress through targeted, straightforward backing.