

SURVEYOR

EAST OF ENGLAND

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Anglia business person of the year

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There is no end to the hurdles you must overcome when starting a business.

Dayle Bayliss started her construction company in 2011, just one year on she was nominated Anglia Business Person of the Year. It was early on in the life of the new business that Dayle met Jane Mohan, who had recently fulfilled a long held ambition to develop a regional wine centre appealing to tourists in the East Anglia.

This was the first commercial build that had been undertaken of this type, and although the superstructure went up in just four days, this was only possible through the months of meticulous planning by Dayle and her small team into every detail of the design and construction. Dayle combined the role of project manager, engineer, interior designer and general all round problem fixer and developed a close partnership with the lead contractor and the client. According to Jane, the flexibility and ability to react quickly to fluid situations are major benefits that a small construction consultancy can bring to a project like this.

The inspiration for the business at West Street vineyard had come from travelling extensively. The Kiwi relaxed approach to life is true of their approach to wine. New Zealand's beautiful vineyards combine with state-of-the-art wineries and cafes – a focus on locally produced food; simple, but a delicious combination with the wine. None of the snobbery associated with wine in the old world, but a relaxed style that is friendly and approachable. After more research in South Africa, including a visit to Fairview in Paarl, where wine tourism is almost an art form, Jane decided that the same approach could and should work in England.



Lessons learnt at Fairview demonstrated that nothing could be left to chance. Charles Back had paid attention to every detail so that on the day that Jane visited, Fairview was happily welcoming 700 people to lunch, some for wine tasting, and some for cheese tasting. Charles had taken the vineyard and wines that he produced to make a wine tourism experience which was accessible, excellent value, fun and appreciated by locals and those on the tourist trail alike.

Jane believed the timing was right. English wines had recently been taking their place on the world stage. Once the hobby of a few enthusiastic gardeners English wine makers were being taken seriously as they began to win major accolades at international wine competitions. The drawback of English wines was their availability – only a small number of producers produce enough wine to warrant large scale distribution. Jane wanted to provide an opportunity for English people to try English wines from all over England and Wales in a relaxed and open plan setting. The new world ethos brought to East Anglia – an easy approach to wine where the only thing that really matters is whether individuals liked the wine. It is to this end, that Jane plans not to just offer the wines from her own vineyard but wines from across England and East Anglia in an innovative automated wine wall.

The design at West Street incorporates a large south facing terrace which will provide unencumbered views over the vines and the beautiful English countryside beyond. A perfect spot for an alfresco lunch accompanied by a glass of English wine or so Jane hopes.

Nearly five years of planning, mountains of red tape, the seemingly endless hurdles that all businesses seem to have to face (and not forgetting the vagaries of the weather which meant that in 2012 West Street vineyard harvested half of the expected crop) has meant getting this far has not been easy. Recession or no recession there is always an opportunity out there for those of us who are flexible in their approach, this is what the story of this project from beginning to end at West Street Vineyard illustrates. **S**