

# SUCCESS STORY



'The feeling you get afterwards, the feeling that your knowledge and expertise has made a difference is amazing, it truly is its own reward'

*Darran Hamer is the Founder of Actopia & Charity Mentor to Aylesbury Homeless Action Group.*

## **Volunteer Charity Mentor for Aylesbury Homeless Action Group**

### **Why did you become a Charity Mentor?**

I decided to become a mentor, simply to give something back. When you start in business there are many demands on your time. But as you become more established, especially if you achieve some measure of success, I personally felt a burning need to give back to the community that has given their business, custom and support to me.

### **How have you found the experience?**

One of the most surprising aspects to me has been that charitable organisations really don't think like a business. But in tough economic times and ever decreasing budgets, relying on government funding or donations is no longer an option. Charities have to sell and market themselves as a business would. This is where I feel I've helped – bringing a commercial viewpoint, thinking as a supplier and a customer would with respect to what the charity does.

### **What are the benefits?**

Our business has benefited from our involvement with Aylesbury Homeless Action Group, as we've offered work experience placements to their beneficiaries. This helps them get back on the road to employment, their CV now shows that they have experience and can turn up on time and perform as an employer would expect.

The feedback from our clients has been overwhelmingly positive. It reflects really well on our business – we don't do it for this reason, but it is a pleasant side effect of doing good in the world!

The whole experience has really left me feeling positive. The fact that the world is a slightly better place for me being in it motivates me. My tombstone will now read "Here lies Darran Hamer. He made a difference"



PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

## **ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?**

Register at [www.xchangeBucks.org.uk](http://www.xchangeBucks.org.uk) to find a wide variety of Buckinghamshire volunteering opportunities.