

East Morton couple take over bike parts firm

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James and Val Muff with their product

An East Morton couple have taken over a company that makes special stabilisers for disabled bike riders. Val and James Muff will assemble the Adjustabilisers through their business, Good Designs, then distribute them in the UK and Europe. The stabilisers can be adjusted slightly each time the rider gains more confidence until they have all the skills needed for cycling.

The takeover came through contacts and through Val's long-time job with Hemi Help, a national charity for children with hemiplegia. Hemiplegia, which is usually caused by a stroke around the time of birth, leaves children with a weakness on one side of the body.

Val said: "I heard that the owner of the business, an engineer who had designed the stabilisers, wished to retire but also wanted his unique stabilisers to continue to be available. With my background this was of interest to me so I suggested to James that we consider taking it over. We wanted to give people with hemiplegia and similar conditions an opportunity to be independent, ride a bike, and improve their confidence."

Val said the Adjustabilisers gave disabled children and adults the confidence to ride a bike. She said: "Having seen the benefits first hand we wanted to help continue the business.

"We have received many wonderful testimonials from parents who are delighted to see their child riding a bike despite their physical difficulties."

Val and James have been supported by Bradford Council's enterprise support programme, Kickstart, specifically through Keighley-based Airedale Enterprise Services (AES). AES enterprise coach Rav Panesar advised the couple on business planning, profit margins and legal matters, and encouraged them to attend networking events and meet legal professionals.

Val said: "Rav has really given us the confidence to take the plunge and purchase the business. Having someone to talk to, bounce ideas off and listen to our concerns has helped us to plan ahead.

"The networking events were brilliant, we met lots of people who were in a similar position to us and also found out more about what it was like to run your own business." Good Designs can be contacted on 07879 522993 or through www.gooddesigns.eu.

The Kickstart information line is on 0800 953 9503, and Rav Panesar can be contacted on (01535) 607775.