

# "From Struggle to Success: Lewis's Story"



## I. Introduction:

Vocal Rogue is a community interest company dedicated to empowering individuals facing significant barriers to employment, entrepreneurship and social inclusion. Our holistic support is tailored to vulnerable groups, addressing mental health and social isolation.

We proudly showcase our successes, including the Grassroot Football Program launched with former West Bromwich coaches, which has enhanced community engagement and provided essential support. Additionally, our partnership with Community Red CIC for the 'Social Supermarket' has improved access to vital resources for those in need.

Our impact is further amplified by the appointment of our first Volunteer, who advocates for our mission and values. Collaborations with organisations like the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, Kaleidoscope PG, and Sweda Services allow us to extend our reach and support more individuals on their journey to self-sufficiency.

**This case study showcases** the transformative journey of Lewis, who leveraged our services to navigate mental health challenges and realise his dream of launching a successful carpentry business.

## II. The Challenge:

Lewis sought out Vocal Rogue CIC's 'Well-being Check-In' service as he battled persistent mental health challenges compounded by physical ailments that hindered his daily life and aspirations. Although he had a natural talent for carpentry and a strong desire to be self-employed, he felt overwhelmed by numerous obstacles.

After years in CRM work, mental health issues and physical health struggles sidelined him, but woodworking became his refuge. His passion shone through in beautifully crafted pieces like a shamisen and a custom table, reflecting his skill. However, low self-esteem and anxiety hindered his ability to network and market himself. Additionally, he lacked the know-how and resources to develop a viable business plan. At that moment, the intersection of his mental and physical health struggles with practical barriers felt insurmountable.

### III. The Solution:

To address Lewis's multifaceted challenges, including his struggles with ADHD, Vocal Rogue CIC provided a tailored suite of services designed to meet his specific needs. The following support services were crucial in Lewis's journey:

#### 1. Well-being Check-In Service:

- This became a vital resource for Lewis, offering a safe, non-judgmental space to discuss his mental health concerns, including the difficulties posed by ADHD.
- With the guidance of a trained mental health professional, he developed personalised coping strategies. This support helped him channel his energy into positive outlets and provided him with tools to manage impulsivity and distraction.

#### 2. Coaching and Mentoring:

- Rugz, an experienced coach, provided tailored support for Lewis to:
  - **Build Confidence:** Through positive reinforcement and setting achievable goals, Lewis began to shift his self-perception, recognising his unique strengths and abilities.
  - **Create a Structured Plan:** Together, they mapped out actionable steps toward self-employment, utilising strategies that catered to his ADHD, such as breaking tasks into manageable parts.
  - **Identify Growth Opportunities:** Guided discussions helped Lewis see how his creative thinking - often a strength associated with ADHD - could be leveraged to find innovative solutions in his carpentry work.

#### 3. Networking and Opportunity Matching:

- Vocal Rogue leveraged its network to connect Lewis with potential clients and opportunities, which was crucial for someone with ADHD, as it provided external motivation and accountability.
- This proactive approach opened doors for Lewis, enhancing his visibility in the woodworking community, essential for building his self-employment initiatives.

#### A Real-World Opportunity

One significant opportunity arose when Tracey's Juice Bar sought a skilled carpenter to transform an unused space into a cozy seating area. Recognising its potential, we connected Lewis with the owners. He embraced this chance with a newfound sense of purpose, effectively channeling his creativity and energy in a real-world setting, allowing his craftsmanship to shine.

#### The Benefits

Vocal Rogue's comprehensive support services not only equipped Lewis with the necessary skills but also instilled confidence and a profound sense of fulfillment. Each interaction reinforced his ability to manage his ADHD-related challenges, ultimately paving the way for personal and professional growth.

## IV. Implementation:

When the owner of Tracey's Juice Bar needed a carpenter, Rugz confidently recommended Lewis. With the support of Vocal Rogue CIC, Lewis secured the contract and completed the renovation in just ten days, executing the project with remarkable precision. His work included:

- Installing new skirting boards.
- Crafting a bespoke breakfast bar along the shop's length.
- Adding 17 extra seats to the newly opened upstairs area.

The owner praised Lewis, saying, "We absolutely loved his work! His attention to detail exceeded our expectations and it turned out even better than I envisioned. We will definitely be using him in the future." Not only did Lewis finish ahead of the two-week timeline, but this success also led to a contract with Sweda Services to renovate their workshop room and build three 6ft tables, showcasing the power of collaboration and paving the way for his continued growth.

## V. Results:

With the unwavering support of Vocal Rogue CIC, Lewis has achieved significant milestones:

- **Launching His Own Carpentry Business:** Lewis is on track to become self-employed, looking to generate income and fulfill his entrepreneurial dreams. He awaits initial correspondence to finalise his self-employment journey.
- **Improved Mental Well-being:** Ongoing support and a sense of accomplishment have greatly enhanced Lewis's mental health. He shares, "Knowing I can achieve with ongoing support has convinced me more than ever to pursue self-employment."
- **Mental Health First Aider:** Enrolled in a Mental Health First Aid course through Vocal Rogue, Lewis has gained insights into his well-being and learned to support others. He now dedicates three hours weekly to Vocal Rogue's Well-being Check-Ins, enriching his own life while providing valuable guidance.
- **Expanded Network:** Successful projects with Tracey's Juice Bar and Sweda Services have expanded Lewis's professional opportunities, preparing him for future collaborations.

**Positive Community Impact:** Lewis's craftsmanship has enhanced local businesses:

- **Tracey's Juice Bar:** Increased seating capacity by 212.5%, resulting in an average of 4 new daily customers.
- **Sweda Services:** Renovations created a functional workspace with custom-built tables, boosting operational efficiency.

These achievements highlight not only Lewis's professional growth but also his personal journey toward empowerment and fulfillment.

## **VI. Conclusion:**

Lewis's journey exemplifies the core mission of Vocal Rogue CIC, highlighting the transformative power of our holistic approach. By focusing on the whole person - through coaching, mentoring, well-being support, enrolled courses and networking opportunities - we successfully addressed his mental health challenges while nurturing his entrepreneurial aspirations. This comprehensive support has empowered Lewis to overcome obstacles and thrive as a business owner.

Key takeaways from Lewis's experience include the importance of personalised growth, problem-solving support and ongoing encouragement in fostering individual success. The remarkable outcomes illustrate the effectiveness of our integrated services in promoting personal well-being and creating positive community impact.

As we move forward, Vocal Rogue is committed to expanding our existing initiatives that support both young people and seniors – all ages groups. We aim to reach even more individuals and rekindle that "old-school loving feeling" of connection and support, empowering our community to thrive.

## **VII. Testimonial:**

"Before joining Vocal Rogue CIC, starting my own business felt impossible. The comprehensive support I received - especially regarding my mental health and lack of experience - gave me the confidence to take the leap. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity and the unwavering belief they had in me."