

THE COSTCO CONNECTION

A lifestyle magazine for small business

Case Study in Success: Dan Watson, Woodland Products

Dan Watson faced rejection by everyone for his business idea until he got support from the Prince's Trust. The landscape architecture graduate wanted to set up a woodland management and craft business. But he was turned down by his bank because they were not convinced about its viability, before being eventually signposted to the Prince's Trust.

"I went through quite a rigorous assessment process. I had a meeting with an area representative and then I had a half-hour meeting with a panel of three judges," says the 26-year-old Watson.

They provided him with a £2,500 loan and a bursary of £500 to launch his business, Dan Watson Woodland Products. The business rents two areas of woodland around Leeds and produces charcoal, traditional



Dan Watson with the Prince of Wales at Country Living Fair.

fencing and other craft products for sale.

His mentor has been John Castle, a businessman with a strong background in retail. "We have regular monthly meetings and his practical help and advice have been very useful," says Watson.

Watson recently met Prince Charles at the Country Living Fair at the Business Design Centre in Islington, north London. "With my business having a rural dimension, the prince was very interested in what I do. I have found generally the more contact you have with the Prince's Trust, the more help and support you get out of it," he says.

The company's address is Dan Watson Woodland Products, 27, Highbury Close, Meanwood, Leeds, LS6 4HA. Phone is 0113 2745209.

Have you had help from the Prince's Trust to start your business? If so, send us a brief history of your venture to *The Costco Connection*, Costco UK, Hartspring Lane, Watford, Herts, WD2 8JS, or fax to 01604 674 375 or e-mail athompson@costco.com.