

## BUSINESS

dorsetecho.co.uk/business

## BUSINESS IN BRIEF

## Relaunch is sweet

**DORCHESTER:** County town chocolatier House of Dorchester has launched new packaging for its range of premium chocolates.

Some of the classic collections have had a makeover designed to reflect current consumer trends.

All House of Dorchester chocolates are hand-packed, hand-finished and handmade at the company's factory in Poundbury.

## The angelic pitch party

**COUNTY:** A Silicon Beach Business Angels pitch event is being hosted by Julia's House Children's Hospice on March 10 at Barclays House in Poole from 6pm to 9.30pm.

The event will finish with a networking session.

Book tickets at [siliconbeachpro/events](http://siliconbeachpro/events)

## Lettings office move

**COUNTY:** The Residential Lettings Department of the Sherborne Office of Greenslade Taylor Hunt has expanded.

It is being managed by Lisa Vaughan who is moving from the Dorchester office.

## FINDING YOUR

Joanna Davis



**WITH** a fresh year stretching out ahead of us, some people may be thinking of a change of direction on the career front.

The average person has between 10 and 12 jobs in their lifetime but data on career change is scarce.

At a time of an unstable economy, uncertain futures in some sectors and pressing financial commitments, some people feel that taking that leap is too big a risk.

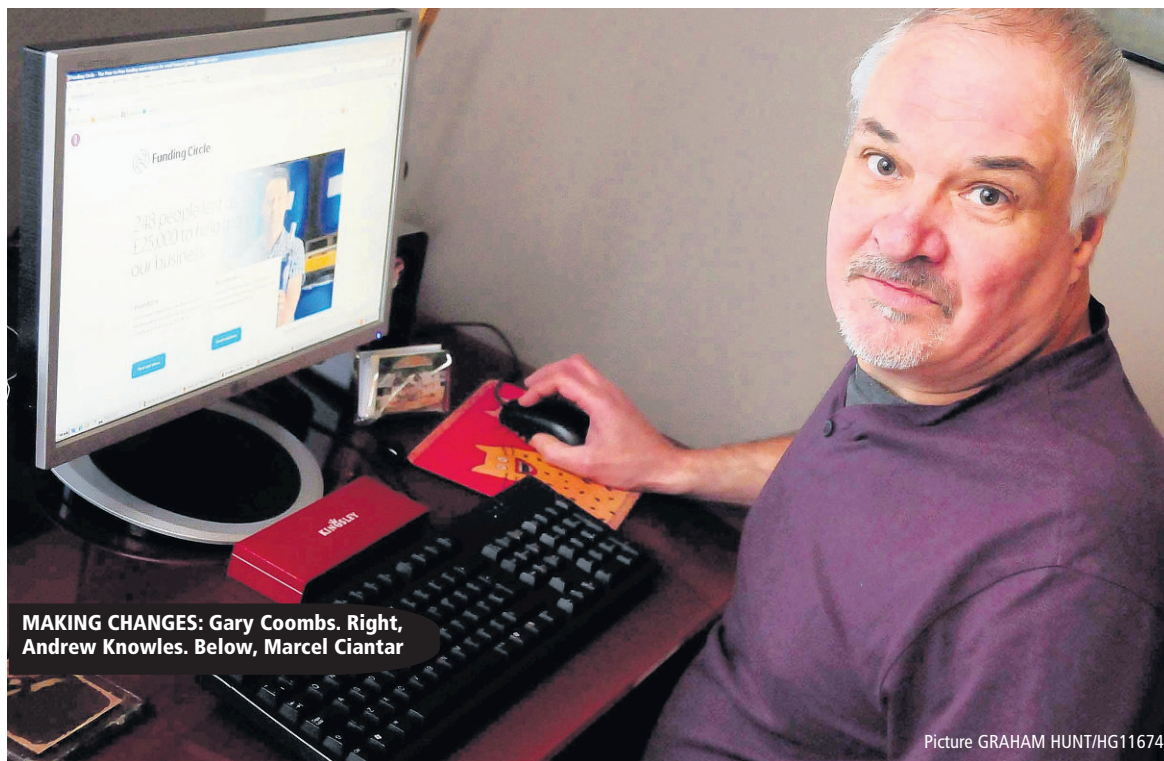
Echo business reporter Joanna Davis interviewed some inspiring local business people who made a career change to do what they love and haven't looked back since.

● **GARY** Coombs describes himself as having 'jumped from job to job' many times during 'a varied career'.

The West Stafford resident has worked as a police officer, in the building trade, as a college finance officer, a doorman and as an investor in a 'microbudget' ghost film.

He said: "From a change of career point of view I've never really decided on what I wanted to do.

"I was a police officer for the



**MAKING CHANGES:** Gary Coombs. Right, Andrew Knowles. Below, Marcel Ciantar

Picture GRAHAM HUNT/HG11674

best part of a year and decided that wasn't for me.

"I was in the building trade for nine years and was made redundant in the early 90s."

Gary, who is now semi-retired, then used a computer course he did at Weymouth College as a stepping stone to a job at the college.

He was then employed by Real World Services, working as a security guard at the Brewery

Square site in Dorchester.

More recently, he has set up his own company, Coogar UK, in which he has invested in independent ghost film Any Minute Now.

The film, which is still waiting to be released, was filmed locally at Hengistbury Head and stars former Grange Hill legend Zammo, Lee McDonald, and Mhairi Calvey, who was the child version of Mel Gibson's

sweetheart in the 1995 Oscar winner, Braveheart.

He said: "I don't think you can have a job for life.

"I'd say to people make the most of your own situation and make it work for you.

"I'm not a risk taker, I think I've been more lucky really."

■ **Gary's Top Tip** – Always keep your eyes and ears open and turn everything around to your own advantage.

● **MARCEL** Ciantar's training as a chemist stood him in good stead for finding the perfect formula for a Weymouth school's acclaimed business liaison centre.

The former chemist attended a private school in Malta.

He said: "It was a time when there wasn't a future in the arts and I was pushed into science."

Harnessing his 'entrepreneurial spirit', Marcel secured a scholarship to study an arts conservation course in London.

After a third scholarship in Massachusetts, Marcel was headhunted by a company in London, eventually becoming a lecturer, then travelling the world lecturing the world.

Returning to the UK and working in consultancy, Marcel said he wanted to try something completely different.

"A friend said to me: 'You love kids, why not look at working within a school?'"

"I found a job at Budmouth as a business and enterprise manager and I figured the problem out in getting students to develop professionally and the Centre of Excellence for Industrial Liaison was born.

"I have no regrets. I have learnt that dealing with failure is important and learning how to manage it is a critical



ingredient to becoming confident."

■ Marcel says his top tips for anyone looking for a career change are: discover your strengths and discover your weaknesses and liabilities.

Always think about the bigger

picture. Think ahead and plan ahead.

If step five is your goal, you have to do the first four steps.

Remember that the world doesn't revolve around you – you are just a small part of it.

Link Park

GENERATING FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

New for Weymouth

- Attractive new 10-acre business park
- Eye-catching, high-spec units
- Long-term, flexible business properties
- Next to the established Granby Industrial Estate
- Excellent transport links
- Good green credentials
- Superfast broadband
- Growing tourist and industrial sectors



Interested in taking space at Link Park? Get in touch now...

DJ Property  
114 Wyke Road  
Weymouth  
Dorset  
DT4 9QP

10305 778896

@MickeyJonesDJP

[www.linkparkweymouth.com](http://www.linkparkweymouth.com)





# REAL PASSION

● FROM accountant to professional writer by way of consultancy, Andrew Knowles' career changed course drastically.

Andrew, of Weymouth, studied archaeology and history at university and ended up working in accountancy. He said: "I came out of university and didn't have a clue what I wanted to do."

"I always wanted to be a writer but I didn't have a clue how I was going to go into it."

"I got a job with a small company in London as a stock controller and went into the accounts department within two weeks. I ended up running the accounts department for the company."

After working as an accountant for 10 years, Andrew realised that the part of accountancy he enjoyed most was the commercial aspect.

He then took on a consultancy role, helping companies put enterprise research planning systems into computers.

Then, at the age of 44, Andrew realised that communication was



his real passion and becoming a professional writer could be a reality.

"I spent a couple of years helping to run a conference

centre. I had written a few war comic strip books and it was after that I realised I could write content that people would pay for."

Andrew said he hasn't looked back since setting up Writecombination, his copywriting and social media services business.

He said: "I would say to anyone else thinking of it that it's never too late to change career."

"If you want to make lots of money then changing career doesn't apply."

"But if you're happy to get an income you can live on and find something you're really passionate about, you never know, you might still make more money than you think."

■ Andrew's Top Tip – research your market – Some people are desperate to open a shop but there might not be a need for it.

Research your market and make sure there's a need for the service you're offering.

## CONTACT ME

t: 01305 830984

e: joanna.davis@

dorsetecho.co.uk

twitter: @dorsetechojo

## BUSINESS IN BRIEF

### Disclosure workshop

WEYMOUTH: A free workshop on Understanding the Safeguarding and Disclosure Service is being held at St Aldhelm's Church Centre in Spa Road, Weymouth, on March 15 from 10am to 1pm.

The Volunteer Centre workshop, which is followed by lunch and networking, will explain the new service, formerly CRB checks, and how the centre can provide volunteers with free checks.

To book a place call 01305 269214.

### Keep head in clouds

PORTLAND: A seminar on cloud computing is being held at Penn Castle on Portland on March 27.

The WSX Enterprise Ltd event will show people what Cloud Computing can do for their business. Email liz.wright@wsxenterprise.co.uk for details or call 01202 607532.

## LOCAL STORAGE SOLUTIONS

## CONTAINER HIRE AND SALES

## SELF STORAGE

## COLD STORES

## TRANSPORT

CALL US ON:  
01202 984 787



**TITAN**  
CONTAINERS



A division of [www.TITANcontainers.com](http://www.TITANcontainers.com)

31 Holton Road · Holton Heath Industrial Estate · Poole · BH16 6LT

[www.TITANArcticStore.co.uk](http://www.TITANArcticStore.co.uk)