



ACE BAR EVENTS LTD

UNIT 19, WESTBURY CLOSE, TOWNSEND INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE, LU5 5BL
WWW.ACEBAREVENTS.COM

Central
Bedfordshire



THE BUSINESS

Andy Collinson's desire to create a better quality life for himself and his young family led to his decision to relocate his business headquarters from London to Central Bedfordshire.

Former bartender Andy created Ace Bar Events Ltd in 2008 at his home in the capital, from where he would organise high end private and corporate occasions for high net worth individuals.

In 2011 Andy and his young family upped sticks, moving one hour's drive north of London to Dunstable, in Central Bedfordshire, where he based his business. Initially borrowing private garage space he then moved into renting from private storage companies.

Andy's family found house property prices in Dunstable to be highly attractive. He also loves the quality of life of the area.

He was approached by Italian fruit puree and syrups producer ODK in 2013 to import and sell one of their products. He sold a pallet to the West End and the business has grown out of that.

In need of more space, he saw a sign for commercial property units for let in Houghton Regis and made contact with Central Bedfordshire Council.

Andy said: "The Council has a very caring attitude and was very helpful in making sure that the property was suitable for my business needs. I needed a mezzanine floor and the council made sure that could happen. To be honest, the unit was a little worse for wear but they made sure that there was new heating and that the electrics were sorted out.

"I would recommend that people looking for commercial properties try their council first. Their motives are not just to fill space but to make sure businesses succeed."

After moving into the property, in Houghton Regis, near Dunstable town centre, in Bedfordshire, Andy has formed productive business relationships with other occupiers on the Townsend Industrial Estate.

Andy currently has a team of five people and he is looking to create more jobs in Bedfordshire as his business grows. His medium term plans include the possibility of taking more commercial space in Central Bedfordshire. He said: "I definitely want to stay in the Dunstable area and work with the council closely on apprenticeships, property issues and the possibility of holding World Flair Association events in the county."

THE REQUIREMENTS

Andy's requirements were for a warehouse where he both store equipment used by Ace Bar Events and for products from ODK in Italy prior to distribution as 86 Importers around the UK.

The available industrial unit would also need to have the appropriate facilities, including toilets, a kitchen unit, appropriate heating and office and administrative space.

Central Bedfordshire Council was able to advise on building regulations and local planning requirements to make sure that a mezzanine floor could be installed. That gave 86 Importers the necessary office space within the unit. Work was also carried out by the council on the heating and electrics before Andy and his colleagues moved into the unit in the Townsend Industrial Estate during the first month of 2016.

Andy said: "My Ace Bar Events company was started in 2008, at the depth of the financial crisis. Things could only go one way and we have seen 20% growth year on year since then."

"The Council has a very caring attitude and was very helpful in making sure that the property was suitable for my business needs."



THE OUTCOMES

Ace Bar Events has continued to see phenomenal growth since moving into Townsend Industrial Estate and Director Andy Collinson is very positive about the future.

He has already struck up some excellent working relationships with other businesses on the business estate and champions the value of networking.

"I can't get enough of chatting to people and finding out what they do," said Andy.

Since moving in, Andy and the owner of Retro Me, which supplies vintage and retro photo booths to events, have agreed to collaborate. Retro Me is virtually next door on the Townsend Industrial Estate.

Andy has also found a local company to repair LED panels. He had previously been sending them to Leeds!

He sees more collaboration, including with Central Bedfordshire Council, as one of the ways forward for his business interests.

THE FUTURE

With major companies like Amazon located here, the building of the Woodside Link Road and the new junction 11a on the M1, Andy believes Dunstable is on the up and up.

"If the big guys are moving in, as they are, there's definitely something happening. There is a really exciting, positive feeling about Dunstable," said Andy.

"Even in the relatively short time since moving in we've noticed a lot more interest in the industrial units here. Business people are looking at Dunstable, seeing all the investment going on here, and they are wanting to be a part of the success.

"For me, Dunstable is outside London enough to be attractive in terms of location but close enough to travel in for events," said Andy. "I use Leagrave Railway Station and can be in the capital in 45 minutes to an hour. London Luton Airport is also close by for international travel."

Andy has clear plans for working with the council in the future. His business plans include engaging an Apprentice to run his social media output and he intends to use the local

authority's contacts to bring that about.

As his businesses grow, Andy intends to create more jobs in Bedfordshire. These will be for warehouse workers and for events staff as he expands.

The World Flair Association is a particular passion of former bartender Andy and he sees collaboration with Central Bedfordshire Council and other local authorities as central to that.

"I would like to talk to colleges and universities about the opportunities for young people," said Andy. "We could even put on events locally and maybe the council could help."

"If the big guys are moving in, as they are, there's definitely something happening. There is a really exciting, positive feeling about Dunstable."



Be ambitious. Be connected. BeCentralBedfordshire

www.becentralbedfordshire.co.uk info@becentralbedfordshire.co.uk 0300 300 8272

@BeCentralBeds **LinkedIn** Search: Be Central Bedfordshire