

Law lecturer to ethical dress shop owner

At the age of 46 Anne McCrickard felt it was time for a career change. Admittedly it was a slightly forced change – the college where she was teaching law wanted to restructure her working hours and, as the journey was almost a 100-mile round trip, the new timetable was not feasible.

So Anne decided the time had come to change direction and she knew she wanted to work for herself.

“I just wanted to be in control of what happened, even though I knew it was, in fact, probably the most difficult option. I had considered finding a teaching job closer to home but thought if I didn't give it a go,

now perhaps I never would. I just really had this feeling that I had to ‘have a go’.

“I thought of the things I could do and my friends and family all had suggestions, but I kept coming back to the same thing – that I found it difficult to find stylish clothing from ethical sources in the high street and, if I found it difficult, other women must be having the same problem.”

Anne has always had an interest in fashion and creative design, so in 2007, opened ONE an ethical, luxury boutique in York.

Anne's first experience of retailing has been a steep, but fun learning curve.

“There were so many things to consider in the early days from sourcing stock to the refurbishment of the shop.

What I always kept in mind was my original idea – to provide customers with fashionable ethical clothing and a special shopping environment.”

Things haven't always gone to plan though. Only five weeks after ONE opened, Anne's husband left her and their three teenage children.

“Perhaps it was one of those ‘mid-life’ moments for both of us?” said Anne quite philosophically. “I can't pretend this was how I saw the future, but as time has moved on I realise that it might force me to do some of the things I have only thought about before.”

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