



STRATFORD BUSINESS CENTRE RAISES A GLASS TO LOCAL GIN COMPANY

www.shakespearedistillery.com

Shakespeare Distillery is an artisan spirit producer that was established in 2015 and has built a strong reputation thanks to director Peter Monks and distiller Simon Picken.

ESTD 2015
SHAKESPEARE
DISTILLERY

Working with another Stratford based company, Avon Boating, who they met through Shakespeare's England, Shakespeare Distillery also offers a Gin Cruise, a valuable added attraction for visitors to the town.

Based in Stratford-upon-Avon, they create a range of gins – the first of which was Stratford Gin but has now extended to other popular flavours Mulberry, Rhubarb and Elderflower & Quince.

Shakespeare Distillery officially opened its doors to the public for the very first time in 2019 after moving to new premises.

Their new home means that the business has expanded its production thanks to the introduction of its new distillation equipment and now offer public tours, as well as introducing its Gin School.

Recently, the team has looked to the future with the introduction of new Cocktail Masterclasses, a refresh of logos and its brand and further new products on the agenda.

Convenient base

Shakespeare Distillery began to outgrow its premises on the Alscot Estate and needed a new home for its expanding business.

Because of a lack of space, it was proving increasingly difficult to host meetings at the business and bring in some of its ideas.

So, while they set about looking for a new home, the distillery took up the hotdesking facilities at Venture House Business Centre on a short-term basis. Peter Monks said: "Things were starting to get a bit cramped at Alscot and we just needed more space because the business was expanding.

"While we were looking for a new facility, we needed somewhere that we could not only work, but also

host business meetings and Venture House in Stratford seemed like it was definitely the perfect fit for us.

"You can pay for hotdesking as you go, so it really is extremely flexible, but there was so many other facilities that you can also access at Venture House such as meeting areas, chill out zones and free Wi-Fi which are great added extras.

"It was exactly what we were looking for as a temporary space and one that we would recommend."

Venture House is Stratford-on-Avon District Council's business centre which opened on the Avenue Farm Industrial Estate in Birmingham Road in 2016 after receiving £450,000 of funding from the Government's Local Growth Fund through the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP).

Unexpected benefits

One thing that did surprise the Shakespeare Distillery team was all the other benefits of making Venture House their temporary base.

It became a valuable tool in the progression of the company as they made connections with other hotdeskers, went along to events such as Donut Time business networking, and made use of the drop-in advice sessions run by Venture House partner, the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub.

These general advice sessions then led to introductions to other partners who were able to directly assist with funding and ultimately the relocation and expansion of the business.

"Our time at the business centre proved extremely useful," Peter said. "We made so many connections and that was something of a pleasant surprise.

"The events were something that we didn't think we would get involved with as we wouldn't be there for that long, but even in the short amount time we were there, we took as many opportunities as we could.

"I would definitely recommend Venture House to other businesses, no matter how long they plan to use it."

Venture House aims to provide the type of facilities and services that entrepreneurs and new businesses just starting out want and need.

It also supports micro-businesses making their first move into commercial premises and more established businesses in need of short-term office space as well as homeworkers and university students needing flexible workspace.

It offers free business advice and support, workshops and networking, a staffed reception, free on-site parking and a secure cycle shed, Wi-Fi, refreshment facilities, a Chill Zone and lockers.

Flexible working space

Anne Solomon, Business Centre Administrator, said there is so much more to Venture House than just being a useful work space for small companies. She said: "I am so pleased that the Shakespeare Distillery team found their time with us very useful and this highlights how much more we can do for customers – whether they are here for just a few weeks or longer.

"We want to make this a space where businesses can work, make connections and get invaluable advice and I am glad that is exactly what happened with the distillery.

"Shakespeare Distillery is a great example of a firm that made use of everything we have to offer and it doesn't matter how long you are working with Venture House.

"We are so pleased that the distillery is doing so well and we are delighted that we have been a small part of their journey."

Helen Peters, board director at the CWLEP leading on culture and tourism, added: "Venture House is the perfect location in the heart of the UK and provides the modern facilities which businesses need to thrive.

"There are many positive ways in which Venture House and the team can have an impact on a business and its future as proved by Shakespeare Distillery."



To find out more about Venture House, please visit www.venturehousestratford.co.uk or contact 01789 207500.

Venture House Business Centre is operated & managed by Stratford-on-Avon District Council in partnership with:



ABOUT THE LOCAL GROWTH FUND

Local Enterprise Partnerships are playing a vital role in driving forward economic growth across the country, helping to build a country that works for everyone.

That's why by 2021 Government will have invested over £12bn through the Local Growth Fund, allowing LEPs to use their local knowledge to get all areas of the country firing on all cylinders.

Analysis has shown that every £1 of Local Growth Fund invested could generate £4.81 in benefits.

LEPs are investing in a wide range of projects informed by detailed analysis of the most pressing economic needs in each of their areas, including transport, skills, business support, broadband, innovation and flood defences.

For further information visit www.cwlep.com