

Julian Grave, Derwent Charcoal and tree services

Julian Grave started Derwent Charcoal and Tree Services eight years ago when he bought himself a second hand charcoal kiln from a contact he'd made while driving a tourist launch across Derwentwater several days a week. He added his tree surgery business after undergoing forestry training shortly after that. His business now operates a busy tree surgery, two charcoal kilns and is branching out into firewood supplies, too. The business plan he prepared with Cumbria Woodlands and the West Cumbria Development Agency helped him to access Forest Futures funding and pay for a second kiln and firewood processing machinery. The plan set out an expected output of 20 tonnes of charcoal in his first year; in fact he's ended up doing 50 tonnes.

"I couldn't have done any of this without the grant aid and now we're incredibly busy, bagging up charcoal or firewood until nine at night," he says. "Everything works well together now, and my business is a complete package. I'm looking at investing further in the business shortly and I've employed another member of staff to manage the growth." Julian is justifiably proud when he sees his product on sale in local garages or on the shelves of a nearby supermarket: "It's the best feeling in the world when you're in there doing your shopping and see your own charcoal on the shelves or in people's shopping trolleys. At the moment we can do up to £300 a week in charcoal sales. It's amazing!"

Julian Grave describes himself as the "happiest fella alive" and, like Danny Frost, has built a business that pulls together a number of supply chain elements into an integrated business model that is both competitive and environmentally sustainable. Where some charcoal or barbecue products might be sourced from potentially unsustainable overseas plantations or even worse, from depleted areas of rainforest, Julian offers charcoal made from wood that comes from his tree surgery business. It is a green waste stream to which he adds value worth hundreds of pounds each week.



Wash Bar
Charcoal.

DERWENT



CHARCOALS

PRODUCED IN KESWICK