



with  
**Adam Kula**  
adam.kula@thenews.co.uk

In association with

**sis** SOLENT  
INTERIOR  
SYSTEMS  
www.solentinteriors.co.uk  
Tel: 023 9255 4400  
email: info@solentinteriors.co.uk

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

# Entrepreneur scheme exceeds its targets

**SUCCESS**  
Karen Standen started her pet therapy business with help from the Ready to Start scheme



THREE years after it began, a charity scheme for disabled entrepreneurs has exceeded its target in the number of people it has helped.

Leonard Cheshire Disability's Ready to Start scheme has run its three year course, helping businesses across the country with free mentoring and hardware to start their own small firms.

As the project wrapped up, 735 people have now started a business with its help.

This is far more than the initial target of 600 which the charity was aiming for, and includes a number of local firms which would not exist without the scheme's initial support.

Portsmouth pet therapist Karen Standen, 47, is among those to have been on the receiving end of the project.

She set up dog hydrotherapy centre Four Paws Aqua with the help of funding for training courses in hydrotherapy, animal first aid, and the cost of a laptop and wetsuit.

'I wouldn't be in this position now if it weren't for the scheme,' said Mrs Standen.

'People don't always have a good grasp of how to run a business but I'm grateful for all the expert help I've received. Ready to Start has that live element which means I've been supported by a specialist who has focussed on my abilities, not my disability.'