

Off the Scale: Selling clothes by the kilo to help people with depression

Tuesday 20 October, 2015

Off the Scale is a not for profit boutique clothing shop that has just opened in Birmingham selling recycled and up-cycled clothing by the Kilo. Off The Scale not only promotes sustainable fashion but also plans to train and employ people who suffer with depression, and perhaps most importantly, raise awareness of some of the stigmas surrounding the condition.

Husband and wife team Eddie and Gail O'Callaghan opened their first shop using the unusual by the kilo concept in San Francisco back in the 1990s, trailblazers at the time they then went on to open the first shop of its kind in Liverpool 'Bulletproof' before moving to Croatia to become co-founders of the infamous 'The Garden Festival'. Eddie has returned his hometown of Birmingham after 33 years, tempted back by the surge in culture and creativity in the area in recent years.

Eddie & Gail have received a Key-fund loan to get things started along with support from The Big Issue's investment arm. They hope that by combining their extensive knowledge of fashion, promotion and up-cycling, and the condition itself, to provide genuine social benefit to the community. Eddie has no problems discussing his own personal experiences with depression and believes that often the taboos and stigmas attached can discourage people from seeking the treatments available.

"We have chosen the vibrant York road in Kings Heath for Off the Scale because of all the terrific independent shops, restaurants and bars in the locality. The recent Kings Heath Street Festival was testament to how the area is fast becoming Birmingham's newest Bohemia." Eddie O'Callaghan

"Buying clothes by the weight brings a feeling of a treasure hunt or lucky dip aspect which is fun especially for those looking to spot a bargain." Gail O'Callaghan

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