

It was back in 1995, when my husband Eric was working as a rubbish collector for the local town council, that I first got the idea of recycling clothes. He would frequently find bags of perfectly good clothes just thrown into the rubbish. I wondered if I would be able to do something with them which would make money for me and perhaps even help the community at the same time. I decided to give it a try.

The first thing I did was to place an advertisement in the newspaper inviting people in the neighbourhood to bring me their second-hand clothing, shoes and bedding instead of throwing them away. Within a week, our garage was bursting with black plastic bags. (1)___ This kept me busy for weeks.

At the same time, I was also looking for a shop to rent where I could sell these items. (2)___ But it wasn't until I contacted Adventure, an organisation which helps people to set up their own businesses, that I finally got the assistance I needed. They helped me find the right shop and gave me advice about getting a business loan to get me started. That's how *Second Best* was born.

For my idea to work, I was going to need a steady supply of clothes. The town council already had recycling bins for paper, glass and the like. (3)___ I was able to make arrangements to have the clothes collected and brought to my shop, where I had installed laundry facilities to cope with all the washloads I needed to do!

It wasn't only making money in the shop that interested me, though. I was still eager for the community to benefit from my idea, too, so I started to find ways that the large quantities of very old or damaged clothing that I couldn't sell in the shop could be put to use. (4)___ Some of the old clothing is now turned into bandages for hospitals, for example, while one school in the area asks for old jeans to make into lunch bags.

Adventure believes in encouraging people by giving an annual Special Merit Award to the most successful new business they have helped. (5)___ Not only had I helped so many others, they said, but I had also had to overcome a difficulty. In 2000, my shop had been destroyed by fire and I had had to start the business all over again from Scratch.

Getting back on track wasn't easy. Not only did I have to search for another shop to rent, but I also had to spend time building up new stocks of clothes, as nearly all of the original stock had been destroyed. (6)___ Otherwise, I would have been forced to call it a day.

Today, twelve years after I first started up, *Second Best* is a very successful small business.

Прочитайте текст. Заполните пропуск (5) одним из предложенных текстовых фрагментов.

- 1 — In 2002, my turn came around.
- 2 — Once I had learnt the basic principles of managing my own business, I never looked back, they said.
- 3 — Once again, though, Adventure came to my aid, providing me with financial support through this difficult time.
- 4 — It turned out that there were plenty!

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